

Friday Times

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Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Over the years, I have become accustomed to hearing inquiries from people who want to work in Kuwait, but are not sure about this decision and if they should make this move or not. This question often comes to me from potential expatriates to Kuwait, especially Europeans and Asians. It is natural that they do not understand the nature of Arab and Gulf countries. Their knowledge about our countries often comes from the media, news and friends, which may be bad or good.

I believe that it is not easy for anyone to move from their home country to a new land, whether to work or study in countries that are different in religion, culture and history. If your choice will be a place like Kuwait, then a newcomer should take into account cultural, social and religious differences. They should be aware that Kuwait, for example, is a religiously conservative country compared to other Gulf states, as there are no nightclubs and liquor is forbidden.

Therefore, the newcomer's acceptance of Kuwait's lifestyle is important, but life is not difficult. There are many things that make life comfortable financially, like a salary, especially if it is rewarding, as a good income can be realized in a short period. Living expenses are not very cheap but acceptable. I think prices in Kuwait are relatively reasonable compared to other countries, and there are no taxes - yet.

Any person who has been offered a contract of employment in any country in the world - and not only Kuwait - must be cautious and read and review carefully the work contract with a lawyer or a legal authority to ensure their financial and moral rights are secure in case of a dispute or termination or even the normal ending of the contract. Also, the time duration of the contract, any penalty conditions and the nature of the workplace must be reviewed to avoid problems. Information about the workplace can easily be found online, whether it is a company, hospital, etc.

I also think it is important that what is mentioned in the employment contract must match the information you receive verbally over the phone or by email. Communication with the embassy of their home country in Kuwait is also important to ensure that the embassy is informed of the offer and to become aware of the nature of the country, its culture and people.

There is a system here called the sponsorship system, which acts as a legal guarantor before official authorities. I advise newcomers to Kuwait to check the reputation of the sponsor in the community to avoid problems. Kuwait is a cosmopolitan country - it is open to diverse cultures and nationalities. This is a positive thing, as the new expat will not feel bored or lonely. Also, freedom of religion is guaranteed. Kuwait is a very hot country in summer and cold in winter, but the beauty is that air-conditioning is everywhere, from the car to the office. Obtaining a driving license is easy for an expatriate with experience and a driving permit.

I believe that the decision to accept a job in Kuwait is completely personal, and it should not be based on the experiences of certain people or news reports. Verifying the validity of the contract and its terms is the most important thing. I wish good luck to all those who decide to come to Kuwait!

WOODEN SAILING SHIPS USED FOR TRADE, PEARL DIVING



KUWAIT: Kuwait's wooden sailing ships were citizens' main source of income. Varying in shapes and sizes, they served the purpose of pearl diving and importing products in the pre-oil era. Until this day, citizens cling to this heritage with nostalgia, and still use ships for the purpose of fishing and transporting goods. — KUNA

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Local

Kuwait receives human remains believed to belong to POWs

Kuwait pursues POWs' DNA examination at criminal evidences department



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti and Iraqi officials sign paperwork for the handover of human remains said to belong to slain Kuwaiti POWs from Iraq to Kuwait. — KUNA photos



Trucks belonging to Kuwait's Interior Ministry's Criminal Evidence Department carry human remains said to belong to slain Kuwaiti POWs as they enter Kuwait's Al-Abdali border checkpoint.

KUWAIT: Kuwait received yesterday human remains said to belong to slain Kuwaiti POWs from Iraqi authorities pending forensics' examination locally. Handover of the human remains was organized at Al-Abdali border checkpoint, with attendance of Kuwaiti and Iraqi officials. Iraq had declared discovery of the remains saying they belonged to Kuwaitis. They are suspected to be of missing Kuwaitis and POWs, taken as prisoners and slain by personnel of the ousted Iraqi regime that invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, and occupied the Gulf state for seven months.

The handing over of 48 human remains, which were put in caskets wrapped in Kuwaiti flags, is the first since the toppling of Saddam Hussein in a US-led invasion in 2003. Kuwait says around 605 people, mostly Kuwaitis, went missing during the seven-month occupation and ensuing war.

Iraqi military officials said the remains were found in a mass grave, in the desert about 170 km (106 miles) west of the city of Samawa in March. Tests have been performed and results confirm the remains' identity, said Iraqi military and health officials attending the ceremony. "Iraq's government is determined to keep searching for the remaining missing bodies of the Kuwaiti citizens and return them back to their families," said army Major General Hazim Qasim.

Positive results

Yesterday's handover of human remains is follow-up to a previous declaration by a Kuwaiti laboratory about positive results after examining samples that had been brought from Baghdad, a Kuwaiti official indicated. Rabie Al-Adsani, the head of the

DNA extraction very complex, time consuming process

Kuwaiti delegation at the international tripartite commission and sub-committee tasked with the POWs' file, said that in light of the positive results, Kuwait had addressed an official request to the Iraqi authorities to transfer the human remains to Kuwait to

complete the examination at the Interior Ministry's Criminal Evidence Department. The Ministry of Interior department keeps a DNA database for the Kuwaiti POWs, thus it will conduct a test to determine whether the samples match, Adsani has explained.



Rabie Al-Adsani, the head of the Kuwaiti delegation at the international tripartite commission and sub-committee tasked with the POWs' file, speaks to reporters.

Adsani further noted that the DNA extraction for examination is a very complex and time consuming process. He expressed gratitude to the Iraqi authorities namely the ministry of defense, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the UN mission, members of the technical committee from Saudi Arabia, the US, the UK and France for their cooperation and fruitful efforts that led "to these positive results." The ICRC-affiliated tripartite commission declared in June discovery of human remains in Al-Muthanna, Al-Samawa, in southern Iraq, saying that they were suspected to belong to Kuwaiti prisoners. The committee had said that the bones were handed over to forensic department in Baghdad indicating that the DNA to be extracted from the skeletons would be compared to those of relatives of the missing persons. Iraqi authorities had handed over to Kuwait DNA samples for 32 corpses. In 2005, remains of Kuwaitis were located. The tripartite commission continues to look for missing peoples in the two countries related to the period of the 1990-1991 occupation.

DNA testing

On July 24, Kuwait affirmed it would continue efforts to locate its Prisoners of War (POWs) and missing individuals in Iraq and will use all of its resources to achieve such goal. In a press release commenting on the findings of the technical committee of the International Committee of the Red Cross's (ICRC) Tripartite Commission, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organization Nasser Al-Hain said that Kuwait presented data to the commission and the Iraqi team involved in the search for

Local



Rabie Al-Adsani, the head of the Kuwaiti delegation at the international tripartite commission (right) and Maj Gen Mahmoud Al-Tabbakh, Director of the Interior Ministry's Criminal Evidence Department.

the remains of Kuwaitis in Iraq. The step led to the approval of DNA testing on the human remains found in Iraq recently, said Hain. He added that initial results had shown a match in the DNA samples of some of the remains, which prompted the State of Kuwait to request that, all of the discovered bodies would be sent to back its soil for further analysis. The tests will continue in Kuwait and the identities of the bodies will be revealed as soon as results are

announced, indicated the official, adding that the families of the victims will be informed as the process goes on. Hain commended the tripartite commission and sub-committees for their efforts to uncover the fates of Kuwaiti POWs and missing persons and he thanked Iraqi authorities for efforts to facilitate procedures in finding the remains. He hoped that the long-awaited case of the fate of Kuwaitis and individuals from other nationalities would be closed to conclude

this humanitarian tragedy.

On June 20, the ICRC-affiliated Tripartite Commission announced the discovery of human remains in southern Iraq with initial expectations pointing to the discovery of bodies of Kuwaiti citizens and other nationals. The discovery gave hope to the families of the missing individuals who were taken away over 28 years ago. The commission gathers officials from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the US, the UK, France, and Iraq. In 2005,

the remains of a number of Kuwaiti citizens were discovered in Iraq, while in 2011, the body remnants of Iraqi individuals were uncovered. The tripartite commission continues efforts to uncover the remains of people missing or killed in the 1990-1991 war to liberate Kuwait. Diplomatic ties between the two neighbors were cut after the invasion, which was ended by the 1991 Gulf War, but restored after Saddam Hussein's removal from power in 2003. — Agencies

Kuwait appreciates Iraqi, ICRC efforts: FM

KUWAIT: Kuwait yesterday highly appreciated efforts by Iraq, the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and the Tripartite committee over progress made regarding fate of Kuwaiti missing persons. This came in a phone call between Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Al-Hakim after

Kuwait received human remains earlier today said to belong to Kuwaitis who had been missing or held as prisoners by former Iraqi regime. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, according to a statement by the foreign ministry, said he was looking forward for further positive results over this "important humane file." He reiterated keenness to continue cooperation with Iraq over this issue. — KUNA



Officials are seen at the Abdali border department.

Local



Livestock market gets a makeover

By Shakir Reshamwala

A cloud of dust rises as sheep jump off yet another truck at the new livestock market in Rai. They are herded into a pen, as the market bustles, with Eid Al-Adha just around the corner. While the market is in operation throughout the year, it explodes in size during Eid. The new market's orderly pens and water misters are in sharp contrast to the earlier open-air livestock market nearby, which was shut down by the Municipality this year.





The sheep at the market are mostly Arabian, while the goats are from East Africa. Australian, hybrid (muhajjan) Iranian, African and Georgian sheep, to name a few, are hard to find this year. Australia has banned the export of live sheep during the summer months, so there isn't a single Aussie sheep in sight.

Arabian sheep at the market are mostly Kuwaiti and Saudi. Prices range from KD 65 to KD 120 and higher, depending on the breed, gender and country of origin. Usually, Australian sheep are the cheapest and Arabian the most expensive, with hybrid varieties in between.

The old market used to be filled with jostling buyers, vendors, porters, butchers, pickup drivers, feed sellers and hustlers, while proceedings are more sedate at the new market, which is within the compound of the new Capital slaughterhouse in Rai. The state-of-the-art abattoir, the largest in the Middle East, is ready to receive patrons during Eid, replete with hundreds of chairs for clients to wait in air-conditioned comfort and a large play area for children.

The slaughtering area is spotless and brightly lit, with conveyor belts and assembly-line overhead hooks. Clients can watch their animal as it is brought in through a chute, slaughtered, skinned, cut up and packed from behind a wall of glass, for a nominal charge of KD 3. The conveniences of the new market and slaughterhouse will surely overcome any lingering nostalgia for the old livestock market and its free-for-all ways.



Local

Baghli's family still holds hope of finding him four years since disappearance

Missing citizen's son urges more effort from Romanian authorities to find his father



KUWAIT: Mohammed Al-Baghli (left) pictured with his son and granddaughter one day before his disappearance.



Mohammed Al-Baghli with his sons.

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Four years have passed since Mohammed Al-Baghli disappeared in Romania, but his family hasn't lost hope of seeing him again. Baghli was last seen on Aug 5, 2015, when he went for an afternoon walk in Cheia village in Romania, where the family spends its summer vacation every year.

His family wonders why no evidence has been found, and blame the Romanian police for not giving full attention to this case. "They are facing problems and corruption in their ministry of interior, and the minister spoke about a shortage of police officers, especially in the villages outside the capital Bucharest. The Romanian government was interested in the case for a couple of months through investigations and searches, but this has now dropped to a minimum," Mohammed's son Riyadh Al-Baghli told Kuwait Times.

"The Romanian government rejected our repeated demands to

reinvestigate the case, although we met the Romanian prime minister during her visit to Kuwait last year. Even efforts by the Kuwaiti ambassador to Romania when meeting officials didn't succeed in transferring the case to the general prosecutor in Bucharest," he added.

The Kuwaiti government is following the case. "HH the Amir always asks about my father whenever he meets any of our family members. Also, the ministry of foreign affairs and ministry of interior are following the case of our father, especially when meeting Romanian officials. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaled Al-Jarallah is always in contact with us to get updates, as well as the interior minister," stressed Riyadh Al-Baghli.

"The interior ministry sent six delegations to Romania since our father went missing, till last year. We hope that investigations will continue to solve the mystery of this case and find our father. We and our attorney both believe that this case could have been solved earlier if the Romania police spent more efforts," he explained.

According to Baghli's neighbors in Romania, the missing man had perfect social relations with the residents of the village. "They all knew my father and used to call him Bu Fahd, and respected him. My father was known for being fair and kind to all people inside and outside Kuwait no matter their religion, nationality or social status," Riyadh Al-Baghli said. The family has offered a reward for providing information that may lead to finding their father, which was gradually increased to reach €500,000.

Mohammed Al-Baghli was born in 1936 and has five sons and three daughters. He graduated from the faculty of law at Ain Shams University in Cairo in 1970. He worked in various institutions including the Kuwaiti army, ministry of finance and the ministry of commerce and industry till he retired in 1986 to manage his own business. He founded the first factory for bishts in Kuwait in 1979 along with his brothers. He is a board member of various institutions and member of the Kuwait Bar Association, in addition to other memberships and posts.

1,278 balloons released to honor Kuwaiti martyrs

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: To remind the new generation of the most important event in Kuwait's history - the Iraqi invasion in 1990 - a group of volunteer teams organized a festival titled 'We are all for Kuwait and Kuwait is for us' on Wednesday at Mubarak Kiosk in Mubarakiya. The event was held on the occasion of the 29th anniversary of the invasion, and aimed to strengthen national belonging to Kuwait and love for volunteer work.

Leaders of volunteer teams released 1,278 balloons symbolizing Kuwaiti martyrs, each with the name of a martyr. Various institutions participated in this event, including the Municipality, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, Kuwait Martyrs' Office, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate and volunteer teams.

Poets Abdulkareem Al-Anezi and Hammad Al-Ajmi presented a poem about Kuwait and the role of martyrs, and how they sacrificed their lives for Kuwait. Two volunteer teams presented two short plays on the brutal practices of the Iraqi soldiers towards Kuwaitis, including arresting and killing people. The event concluded with awarding leaders of the participating volunteer teams.



KUWAIT: Balloons are released during the event to commemorate the memory of Kuwait's martyrs. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Local

Commerce Ministry may step in to stop 'artificial price hike' of fish

Fishermen union invites Kuwaitis to practice profession 'if they wish to'

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry said it may use law 10/1979 with regards to supervising trade in commodities and set their prices. This comes in the aftermath of its recent regulations to organize fish market auctions, which helped drop prices before a reported fishermen strike caused prices to soar back to their original high rates.

Article 1 of the law gives the minister authority to confiscate any product in exchange of just compensation that considers cost and reasonable profit. The second article says artificial price hike is not allowed and will be considered as spreading false news, or hoarding or hiding quantities of products in order to make profit outside the nature of supply and demand, adding that article 14 stipulates that anyone who commits such an act will be punished by a minimum of three months in jail and a maximum of three years, as well as a minimum fine of KD 2,000 and a maximum of KD 10,000.

Article three says some products can be subjected to the pricing system, and decision in this

regard is issued by the commerce minister. The ministry said it will not hesitate in implementing the law and fight cheating and manipulation, and will take legal action to maintain real prices.



Foreign ministry denies meeting over strike

Less boats

Meanwhile, head of the fishermen's union Thaher Al-Suwayyan said the area of water in which fishing is permitted does not allow for issuing new fishing licenses, especially after reducing the number of boats from 750 to 350. He said the union wrote to the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources in 2017

to allow fishing in Kuwait Bay under its supervision and according to certain hours or days decided by them, but it was rejected.

Suwayyan said the approved fishermen in the union are Egyptian and Indian, adding that Kuwaitis can practice this job if they wish to. About mullet, he said, "we warned against this problem since the decision by the agriculture authority designating places outside Kuwait Bay to fish for it, but these areas are far away and do not have mullet, and all requests were rejected".

Furthermore, Suwayyan said that union members met with commerce ministry officials on Wednesday, noting that the officials expressed understanding of many issues. "We explained fishermen did not strike, but we were surprised by the commerce ministry letter saying they were on strike and 23 boats were not operating," he added.

Fish prices reportedly dropped again yesterday following strict measures taken by the commerce ministry to monitor the implementation of the new circular, which was done earlier this week with hopes of preventing 'manipulation of prices.' The circular had been released in re-

sponse to complaints that auctioneers, who are mostly expatriates, allegedly raise the prices to increase their profits. The circular stipulates that expatriates are not allowed to enter fish auctions unless authorized.

Rumors denied

In the meantime, a source from Kuwait's Foreign Ministry denied on Wednesday rumors that circulated on social networks alleging that ministry officials held a meeting with Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Tareq Al-Qouni over fishermen strike. Deputy Foreign Minister for Consular Affairs Advisor Anas Al-Shaheen said in a press statement that there is totally no information or truth on this matter, and no meeting took place with the ambassador or any meeting regarding the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's recent decision on the governing of sales to fishery. Shaheen also called for accurate reporting on such issues, and denounced the involvement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in issues related to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in accordance with the laws and regulations.

Bedoon defendants remanded in custody

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A judge yesterday reprimanded 10 persons accused of participating in a sit-in organized by bedoons in jail. He also reprimanded a suspect accused of operating a Twitter account and using it to insult officials, as well as another suspect accused of urging the killing of officials from the central agency of illegal residents. The suspects will return to court on August 25 for a hearing to discuss the possibility of their release. Meanwhile, a security source said a decision to suspend issuing article 17 passports for bedoons was made to allow officers to process more than KD 10,000 piled up applications, adding that applications for university and medical cases are still being accepted.

In the meantime, the Education Ministry asked educational zones to stop accepting children and grandchildren of bedoons "without a valid security ID, and a certificate from the central agency of illegal residents that states they do not have any security restrictions, or an indication that they have another nationality."

227 Filipinos

In other news, MP Bader Al-Mulla asked Kuwait Airways about the appointment of 227 Filipinos in the traffic sector, and who were brought from their country. Mulla condemned the move, if true, criticizing officials for hiring employees from abroad "while Kuwaitis are still waiting for jobs." Mulla threatened to grill the concerned minister after the parliamentary break.

Separately, the Public Authority for Civil Information said the electronic envelop service will be suspended for one week starting yesterday for renovations. It said this is due to the upgrade of the system, and it will be restored August 14. The e-envelope services that will be stopped are for newborn's civil IDs, renewal of the civil ID, correcting the name of non-Kuwaitis, as well as domestic help and family visa services.



KUWAIT: Interior Ministry's Acting Undersecretary Lt Gen Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, accompanied by other senior ministry officials, toured Kuwait International Airport yesterday to inspect preparations to facilitate pilgrims' travel to Saudi Arabia to perform hajj. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

Police probe mosque quarrel

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Police responded to a dispute between several women in a Salmiya mosque. One woman said she was attacked verbally and physically while praying, and also accused other women of attempting to steal her phone. Police are investigating.

Kuwait calls for ending plight of jailed Syrians

NEW YORK: Kuwait has affirmed necessity of releasing prisoners in Syria calling on the local parties to cooperate with the UN envoy Geir Pedersen to try end plight of those languishing behind iron bars. The Kuwaiti call was made by the State of Kuwait Permanent Representative at the UN, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, during a Security Council session on the detainees and missing persons in Syria on Wednesday. Resolving this plight will constitute a measure for building confidence among the parties as part of the efforts by the UN envoy for resuming the political process according to Security Council Resolution 2254 and the 2012 Geneva Declaration, Ambassador Otaibi stated. Nine years after flare-up of the crisis in Syria, there have been justified inquiries about destiny of the detainees and the missing, where according to reports by international investigation panels, there are thousands of detainees and missing people in Syria and their families know nothing about their destiny. Freeing these detainees has been stipulated in SC resolutions namely Resolutions 2254, 2401 and 2449, he said, noting that a breakthrough in this respect would

back up the political process.

Ambassador Otaibi renewed support for the UN envoy mission, calling for speedy efforts to free the largest number possible of those held in the cells. "We have celebrated this year the 70th anniversary of adopting the 1949 four Geneva conventions and additional protocols as well as the 20th anniversary of endorsing the first resolution by the Security Council calling for protection of civilians in armed struggles," Otaibi said. He called for adherence, literally and morally, to these resolutions and conventions, namely those addressing the question of prisoners. He stressed on the necessity of calling on the Syrian authorities and all parties of the struggle to stop instantly all inhuman practices happening inside the prisons and detention centers, in violation of international and humanitarian laws. The veteran Kuwaiti diplomat called for rapid freeing of imprisoned women, children, sick people, elderly and those with special needs and allow their families to determine their destiny and whereabouts. The prisoners in Syria need medical care, food, water and other basic materials.

Ambassador Otaibi urged the Syrian authorities reveal number of the deceased, information about burial places and hand over their remains to their families, in line with international laws. He re-affirmed that officials responsible for the heinous crimes and war crimes must be brought to account. — KUNA



Gazans 'too poor' to afford sheep for Eid

Lebanon newspaper goes black to raise alarm over political crisis

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MAKKAH: Muslim pilgrims shop for prayer rugs at a market in the Saudi holy city of Makkah during of the annual hajj pilgrimage. — AFP

Makkah vendors cash in on hajj

Pilgrims descend on Makkah, Saudis warn against politics

MAKKAH: In the Saudi city of Makkah, dotted with fast food eateries and stalls selling Chinese-made trinkets, vendors are ready to cash in on the annual hajj pilgrimage. "Business is going very well," said Faisal Addais from his stall close to the Grand Mosque-Islam's holiest site. "The customers are foreigners and speak all languages," added the 41-year-old Yemeni, who sells religious souvenirs. To overcome linguistic challenges, sales are often conducted with the help of a calculator.

Potential customers stroll past the stalls and shops, while pigeons coo at their ankles on the bustling thoroughfare. Retailer Ali said his sales were expected to "increase five-fold" during hajj, which this year is expected to attract 2.5 million worshippers from Saudi and across the world between Friday and Tuesday. Completing hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam and every Muslim with the means is obliged to undertake it at least once in their lives.

The pilgrimage draws vendors to the holy city, the majority peddling religious wares. They include Chinese-made replicas of the Kaaba, a black structure inside the Grand Mosque towards which Muslims around the

world pray, as well as call to prayer alarm clocks and water said to be holy. "The religious and mercantile dimensions have always been linked in Makkah," said Luc Chantre, author of several books about the pilgrimage in the modern era.

"When they had come from far away, pilgrims needed to trade to finance their stays—and some even went home in profit," Chantre said. "What's new is that these vast multi-storey malls have replaced the old bazaars around the Grand Mosque." Air-conditioned shopping centres near the Grand Mosque are home to leading luxury brands which welcome a constant stream of pilgrims—except during prayer times.

Beyond the religious souvenirs, visitors to Makkah can pick up highly-coveted Saudi gold, watches, clothes and more. The city's restaurants and fast food outlets, either in narrow side streets or on main arteries, are deluged by worshippers around the clock. As well as the five-day hajj, Muslims also travel to Makkah year-round to undertake the umrah, a lesser pilgrimage.

Makkah is unlike Christian pilgrimage sites such as Lourdes in France and Mexico's Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe where

"trade is linked exclusively to souvenirs and religious offerings", said Chantre. Makkah's nearby city of Jeddah is the traditional home of western Saudi Arabia's mercantile families, partly owing to its vast port. Religious tourism brings the conservative kingdom billions of dollars annually—an important revenue source as the oil-rich nation seeks to diversify its economy.

Saudis warn against politics

Hundreds of thousands of white-clad pilgrims, many gripping umbrellas to ward off Saudi Arabia's blistering summer sun, descended on Makkah this week ahead of the annual hajj. Saudi officials asked Muslims to focus on rituals of worship, warning against politicizing the rite as wars rage on in the region and at a time of heightened tensions between Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia and Shiite Muslim adversary Iran.

"Hajj...is not a place for political conflicts or to raise sectarian slogans that divide Muslims," Abdulrahman Al-Sudaib, imam of the Grand Mosque of Makkah, told reporters. Makkah Governor Prince Khalid al-Faisal asked worshippers earlier this week to "leave all other matters in your countries to discuss

when you are back". Saudi Arabia stakes its reputation on its guardianship of Islam's holiest sites and organizing a peaceful hajj, which has been marred in the past by deadly stampedes, fires and riots.

Authorities said more than 1.8 million pilgrims had so far arrived in the kingdom for the world's largest annual Muslim gathering, which retraces the route the Prophet Mohammad took 14 centuries ago. Outside the Grand Mosque, the world's largest, temperatures topped 40 degrees Celsius as industrial fans sprayed water.

"All of this is for the sake of the hajj," 43-year-old Fatima Sayed from Giza, Egypt, said of the searing heat. "We applied twice before but God didn't permit it, and, thank God, it was a very big surprise that He ordained it for me this year." Every able-bodied Muslim who has the means should perform the hajj at least once in their lifetime under a quota system. Saudi Arabia has made use of technology to manage the flow of millions at the same place at the same time. This includes electronic identification bracelets, connected to GPS, that were introduced after a 2015 crush killed hundreds of people. — Agencies

International

Iran says US Gulf mission will 'increase insecurity'

Iran slams Bahrain's 'provocative' Gulf military conference

TEHRAN: Iran's defense minister said yesterday that the formation of a US-led flotilla in the Gulf would "increase insecurity" and any Israeli involvement would have "disastrous consequences" for the region. Tehran and Washington have been locked in a battle of nerves since US President Donald Trump withdrew from a landmark 2015 nuclear deal with Iran last year and reimposed sanctions. Tensions have soared in the region, with drones downed and tankers mysteriously attacked in Gulf waters. Washington and its Gulf allies have accused the Islamic republic of the tanker attacks, which Tehran denies.

In response, the US has been seeking to form a coalition whose mission—dubbed Operation Sentinel—it says is to guarantee freedom of navigation in the Gulf. Britain, which already has warships on protection duty in the Gulf after a UK-flagged tanker was seized by Iranian Revolutionary Guards, has said it will join the planned operation. But other European countries have kept out, for fear it might harm European efforts to reach a negotiated settlement with Iran.

"The military coalition that America is seeking to form with the excuse of securing maritime transport will only increase insecurity in the region," Defense Minister Amir Hatami said in a conference call with counterparts from Kuwait, Oman and Qatar. Reacting to reports of Israeli willingness to join the coalition, he said it would be "highly provocative and can

have disastrous consequences for the region." There have been reports in the Israeli media of the country's possible involvement although it was not clear in what capacity.

Iran has seized three tankers in the Gulf since last month, including the British-flagged vessel. The ship seizures came after British Royal Marines helped to impound a tanker carrying Iranian oil off the British overseas territory of Gibraltar on July 4, alleging it was destined for EU-sanctioned Syria, an accusation Iran denies. Calling the US the main source of tensions in the region, Hatami called on Gulf countries to enter "constructive talks" to provide maritime security by themselves.

'Provocative' conference

Meanwhile, Iran yesterday hit out at Bahrain for hosting a "provocative" conference on Gulf maritime security and for its "anti-Iran" rhetoric accusing Tehran of attacking tankers in sensitive waters. Bahrain said the July 31 meeting was to discuss the "current regional situation" and blasted "the repeated attacks and unacceptable practices of Iran and the terrorist groups linked to it".

The tiny Gulf monarchy, which hosts the US Fifth Fleet, did not specify who attended but Britain's Guardian newspaper reported the UK had called for the meeting with other European countries and the United States.

"Bahrain's government should not become the facilitator of common enemies' wishes and



TEHRAN: A handout picture released by Iran's Defense Ministry shows the missiles 'Balaban' (left top), 'Ghaem' (bottom row), and 'Yasin' (right top) during an unveiling ceremony in the capital Tehran. — AFP

schemes in the region," said foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi in a statement published on his Telegram channel. "The security of regional countries is inseparable and it is not possible for some to be secure at the cost of others' insecurity. It is expected that regional

countries prevent foreigners' escalatory interventions by exercising prudence and foresight," he added. Mousavi "condemned the anti-Iran measures taken by Bahrain's government including hosting suspicious and provocative conferences," the statement said. — Agencies

Land and climate: Problems, solutions inextricably linked

GENEVA: The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change yesterday delivered the most comprehensive scientific overview yet of the links between the land we live off and global warming. Here are some key takeaways:

Sucking Earth dry

The report was compiled by more than 100 climate and land use scientists, drawing on thousands of data sets. It depicts a world ravaged by humankind's insatiable appetite for food and natural resources. Human activity is now imprinted on more than 70 percent of all ice-free land on Earth; agriculture uses 70 percent of the planet's freshwater. At the same time, human activity is expanding the world's deserts, with the area of dryland experiencing drought increasing around 1 percent each year. Land, with its soil, vegetation and ability to reflect much of the Sun's heat, sucked up as much as 29 percent of mankind's CO₂ emissions in the decade to 2016. But as temperatures rise across the globe, there are fears that absorption rate will slow. Land is also a source of greenhouse gases, with agriculture, forestry and other activities accounting for 23 percent of total net man-made emissions.

1.5C already?

The IPCC sprung to global attention in 2018 with its assessment on how to limit global warming to 1.5C (2.6 Fahrenheit), as aimed for in the Paris climate deal. It spelled out the need for drastic greenhouse gas emissions cuts achieved partly by a near-imme-

diated fall in fossil fuel consumption. Earth's surface has already heated 1C since pre-industrial times, but temperatures on land rise faster than in the ocean. Yesterday's report suggested that compared with the pre-industrial average, land temperatures have already risen 1.53C. It highlighted an increased risk of crop vulnerability, land degradation and extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change, with women, children and the elderly at most immediate risk. It also warned that the risk of food insecurity would go from "high" under 1.5C of warming, to "very high" under 2C.

Overweight, underfed

Between 25-30 percent of all food produced is currently lost or wasted. This waste comes amid an epoch of vastly heightened meat and fat consumption in wealthy nations, and indeed global per capita food calories have increased around one third since 1961. Two billion adults are classified as overweight or obese, while at least 820 million people go to bed hungry every night.

Trade-offs

The report looks at ways that humanity can use land to combat climate change. It stresses the value of maintaining and even restoring forests to suck carbon from the atmosphere. In addition, it runs the rule over bioenergy schemes, including as yet untested systems that use biomass to sequester greenhouse gases, and later get burned for energy as an alternative to fossil fuels. But the area of land needed to keep to a 1.5-C limit varies in projections depending on global consumption patterns in the decades to come.

Even under a low-consumption trajectory, where populations rise slower than anticipated in a less resource-intensive world, a "high risk" of food insecurity occurs in the IPCC models at warming between 2.5-3.5C. For a world on its current consumption path, that happens at just 1.3C. The report warns that land given over to bioenergy at the scale required to scrub out global missions, could "increase risks for desertification, land degradation, food security and sustainable development". — AFP

Flight shame! Website spells out emissions toll on global climate

NEW YORK: Getting ready to cruise in first class from New York to Beijing? That will be 15.6 square meters of Arctic ice down the drain, thank you. Enjoy your flight. Such statistics detailing the environmental toll wrought by jet setting, or even just business travel, are the stuff of a new web site, Shameplane.com, which aims to calculate how much Arctic sea ice melt a traveler's flight causes.

Visited by people from 120 countries since its creation in March, shameplane.com is spreading the Swedish-born concept of "flygskam", or "flight shame, by exposing the environmental toll of just one person's plane trip, co-creator Victor Muller said on Wednesday. But Muller said he in fact created the site for himself, to ease his angst over 'flygskam,' and never anticipated its popularity. So far the site has seen 30,000 visitors, from Kyrgyzstan to South Sudan and Martinique. "It was just for me," Muller, 35, who lives in Sweden's capital Stockholm, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, adding "It was never intended to shame anyone," despite its name.

And in fact it's not even only about air travel. Adopting environmentally conscious behaviors such as eschewing meat or living car-free for a year will cut the estimate for that New York-Beijing trip by about a fifth through emissions reduction, according to Shameplane. — Reuters

International

3 die; separatists clash with presidential guards in Aden

Frictions grow within Yemen's anti-Houthi alliance

ADEN: Southern separatists clashed yesterday with presidential guards in Aden, the seat of Yemen's government, and three people were killed and nine injured, local officials and residents told Reuters. The violence highlighted a rift within the Saudi-backed coalition battling the Iran-aligned Houthi movement in a more than four-year war that has killed tens of thousands of people and pushed Yemen to the brink of famine.

The separatists and the internationally recognized government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi are nominally united in their battle against the Houthis. But they have rival agendas for Yemen's future, and a missile strike in Aden last week that killed dozens of southern soldiers raised friction between them.

Just before Wednesday's clash, hundreds of separatist supporters attended a funeral for some of the southern soldiers and a prominent commander near the hilltop presidential palace. As the crowd chanted anti-government slogans, shooting was exchanged with presidential guards. Presidential guard Brigadier General Sanad Al-Rahwa told Yemeni news outlet Masdar Online that his forces had clashed with armed groups trying to storm the presidential palace and central bank.

After the funeral, the vice-president of the separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC), Hani Ali Brik, called on supporters to march on the palace and overthrow the government, but there was no sign such a march had begun. Interior Minister Ahmed al-Mayssari said the government had so far practiced restraint to maintain stability in Aden but was "fully

ready" to combat any actions targeting the state's institutions.

"We call on the Yemeni people not to respond to such calls as they only aim for war and only serve the Houthis," he said. The United Nations' special envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, expressed concern about the flare-up in Aden. "I am alarmed by the military escalations in Aden today, including reports of clashes in the vicinity of the Presidential Palace. I am also deeply concerned by the recent rhetoric encouraging violence against Yemeni institutions," he tweeted.

A senior United Arab Emirates (UAE) official, Anwar Gargash, called for calm after the violence, which he described on Twitter as worrying. He said escalation between the two sides was not acceptable after attacks claimed by Islamic State and Al-Qaeda in southern Yemen in recent days. The UAE supports the anti-Houthi coalition but also backs the southern separatists. The Saudi ambassador to Yemen said the only beneficiary of the violence was the Houthis.

President away

The southern port city of Aden is the temporary home of Hadi's government, though he himself is in Saudi Arabia and the presidential palace is largely empty apart from soldiers. Wednesday's fracas came after the STC on Tuesday alleged that an Islamist party that is an important ally of Hadi was complicit in last week's killing of the Security Belt soldiers.

Separatist commander Brigadier General Muneer Al-Yafee was among those who died in the missile attack on the parade. "The people of the south are all on the street. This is a movement



ADEN: Fighters from the separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) drive their pick up in Aden yesterday. — AFP

by the people that cannot be stopped, except with the government's downfall," said one mourner, Abdelhakim Tabaza.

Warplanes were seen on Wednesday flying over Aden, where rivalries have brought violence in the past too. In January 2018, southern forces took control after two days of fighting, confining Hadi's government to the

presidential palace. After accusing the Islamist party Islah of involvement in yesterday's missile attack, the STC's Brik had on Tuesday said: "Do not blame our people if they take to the streets to demand the removal of this government from southern lands." Islah is tolerated by Saudi Arabia but viewed with suspicion by the UAE. — Reuters

Lebanon newspaper goes black to raise alarm over crisis

BEIRUT: A prominent Lebanese daily yesterday appeared on newsstands with a black front page in the second such protest by a local paper in less than a year over the country's lingering political crisis. "Lebanon," read the cover of The Daily Star, the country's only English-language newspaper. On 10 blank pages inside, it listed a string of woes including "government deadlock", "pollution" "unemployment", "illegal weapons" and "public debt".

"Wake up before it's too late!" it concluded on its back page, with the issue's single picture of a cedar, the country's national emblem. The newspaper's Lebanon and online editor Joseph Habboush said the move sought to convey alarm to the ruling class. "We wanted to deliver a warning to the politicians and officials that the situation has reached an alarming level," he said.

In October last year, the country's oldest newspaper An-Nahar printed an entirely blank issue to protest a political deadlock

over forming a cabinet. The government was formed in January after an eight-month hiatus, but the cabinet has now not met for over a month since a shootout killed a minister's two bodyguards.

In a rare comment, the US embassy on Wednesday warned against any inflammation of tensions over the incident in Qabr El-Shamoun on June 30.

"The US has conveyed in clear terms to Lebanese authorities our expectation that they will handle this matter in a way that achieves justice without politically motivated inflammation of sectarian or communal tensions," it said. Growth in Lebanon has plummeted in the wake of endless political deadlocks in recent years, compounded by the 2011 breakout of civil war in neighboring Syria. The country hosts 1.5 million Syrians who have fled the conflict, often blamed in Lebanon for putting pressure on an already struggling economy. — AFP

Damascus rejects Turkey-US plan

DAMASCUS: Damascus said yesterday it strongly rejects a proposed US-Turkish buffer zone for northern Syria, blaming the "aggressive" project on Syria's Kurds, who gave the proposal a guarded welcome. Turkish and US officials agreed on Wednesday to establish a joint operations centre to oversee the creation of a safe zone to manage tensions between Ankara and US-backed Kurdish forces in Syria. No details were provided on the size or nature of the safe zone, but the deal appeared to provide some breathing room after Turkey had threatened an imminent attack on the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), which control a large swathe of northern Syria.

"Syria categorically and clearly rejects the agreement between the American and Turkish occupiers on the establishment of a so-called safe zone" in northern Syria, a foreign ministry source told state news agency SANA. "Syria's Kurds who have accepted to become a tool in this aggressive US-Turkish project bear a historical responsibility," the source added, urging Kurdish groups to return to the fold.

Turkey has already carried out two cross-border offensives into Syria in 2016 and 2018, the second of which saw it and allied Syrian rebels overrun the Kurdish enclave of Afrin in the northwest. The deployment of Turkish troops and their proxies in Afrin has drawn accusations of a Turkish military occupation. Damascus said the planned buffer zone further east serves "Turkey's expansionist ambitions," accusing both Ankara and Washington of violating its sovereignty.

A senior Syrian Kurdish official gave the Turkish-US agreement a guarded welcome. "This deal may mark the start of a new approach but we still need more details," Aldar Khalil said yesterday. "We will evaluate the agreement based on details and facts, not headlines." The deal describes the planned safe zone as a "peace corridor" that can "ensure that our Syrian brothers will be able to return to their country".

Turkey has the highest number of Syrian refugees in the world at more than 3.6 million, and has faced increasing pressure domestically to speed up repatriations to peaceful parts of Syria. While the Kurds have largely stayed out of the conflict between various rebel groups and the Damascus government, they have taken advantage of the war to set up an autonomous region in the northeast. — AFP

International

Gazans 'too poor' to afford sheep for Eid

Under blockade, Israel cash row rock Gazans

GAZA: Ali usually marks the Muslim holiday of Eid Al-Adha with his family in the Gaza Strip by sacrificing a sheep, a customary annual ritual for those who can spare the cost. But this year the 49-year-old police officer says he cannot afford to buy an animal for the "feast of the sacrifice" holiday, which begins next week, after the Palestinian Authority halved his salary five months ago.

"I have slaughtered a sheep every year ... but this year there is no way I can. I am ashamed," said the father of five, who declined to give his last name. Gaza has suffered under years of blockade by Israel and Egypt, which cite security concerns for restrictions the World Bank says have severely damaged its economy. Nearly 80 percent of the enclave's 2 million residents rely on some form of aid and over half are unemployed.

Ali said that in March, the PA cut his monthly salary in half, leaving him with of 1,500 shekels (\$431). A sheep costs around \$500. The PA, which exercises limited self-rule in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, still has some 25,000 Gazan civil servants on payroll despite a decade-long feud with rival Hamas which has left the Islamist group in control of the coastal territory.

Many PA employees across Gaza and the West Bank had their salaries slashed in March amid a dispute with Israel over payments it

makes to the families of Palestinians in Israeli jails. Israel says the payments fan Palestinian violence, and in February it removed the portion the PA designates for prisoners' families from taxes it transfers monthly to the body under interim peace accords.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has refused to accept partial transfers, saying the PA is entitled to the entire sum of around 700 million (\$197 million) shekels, over half its budget. The mounting fiscal pressures have squeezed the Palestinians' \$13 billion economy. The cuts have put a particular strain on Gaza, where civil servants had already been hit by earlier salary cuts Abbas imposed in 2017 to isolate Hamas.

"I used to offer a sacrifice every year but this year there is no money," said Hassan An-Najjar, an unemployed father of six. He says the cost of a sheep would run out the \$500 in welfare he receives quarterly from the PA. "I am looking for someone who can sell me a sheep and divide the cost into three or four payments," An-Najjar, 58, said. The median monthly wage in the Strip is around \$330, according to the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute.

The territory's livestock breeders and farmers say they are desperate for customers ahead of the Islamic holiday, which commemorates God's testing of Abraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice his son. "This year I brought only 40



GAZA: A Palestinian child holds a pumpkin while sitting next to another on a pile of other pumpkins at a home in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip. — AFP

cows and so far I haven't even sold half of them," said Gaza farmer Mohammad Al-Balawi. He says he normally sells 500 each year to people who

may also split the animal's 9,000 (\$2,600) shekel price. "I have not seen a year as bad as this in my life," he said. — Reuters

Manhunt after Israeli off-duty soldier killed

MIGDAL OZ: An off-duty Israeli soldier was found dead with stab wounds near a Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank yesterday in what Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called a "terrorist" attack, sparking a manhunt. Details were still emerging of the killing, but it risked raising Israeli-Palestinian tensions weeks ahead of September 17 Israeli polls. It occurred between Bethlehem and the flashpoint city of Hebron in the West Bank.

"Today in the early morning hours, a soldier's body was found with stabbing marks on it adjacent to a (Jewish) community north of Hebron," the Israeli army said in a statement. It later described it as a "terror attack" and identified the man killed as Dvir Sorek, 19. An army spokeswoman said he was not in uniform at the time. Troops, police and the Shin Bet intelligence agency were searching the area, notably the nearby Palestinian town of Bejj Fajjar.

The army said it had sent reinforcements to the West Bank. Netanyahu called it "a serious stabbing attack." "Security forces are now in pursuit to capture the lowly terrorist and settle accounts with him," he said in a statement. Later in a visit to the Israeli settlement of Beit El near Ramallah in the West Bank, Netanyahu again spoke of the attack and pledged more settlement building. The newly drafted soldier was a student

at a yeshiva—or Jewish seminary—in the settlement of Migdal Oz, near where the body was found.

He was in a program that combined military service with religious study, the seminary head told Israeli public radio. "The soldier left for Jerusalem during the afternoon to buy a gift for his teachers," rabbi Shlomo Wilk said. "He was in contact half an hour before he was murdered. He was on the bus to the yeshiva. "About 100 meters from the bus stop, before he entered the settlement, he was murdered." Israeli police were blocking access to the area around where the body was found yesterday and medics were at the scene, an AFP correspondent reported. The body appeared to have been found around 30 to 40 meters outside the gate of the settlement. In Beit Fajjar, dozens of Israeli security personnel arrived in around 20 vehicles and were going house-to-house while seizing security camera footage, an AFP correspondent reported. Low-level clashes broke out between residents and the Israeli forces. Palestinian attacks against Israeli security forces and settlers occur sporadically in the West Bank, occupied by Israel since the Six-Day War of 1967.

Such attacks, and the Israeli arrest raids that follow, often stoke tensions. Yesterday's incident came at a sensitive time, with Israel heading towards a general election on September 17. It also occurred just ahead of the Muslim Eid al-Adha holiday. Netanyahu is widely seen as wanting to avoid a major flare-up in either the West Bank or the Gaza Strip before the election, but he is likely to face political pressure to act firmly. His main challenger, ex-armed forces chief Benny Gantz of the centrist Blue and White Alliance, spoke in stark terms. — AFP

Too many modern slaves left in limbo

LONDON: Britain must improve its handling of thousands of suspected modern slaves whose lives are "on hold" as they wait to learn if they will be recognized as victims and granted extra support, the country's new independent anti-slavery commissioner said. A record 7,000 possible slavery victims were identified last year - up a third on 2017 - yet worsening delays in the system that judges their cases are concerning, said Sara Thornton, who took up the post in May after the inaugural tsar quit last year.

People who say they have been enslaved enter the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and access care, from housing and healthcare to legal aid, while the government considers their claim. The process can take from six weeks to several years. As of March this year, more than 2,200 people had been waiting at least a year for a decision, the latest official data shows. If positive, this leads to additional support and can increase the likelihood of being allowed to remain in Britain.

"We want to give people confidence in the system - to say to them, 'we'll treat you as a victim and give you support'," Thornton, formerly head of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), told the Thomson Reuters

Foundation in an interview. "(But) decisions are taking longer, there are more people in the system ... it is not good for survivors. Lives are on hold, there is a sense of uncertainty. It is hugely unsettling if you are trying to do therapeutic work and counseling with someone."

The Home Office (interior ministry) in 2017 announced a raft of reforms to the NRM, from extra shelter and support to an overhaul of decision-making and review processes. Yet a 45-day limit of "move-on support" for recognized victims was challenged in court last month, leading the Home Office to promise unlimited help based on individual needs. "The test will be how effectively the changes are implemented," Thornton said. "For survivors, what matters is that there is sound decision-making, and that is timely."

Britain is seen as a world leader in the anti-slavery drive, but is considering the findings of a government-ordered review of its landmark 2015 Modern Slavery Act amid criticism it has not been used fully to tackle the crime and support survivors. A requirement for big companies to outline their anti-slavery efforts has been questioned due to a lack of penalties, and Thornton called for firms who flout the law to face action such as fines, court summons and director disqualifications.

"Civil sanctions is something we need to move towards," Thornton said. "If you are sitting on the board of a big company and don't get GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) right, or health and safety right, then there are big sanctions." — Reuters

International

UN flags need to cut meat to curb global warming impact

Climate change will exacerbate food security risks

LONDON: Global meat consumption must fall to curb global warming, reduce growing strains on land and water and improve food security, health and biodiversity, a United Nations report on the effects of climate change concluded. Although the report stopped short of explicitly advocating going meat free, it called for big changes to farming and eating habits to limit the impact of population growth and changing consumption patterns on stretched land and water resources.

Plant-based foods and sustainable animal-sourced food could free up several million square kilometers of land by 2050 and cut 0.7-8.0 gigatons a year of carbon dioxide equivalent, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said. "There are certain kinds of diets that have a lower carbon footprint and put less pressure on land," Jim Skea, professor at London's Imperial College, said on Thursday.

The IPCC met this week in Geneva, Switzerland to finalize its report which should help to guide governments meeting this year in Chile on ways to implement the 2015 Paris Agreement. "The IPCC does not recommend people's diets ... Dietary choices are very often shaped or influenced by local production practices and cultural habits," Skea, who is one of the report's authors, told reporters in Geneva.

Land can be both a source and sink of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas blamed for global warming, and better land management can help to tackle climate change, the IPCC said. But it is not the only solution and cutting emissions

from all sectors is essential to quickly curtail global warming. "The window for making these changes is closing fast. If there is further delay in reducing emissions, we will miss the opportunity to successfully manage the climate change transition in the land sector," it said.

Since the pre-industrial era, land surface air temperature has risen by 1.53 degrees Celsius, twice as much as the global average temperature (0.87C), causing more heatwaves, droughts and heavy rain, as well as land degradation and desertification. Human use directly affects more than 70% of the global, ice-free land surface and agriculture accounts for 70% of freshwater use, the IPCC added in the report.

Agriculture, forestry and other land use activities accounted for 23% of total net man-made greenhouse gas emissions during 2007-2016. When pre- and post-production activity in the food system are included, that rises to up to 37%. Last year the IPCC's first special report warned that keeping the Earth's temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit), rather than the 2C target agreed under the Paris accord, required rapid change across society.

Food security

The IPCC warned of more disruption to global food chains as extreme weather becomes more frequent due to climate change and said environmental costs should be factored into food. It projects a median increase of 7.6% in cereal prices by 2050, meaning higher food prices and an in-

creased risk of hunger. While an estimated 821 million people are undernourished, changing consumption habits have already contributed to about 2 billion adults being overweight or obese. Per capita supply of vegetable oils and meat has more than doubled based on data since 1961 but 25-30% of total food produced is still lost or wasted. Yields of crops such as maize and wheat have declined in some regions, while those of maize, wheat and sugar beets have increased in others in recent

Putin the liberal

The picture was very different when Putin won his first presidential election following Yeltsin's early resignation on New Year's Eve, 2000. "Russia, despite its poverty and problems with criminality, was still a democratic, liberal country," said prominent journalist Nikolai Svanidze, who often interviewed Putin at the start of his time in the Kremlin.

"After 20 years in power, he's not limited in any way - he's practically a sultan," Svanidze said. Political analyst Konstantin Kalachev said Putin started out as a liberal who was ready to work with the West but over time took a more conservative and hostile stance. "Until the mid-2000s there was a political life in the country and elections were competitive," Kalachev said. After the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, which the Kremlin believed was backed by foreign governments to reduce Russia's influence in its Soviet-era satellite, Putin's attitude changed. The West's dismissive attitude towards Russia as well as its interventions in Iraq, Libya and elsewhere further disillusioned Putin, Kalachev said. "I believe his disappointment... was the trigger in this evolution" towards a harder line, the analyst said. — AFP



GENEVA: Greenpeace activists hold a banner reading 'less meat : less heat, climate action now', during a protest prior to the publication by The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of a special report on climate change and land yesterday. — AFP

creased risk of hunger. While an estimated 821 million people are undernourished, changing consumption habits have already contributed to about 2 billion adults being overweight or obese. Per capita supply of vegetable oils and meat has more than doubled based on data since 1961 but 25-30% of total food produced is still lost or wasted. Yields of crops such as maize and wheat have declined in some regions, while those of maize, wheat and sugar beets have increased in others in recent

decades. While forests can soak up heat-trapping gases from the atmosphere, desertification and deforestation can amplify warming due to the loss of vegetation cover and soil erosion. Measures to cut emissions, such as the production of biofuels, biochar - made from biomass - as well as planting trees, will also increase demand for land conversion. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation could result in a reduction of 0.4-5.8 gigatons of CO2 equivalent, the report said. — AFP

From reformer to hardliner: Putin's 20 years on the global stage

MOSCOW: Twenty years ago, Russian president Boris Yeltsin appointed his fourth prime minister in less than 18 months: Vladimir Putin, then a relatively unknown security services chief with scant experience of politics. The departing Yeltsin was casting around for a successor and few could have predicted that two decades later Putin would still be ruling Russia, having taken on a dominant role in world affairs.

But the anniversary comes at a time of uncertainty in the leader's reign. Putin's approval ratings remain at a level most Western leaders would envy but they have taken a hit from a stalling economy and declining living standards. A protest movement in Moscow has meanwhile seen thousands arrested in recent weeks - the largest crackdown since a wave of demonstrations against Putin returning to the Kremlin in 2012 after another spell as prime minister.

The 66-year-old is meanwhile facing a succession drama of his own. This is his last term in office according to the Russian constitution

Congo's bread basket struggles to recover from conflict

MINDOULI: "The trains are running again. We have peace," says Didier, the station master at Mindouli, in the Republic of Congo's southern region of Pool. But a glance at the weeds growing on the line connecting the capital Brazzaville and the port city of Pointe-Noire shows that traffic - to put it gently - is not huge. Outside the station, a war-battered relic of French colonial times, a few plucky hawkers have set up stalls in the hope of snaring a little cash.

More than two years after a brutal civil conflict in Pool, the second in 20 years, was settled, Congo's key agricultural region remains deeply depressed. The so-called Pool War erupted in April 2016, pitting the forces of President Denis Sassou Nguesso against the troops of Frederic Bintsamou, a Protestant clergyman and leader of a rebel group called the Ninjas. A ceasefire ended the con-

flict in December 2017 - but it took until November 2018 for traffic to resume on the Congo-Ocean Railway.

Even today, there are no passenger trains and a new Chinese-built highway siphons off much of the meager trade. "On average, we have five trains a day," says Didier. "Before, we used to have three times as many." The track is old, the rolling stock decrepit and out of the first seven months of this year, workers went unpaid for four, employees say. The state's coffers are empty. The government, run by Sassou Nguesso for 35 years, has debts of \$9.5 billion, nearly a third of which is owed to state enterprises and private firms. In July, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave Congo a three-year loan of nearly \$450 million after revenues from oil, the country's main currency earner, crashed. Congo, with a population of 4.6 million, has a poverty rate of 43 percent, according to the UN Development Program (UNDP). The country ranks a lowly 135th out of 188 nations rated in terms of human development, and life expectancy is a mere 62.9 years, compared to 80.9 years in the EU.

The name of the Pool department derives from Stanley Pool, which the 19th-century European colonialist Henry Stanley named after himself. It comes from a lake-like broadening of the mighty Congo River in its lower reaches. — AFP

International

S Africa's Ramaphosa wins court case against anti-graft watchdog

Public Protector loses third case in as many weeks

JOHANNESBURG: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa won a court case against the anti-corruption watchdog yesterday over a matter concerning ally Pravin Gordhan, ahead of a fresh battle over findings against the president himself. A high court judge found that Ramaphosa had acted reasonably in not immediately disciplining Gordhan, the public enterprises minister, over a decision regarding the retirement of a tax official in 2010. Yesterday's ruling was the third high-profile court defeat for Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane in as many weeks, potentially undermining the credibility of her investigations, including one into Ramaphosa.

Ramaphosa secured an "interdict" from the court, meaning he does not have to implement disciplinary action against Gordhan while Gordhan appeals against the finding by Mkhwebane. By targeting Ramaphosa and Gordhan, the president's supporters say, Mkhwebane is acting as a proxy for a faction in the ruling African National Congress party that is aligned with former president Jacob Zuma and opposes Ramaphosa's agenda. Mkhwebane de-

nies playing politics, saying she is simply holding senior officials to account.

Last week another ruling also spared Gordhan from disciplinary action while he appeals a different finding against him by Mkhwebane. Yesterday the judge criticized Mkhwebane for again pushing for Gordhan to be disciplined before his appeal against the public protector's findings could be heard. "It is mind-boggling why, in this matter, the public protector did not even consent to at least ... have the remedial action stayed, pending finalisation of the review application," judge Letty Molopa-Sethosa said in delivering her ruling.

The Public Protector's Head of Legal, Alfred Mhlongo, said the watchdog would consider the ruling and its options. "The President of the Republic of South Africa owes an indispensable constitutional obligation to not only support but to also protect the independence, the dignity and the integrity of the Office of the Public Protector," he told state broadcaster SABC. Mkhwebane found in a separate investigation that Ramaphosa deliberately

misled parliament over a 2017 donation to his campaign to lead the governing African National Congress party.

Ramaphosa has said he will urgently challenge the finding, which he says is flawed. But it is still a headache for a president who has staked his reputation on cleaning up deep-rooted corruption and reviving Africa's most developed economy. The public protector has authority enshrined in the constitution to investigate alleged wrongdoing by public officials and demand remedial action, and her binding rulings can have far-reaching consequences.

Calls for Mkhwebane's removal—which can only be done by parliament—have gained momentum after the country's top court ruled last month that her investigation methods were flawed and that she had been dishonest during litigation. A South African parliamentary committee will discuss a request to look into Mkhwebane's fitness to hold office, probably in early September. Police said on Wednesday they were investigating allegations against Mkhwebane of perjury and defeating the ends of justice. — Reuters

Myanmar floods force thousands from homes

SHWEGYIN: Raging floods across Myanmar have forced tens of thousands of people from their homes in recent weeks, officials said yesterday, as monsoon rains pummel the nation. Aerial images from Shwegyin township in Bago region showed how the area had become a vast lake of water. Only the rooftops could be seen of many homes lining the Sittaung river.

Emergency services have been helping bring people to dry ground, many seeking shelter in local monasteries. Others waded

through waist-deep floodwaters or rowed on wooden boats with pets and any belongings they could take with them. Than Aye, 42, who has diabetes and is partially-sighted, struggled to escape the deluge. "I could not do anything when the flooding started but then the fire service came to rescue me by boat," he told AFP from the safety of the monastery that has been his home for the last five days.

The most severe flooding is currently in eastern Bago region and Mon and Karen states, according to the social welfare ministry. "There are currently over 30,000 people (across the country) displaced by floods," said director general of disaster management Ko Ko Naing. UN's Office for Coordinated Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates around 89,000 people have been displaced in recent weeks, although many have since been able to return home. — AFP

Child labor cartoon? Brazil turns to TV to shed light on slavery

RIO DE JANEIRO: From a cartoon about child workers to an HBO mini series, Brazil is turning to television and social media to shed light on modern slavery and change attitudes through entertainment. Prosecutors and judges are spending funds - seized from those who profit from modern slavery - on documentaries and movies in a drive to spark debate, engage with more people and bring to life the reality of slave labor in Brazil.

"Public opinion is fundamental," said prosecutor Luiz Carlos Fabre, who brokered a deal between a production company and the Labor Prosecutor's Office to part fund a series about slave labor for a major regional broadcaster, HBO Latin America. "These issues need to be in the spotlight always," said Fabre, whose office provided about R\$200,000 (\$53,100) for the upcoming series, which has yet to be given a release date.

With more than 40 million people enslaved worldwide, the entertainment industry has made a host of documentaries and films that explore life as a modern slave. But it is unorthodox for a government to commission content and detractors question the value of funding entertainment to educate. Under Brazilian law, civil fines for labor violations and court convictions relating to public issues should be awarded to the victims or spent on helping the affected community. Prosecutors and judges decide how to spend the funds, and have committed tens of thousands of dollars in recent years to anti-slavery screenplays.

A short cartoon on the dangers of child labor was screened last month at a fair in Juina, a small city in Mato Grosso state - a region where prosecutors say child workers are not seen as a problem by the public. It was also shared across social media. "We heard people say: better (for a child) to be working, than on the streets doing nothing," said prosecutor Ludmila Pereira Araujo, so she

used R\$92,000 (\$23,256) in labor fines to produce the cartoon, adapted from a comic book series. "We made it to try and reach younger people that use social media heavily," Araujo said.

Money no object

Money gained through fines and court convictions has been used by prosecutors and judges to build hospital wings and immigrant centers, buy equipment for labor inspectors, and fund social enterprises that aim to do business and do good.

Yet a lack of spending guidelines worries some civil servants. Jonatas Andrade, a judge with more than a decade of experience working in the state of Para, said he felt more and more uneasy as the stash of money he managed kept growing. "It would be pretentious on my part ... to presume to know where to best spend it," said Andrade, who consults with state officials and anti-slavery campaigners on how to use the money.

In 2015, he allocated R\$1 million (\$252,786) to fund the film "Pureza" - a real-life account of anti-slavery activist Pureza Lopes, who travelled Brazil in search of her son after learning that he had been enslaved on a farm in the rainforest. The movie will be shown at international film festivals and in Brazilian cinemas over the next two years, according to Andrade, who said he hoped it would raise awareness.

In Brazil - whose government has rescued more than 53,000 people in slave-like conditions since 1995 - slavery is defined as forced labor, and also includes debt bondage, degrading work conditions and long hours that pose a health risk to workers. President Jair Bolsonaro, who took office on a populist campaign targeting the opposition's corruption and economic ineptitude, last month criticized Brazil's labor laws and said the definition of slave labour "terrorized" bosses.

Screenplays with a message can be ineffectual without good planning and appropriate screenings, be it in schools, labor unions or regions rife with slavery, said Fred Lucio of ESPM Social, a consultancy promoting corporate social responsibility. Otherwise, the film might win awards but touch nobody. "Many times the government gives money...and has no further involvement," said Lucio. "Then it's just throwing public funds to waste." — Reuters



SHWEGYIN, Myanmar: Houses submerged in floodwaters are seen in Shwegyin township, Bago Region yesterday. —AFP

International

On-board toys, pregnancy tests await migrant mothers-to-be

MSF sets up a clinic on the bridge of the Ocean Viking

ON BOARD THE OCEAN VIKING: The Ocean Viking is bound for the Libyan coast, and beside stocks of medicine and pregnancy kits, on-board midwife Marina is busy painting a turtle on the ship's migrant shelter. As well as preparing to treat the exhausted, dehydrated Africans the ship hopes to rescue, experience has taught her that she must be ready to welcome the children - and any babies that may be born on board.

With the Italian government refusing to let migrants land on its shores unless other EU countries help take them in, the rescuers are preparing for a long wait before disembarking. "We know that we may have to keep patients on board for a while. It's a new challenge", says Stephanie, a German nurse on board. There is also a doctor, another nurse and the midwife. They asked not to be identified by their full names for fear of prosecution by authorities.

The Ocean Viking mission is jointly operated by Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and the migrant aid charity SOS Mediterranee. Those two groups also operated the Aquarius, a rescue ship that made headlines last year when it spent days at sea after Italy and Malta refused to let it dock. Among the migrants pulled from the water by teams on the Aquarius in its three years of rescue missions were hundreds of pregnant women.

Born in a storm

MSF has set up a clinic on the bridge of the Ocean Viking. The white container has an emergency room, a separate room with three sleeping berths and a delivery room with blue bedsheets. Generally, pregnant women who are nearing

their delivery date are entitled to a medical evacuation - even in Italy, where authorities under far-right interior minister Matteo Salvini have turned away some migrant rescue boats.

In recent years, at least 35 babies have been born on military or humanitarian relief vessels in the Mediterranean, according to an AFP count. Six of them were born to mothers rescued by the Aquarius, the teams on the mission say. In May, 2016, Desire Alex was the first baby born on the ship. The baby boy was named after the ship's captain. Five others followed, their first names in several cases reflecting the incredulous relief of their mothers: Newman, Favor, Mercy, Christ and Miracle. Christ's mother gave birth on the open sea in a boat filled with men. When she climbed on board the Aquarius, her baby was still attached to her by the umbilical cord.

Choppy waters 'favor contractions'

Marina was one of the medics who took care of Favor on a stormy night in December 2016. The baby's mother, a Nigerian woman who lost her husband in Libya, had begged the smugglers to let her get on the boat - as a "favor".

"Coming to see her around 4:00 am, I found her standing up holding her stomach... We had 150 women on board," Marina said. "I ask for a medical evacuation... (it was) impossible."

Favour was born the next day and in perfect health, the midwife says. She shows a photo on her phone of the child - now a toddler, living in Italy. Marina says she has observed that "the movements of the boat, especially in a storm, favor contractions" in childbirth. Another trigger

Security officers beaten

BISHKEK: Kyrgyz special forces yesterday launched a fresh raid to capture the former president, an official said, a day after an attempt to storm his compound left one officer dead and a police chief in a critical condition. Central Asian Kyrgyzstan, which has seen two revolutions in less than two decades, is on the brink of full-blown political crisis amid a standoff between ex-leader Almazbek Atambayev and his protegee-turned-foe President Sooronbai Jeenbekov.

On Wednesday the confrontation escalated when the security service announced an operation to seize Atambayev from his compound outside Bishkek, capital of the Muslim-majority nation of six million people. Now "a second raid has just begun," lawmaker Irina Karamushkina, an ally of Atambayev's in contact with his compound, told AFP by telephone yesterday. Around a thousand police and special forces officers were taking part, while the same number of supporters of Atambayev were defending the residence, she said. Atambayev has ignored police summonses for questioning on corruption charges that supporters say are politically motivated.

He announced a rally for later on, in the same area of the capital where his supporters gathered at the start of a popular uprising in 2010. Kyrgyzstan's people "will never live on their knees, will not be collective farm sheep, will not be slaves of the ruling clan," he said in a broadcast on the television channel he owns. Atambayev also pledged to release police special forces officers held by his supporters following a night of clashes at his residence in the village of Koi-Tash.

An AFP correspondent saw police and hundreds of Atambayev supporters hurl stones at each other late Wednesday in Koi-Tash, where internet and mobile networks appeared to have been cut by authorities. The correspondent saw some supporters forcibly disarm and beat special forces officers whom they then took hostage. The health ministry said a special forces officer had died from a gunshot wound and the head of the Chui province police department was in a critical condition after being concussed during the clashes. The ministry said 52 people had been injured in the clashes, around half of them law enforcement officers. — AFP



AT SEA: Members of the French NGOs SOS Mediterranee and Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) new boat Ocean Viking put a 'rhib' (an inflatable dinghy) into the water as part of a team exercise to get ready for a rescue situation at sea, on their way to the coasts of Libya. — AFP

for labor, she says, could be the relaxation that comes from the relief the mothers feel once they board a rescue boat.

The Aquarius rescued nearly 4,700 women in nearly three years of operations. Most of them had suffered violence and sexual abuse on their journey. In 2016, 4.4 percent of the women rescued by the boat were pregnant. By 2018 that

number increased to 10 percent. Marina helps all the women who come to her and says her assistance is vital for those who have been raped. "If you are pregnant, if you think you are pregnant, come and see me. It will remain confidential", she says. Women who ask for pregnancy tests are given them but some of those rescued do not even know they are pregnant. — AFP

Kyrgyzstan's special forces launch fresh raid for ex-president

BISHKEK: Kyrgyz special forces yesterday launched a fresh raid to capture the former president, an official said, a day after an attempt to storm his compound left one officer dead and a police chief in a critical condition. Central Asian Kyrgyzstan, which has seen two revolutions in less than two decades, is on the brink of full-blown political crisis amid a standoff between ex-leader Almazbek Atambayev and his protegee-turned-foe President Sooronbai Jeenbekov.

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US immigration raids sweep up hundreds

MIAMI: US officials said that some 680 undocumented migrants were detained in a major series of raids Wednesday at food processing plants in the southeastern United States, part of President Donald Trump's announced crackdown on illegal immigration. Most of those detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents were Hispanic migrants, officials said.

TV footage showed lines of arrested migrants heading to buses parked outside the processing plants with their hands behind their backs under the watchful eyes of ICE agents. Those who were not detained, including some children, stood by waving at their friends and relatives. Several wiped away tears as they gave their farewells. "Special agents executed administrative and criminal search warrants resulting in the detention of approximately 680 illegal aliens,"

said Mike Hurst, US Attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi.

"They have to follow our laws, they have to abide by our rules, they have to come here legally or they shouldn't come here at all," Hurst said at a news conference. The US attorney did not spare the employers. "To those who use illegal aliens for competitive advantage or to make a quick buck, we have something to say to you: If we find that you have violated federal criminal law, we're coming after you," he said.

Matthew Albence, the interim ICE head, said the raids were the result of a year-long investigation. He said that the children of detained parents will be sent to live with relatives or other families. Some of the migrants will be released with electronic ankle monitors as they await a court hearing. ICE agents raided plants in the towns of Morton, Carthage, Canton, Pelahatchie, Sebastopol and Bay Springs, all in the state of Mississippi, officials said. "After speaking with the agents, I now know that they are identifying illegal immigrants, versus those who are legal, and rounding them up, putting them in buses and carrying them away," Canton Mayor William Truly told the local ABC News television affiliate. — AFP

International

Pakistan bans films, halts train service to India over Kashmir

Outrage grows over withdrawal of Kashmir's special status

SRINAGAR: Pakistan halted its main train service to India yesterday and banned Indian films as it kept up the diplomatic pressure on New Delhi for revoking the special status of Kashmir, the region at the heart of 70 years of hostility between them. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government this week withdrew Muslim majority Jammu and Kashmir's right to frame its own laws and allowed people from outside the region to buy property there in a bid to tighten its grip over the contested region.

Kashmir remained under a communications blackout yesterday with mobile networks and internet services suspended and at least 300 politicians and separatists in detention to prevent protests, according to police, media and political leaders. Kashmir's leaders have warned of a backlash and Pakistan, which also lays claims to the territory, vowed to fight for the rights of people living there.

"Pakistan is looking at political, diplomatic and legal options," foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told a news conference in Islamabad, though he ruled out a new military conflict. "We're not looking at the military option. We're not," he said. The nuclear rivals have twice gone to war over Kashmir and fought an aerial duel in February.

India said changing the status of Kashmir was an internal affair and aimed at developing the region. It urged Pakistan to reconsider its decision to downgrade diplomatic ties, striking a conciliatory tone. "The Government of India regrets the steps announced by Pakistan yesterday and would urge that country to review them so that normal channels for diplomatic communications are preserved," the foreign ministry said. Islam-

abad said on Wednesday it would expel India's ambassador to Pakistan and its envoy, who was to start his assignment soon, would not move to New Delhi.

Modi's Hindu nationalist led government, which has long campaigned for an end to Kashmir's special status, said it would split the state into two federal territories that the region's leaders labeled a further humiliation. Thousands of paramilitary police have been deployed in Kashmir's largest city, Srinagar, schools shut and roads and neighborhoods barricaded. There have been sporadic protests, two police officers said, speaking on condition of anonymity. At least 13 people have been injured in stone-throwing protests across the city since Tuesday night, one officer said.

Srinagar's old quarter was locked down on Wednesday evening, with policemen in riot gear deployed every few meters, and barbed-wire checkpoints every few hundred meters. Near the Jama Masjid, which has long been the centre of protests in Srinagar, bricks and rocks from recent stone pelling incidents were strewn in at least three locations. A witness said that there had also been stone-throwing in the Bemina area in northwest Srinagar, where some roads had been blocked by poles and boulders. "There is a lot of anger among the people," one of the police officials said.

Kashmiris see Modi's decision to withdraw the special status as a breach of trust and opening the way to flooding their region with people from the rest of India, eventually altering the demographics of the territory. Already tens of thousands of people have died in the armed revolt to secede from India that

viction so I am walking out of this house," announced Bilawal Bhutto, chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party, during an address to parliament.

Sharif's arrest in the eastern city of Lahore comes just a day after authorities took former finance minister and Sharif family loyalist Miftah Ismail into custody on graft charges. Last month, former prime minister Shadhid Khaqan Abbasi and former president Asif Ali Zardari were also arrested. Corruption is widely entrenched in Pakistan, with politicians regularly accused of misusing or stealing public funds and whisking the money out of the country.

Prime Minister Imran Khan was elected after running a fiery campaign against graft, but has also been accused of persecuting his political adversaries rather than launching wide-ranging reforms. Since taking office, Khan has struggled to stabilize Pakistan's sinking economy beset by soaring inflation, a depreciating rupee, and ballooning deficits. He now faces the difficult task of confronting arch-rival India, after Delhi unilaterally revoked Kashmir's special status earlier this week. — AFP



KARACHI: Women supporters of the Pakistani political and Islamic party Jammāt-e-Islami (JI) raise their hands during an anti-Indian protest rally in Karachi yesterday. — AFP

erupted in 1989 and has ebbed and flowed since then. Two leaders from the National Conference, a major regional party, said at least 100 politicians - including former state ministers and legislators - had been detained. They did not want to be named because of the sensitivity of the information.

Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, chairman of the Hurriyat Conference, an umbrella group of non-violent separatists, has been detained at his home, a statement from his office said. Pakistani Nobel Peace Prize winner, Malala Yousafzai, called for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Kashmir. "Whatever disagreements we may have, we must always defend human rights, prioritize the safety of children and women and focus on peacefully resolve the seven-decade-old conflict in Kashmir," she said on Twitter. — Reuters

Pakistan ex-PM's daughter arrested amid crackdown

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani anti-corruption officials arrested opposition leader and daughter of former Pakistani prime minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif yesterday, one of the most high-profile arrests in a crackdown on alleged graft. Sharif is the latest member of her family to be targeted under the government of Imran Khan, who swept to victory last year.

Her father Nawaz Sharif, who served as prime minister three times, was sentenced in 2018 to seven years in jail for corruption. Her uncle, former Punjab chief minister Shahbaz Sharif, has also faced investigation, along with other relatives. Her detention sparked a walk out by opposition legislators at the country's parliament yesterday. "Today in this new Pakistan, Miss Maryam Nawaz has been arrested without any con-

Indian men see new policy as chance to marry Kashmiris

NEW DELHI: Women's rights advocates have slammed a torrent of online posts by men from across India who expressed enthusiasm about marrying women from Kashmir after the sudden removal of special rights in the disputed region made it more appealing to do so. Until this week, residents of Jammu and Kashmir, whose population is majority Muslim, had exclusive rights to property and state government jobs, among other privileges, though women marrying non-residents stood to lose those benefits. But the constitutional changes put residents and people from elsewhere in India on equal legal footing.

Many women and women's rights activists condemned the online comments that welcomed the changes for making it easier to marry Kashmiris. "It's deeply sexist," said Rituparna Chatterjee, an independent journalist and activist who runs the Twitter handle @indiametoo handle that spotlights the stories of survivors of sexual ha-

assment. "Women's bodies have been battlegrounds for men for centuries. The latest comments on Kashmiri women are only testimony to this fact."

Supporters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata party had flooded social media with jubilant posts after the change. And many men among them took to Twitter and the video platform Tiktok to say it eased the way to marry Kashmiris. "Congrats India, now unmarried boys can marry these smart girls from Kashmir after 370 removal," said one, referring to the constitutional provision. Another said, "Every Indian boy's dream right now: 1. Plot in Kashmir 2. Job in Kashmir 3. Marriage with Kashmiri girl."

Adding to those voices on Wednesday was a BJP lawmaker, Vikram Saini, seen urging party workers to marry "Kashmiri girls" in a video clip. "We can get the bachelors among our party workers married there now, there is no problem," Saini, standing in front of a Modi poster at a rally in northern India, added. "Our Muslim party workers should be happy, now they can go and marry fair-skinned Kashmiri girls." When contacted on Thursday, Saini told Reuters he had said nothing wrong and meant no disrespect to women, adding, "If I said something jovially, it should not be taken in a bad light." — Reuters

International

Earthquake rattles Taiwan, triggering some power cuts

Markets, schools close as super typhoon approaches

TAIPEI: A 6.0-magnitude earthquake struck off Taiwan's northeastern coast yesterday, the island's weather bureau said, shaking buildings and cutting power to around 2,000 buildings. A Reuters witness said the shallow quake shook buildings in the capital, Taipei. The quake near the northeastern county of Yilan had a depth of 22 km. There were no immediate reports of significant damage or casualties.

The earthquake triggered limited power cuts and forced the suspension of regional railway service in northern Taiwan. There were also reports of gas and water leaks. Taiwan, a self-ruled island that China considers its own, lies near the junction of two tectonic plates and is prone to earthquakes. More than 100 people were killed in a quake in southern Taiwan in 2016, and some Taiwanese remain scarred by a 7.6 magnitude quake that killed more than 2,000 people in 1999.

Super typhoon approaches

In another development, Authorities in Taiwan have ordered markets, businesses and

schools will be closed today as a super typhoon approaches the island, forcing flight cancellations and landslide warnings shortly after an earthquake of magnitude 6 struck. Typhoon Lekima, which is packing maximum winds of 234 km per hour, is expected to hit the island today, after gaining in strength to become a super typhoon, weather officials said.

"An earthquake struck when we are making preparations for the typhoon, which is a rare event," premier Su Tseng-chang told a meeting at a national emergency center, urging officials to stay on alert for its approach. The strongest storm to hit the island this year is expected to approach off the northeastern coast, after moving across the ocean in a northwesterly direction at 19 kph (12 mph), Taiwan's weather forecasters said. Taiwan's weather bureau issued wind and rain warnings for greater Taipei, the northern port city of Keelung and other northern counties. It also put out a warning to seafarers off the south and east coasts. — Agencies



SUAO, Taiwan: This overview shows fishing boats packed into the typhoon shelter at Nanfangao harbor in Suao, Yilan county, as Typhoon Lekima approaches off the shores of eastern Taiwan. — AFP

Young Taiwanese reconnect with indigenous roots to heal trauma

HUALIEN: The Truku elders of Taiwan still dream about their mountain home four decades after bulldozers tore it down - a classic symptom of trauma as community members struggle to accept their loss. At one evening gathering, Miya Yudaw described his recurring dream, where the mountain was still whole, dotted with quiet farms of millet and sweet potatoes, and the air clean, only to wake each time to the misery of reality. "The mountain is our home and the land is our blood," said Miya, 65, who leads a group that has been fighting for more than 20 years for a mining firm to return their ancestral land in Hualien on Taiwan's rugged east coast.

"When it is being taken away, it's like a part of us being taken away too," the farmer told the other Truku elders as they drank Kaoliang, a strong sorghum-based Taiwanese liquor, at his dimly lit home. The historical trauma of Taiwan's 16 indigenous groups - who were evicted from their land and banned from speaking their own languages, using their native names or practicing traditions like hunting - has only recently been acknowledged.

President Tsai Ing-wen apologized in 2016 for "centuries of pain and mistreatment", dating back to colonization by Japan in the 19th century and former leader Chiang Kai-shek's assimilation policy in the 1960s. Such trauma has led to depression, anxiety, alcohol dependence and high rates of liver disease and fatal accidents among the 24,000-strong Truku community, said National Taiwan University researcher Ciwang Teyra.

But the younger generation are breaking the cycle by reconnecting with the culture that their parents were uprooted from, through language, music and nature, as they push for the government to recognize and protect their rights. Indigenous people make up 2% of Taiwan's 23 million people, the majority of whom trace their ancestry back to China, which regards the self-ruled island as a wayward province.

Buya Ici's memories are equally painful. His childhood was filled with the deafening sound of neighbors' roofs and kitchens explod-

ing as the mining company blew them up, forcing his family to abandon their farm and trek down the mountain. "They used some giant machines to tear down the house. There was simply nothing left," said the 50-year-old train technician, who is also a Truku. "This kind of psychological trauma is with me until now."

Alcohol

Globally, many indigenous peoples suffer from higher suicide rates than the general population due to colonization, dispossession, discrimination and culture loss. A 2018 analysis of 30 countries and territories by Canada's Memorial University found the highest disparities in Canada and Brazil, where suicide rates were 20 times the national averages. In Taiwan, suicide rates among some indigenous groups were six times higher than the rest of the population, it found. "Today, our people face the issue of abusing certain materials, abusing alcohol and drugs," said Ciwang, who is also a Truku.

"It's because we have been deprived of our own power to cure our own hearts. When alcohol is easily accessible to you, it naturally becomes a tool to alleviate your stress." Ciwang's research found that alcohol abuse reduced among Truku who were able to hunt, weave and perform traditional rituals in their ancestral mountains. "Our culture can help us cure the historical trauma and bring comfort in the face of discrimination. To have close ties with our land is a way to restore our own health," she said.

Deputy minister Iwan Nawi, who oversees indigenous people's affairs, said the government has made numerous reforms. Hunting is now allowed in certain areas while the government has also set up an indigenous TV channel and improved education to promote native culture, since a 2005 law adopted to recognize indigenous rights. "We have loosened some of the policies ... this is a long dialogue," said Iwan, an indigenous academic-turned-politician from Taiwan's Sediq tribe, which has 10,000 people.

Healing

Wearing a crown of flowers and a long, flowing dress, Panai Kusui sang at London's first Taiwan Film Festival of her indigenous community's loss of land, language and identity. "When the mountains collapse, the beaches are sold, the wind from ancient times is polluted, human hearts are also contaminated," she sang, on a break from a sit-in over land rights that she began in 2017 in Taiwan's capital, Taipei. Panai's songs, partly sung in her native Puyuma language, have become a symbol of protest and a source of inspiration for the younger generation to re-engage with their culture and take up the land struggle. — Reuters

Deadly dengue outbreak overwhelms Bangladesh

DHAKA: Five-year-old Mohammad Ahnaf lies in a makeshift bed in the balcony of a major hospital in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka, fighting for his life as dengue fever ravages his little body. But his mother Shimul Akhter knows he is one of the lucky ones as Bangladesh grapples with its worst-ever outbreak of the viral fever - 23 have died and many cannot get access to medical help at all.

Since January, almost 30,000 people have been hospitalized with the disease nationwide, and in the past week some 2,000 patients a day have been admitted to hospitals. "The situation is like an epidemic. But no-one is admitting it," one expert, who asked to remain anonymous, told AFP adding the real number of those with dengue was likely to be several times higher than official figures, which are based on limited data.

Panic is setting in. Such is the terror of those with symptoms that medical staff have been attacked as they try to stretch the meagre resources around and in some cases armed guards have been called in for protection. Facilities are struggling to cope with the influx - mattresses line every inch of spare floor extending beyond wards into corridors and balconies. Dengue, which causes flu-like symptoms, can be deadly if it develops into a hemorrhagic fever. There is no vaccine or any specific medicine to treat dengue, according to the World Health Organization.

Authorities are worried the situation is set to worsen. With the upcoming Eid al-Adha holidays, the fever could spread to remote villages as tens of millions of people head back to rural areas to celebrate the Muslim festival. At Suhrawardi Medical College Hospital in central Dhaka where Ahnaf has been admitted, all the wards are full of dengue patients. — AFP

Lifestyle

Friday Times www.kuwaittimes.net

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9, 2019



A Syrian child holds a sheep at the Atmah camp in the north-western Idlib province. — AFP

Born in the USA, 'Boss' the bull fetches record price in Bangladesh

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Lifestyle | Features

'Game of Thrones' showrunners ink massive Netflix deal

Game of Thrones showrunners David Benioff and Dan Weiss have signed a multi-year deal with Netflix to write, produce and direct new series and films for the streaming giant, the company said Wednesday. The contract sees the pair leave HBO after years on "Thrones," which demolished audience records, scooped an unprecedented number of Emmys for a fictional show, and redefined weekly "event TV." "We are thrilled to welcome master storytellers David Benioff and Dan Weiss to Netflix," said Ted Sarandos, Netflix's chief content officer, in a statement. "They are a creative force and have delighted audiences worldwide with their epic storytelling. We can't wait to see what their imaginations will bring to our members."

Netflix did not comment on reports in the Hollywood press that the contract, which followed an intense bidding war between major studios, was a "nine-figure deal." A figure above \$100 million would be in line with deals Netflix has signed with "mega-producers" such as Ryan Murphy ("Glee") and Shonda

Rhimes ("Grey's Anatomy"). In a statement of their own, Benioff and Weiss said: "We've had a beautiful run with HBO for more than a decade and we're grateful to everyone there for always making us feel at home." "Netflix has built something astounding and unprecedented, and we're honored they invited us to join them," they added.

No details have been given on the series and films the pair will create. But Benioff and Weiss said they shared a love for "the same '80s movies" and "the same books" as several Netflix executives. In a totally separate deal, the pair are also working on a trilogy of new "Star Wars" films for Disney's Lucasfilm. The payday for Benioff and Weiss comes despite a bumpy final season for "Thrones" that enraged fans around the world, and prompted a petition signed by 1.7 million people for it to be remade with "competent writers." The final season however bagged a record 32 Emmy nominations. — AFP



Dan Weiss and David Benioff

After #OscarsSoWhite, Hollywood trainees see progress on diversity

Debate is raging inside a dark, cavernous soundstage on the Warner Bros Ranch—about a mushroom. One film crew member wants to try lighting the six-inch prop from the right. Another favors the left. Richard Crudo, a veteran Hollywood cinematographer whose credits include "American Pie," observes for a moment before stepping in. "If you can light it right, you're going to get an Academy Award," he says, with a wry smile. Crudo is overseeing 30 or so young interns from the elite "Academy Gold" summer program, set up by the industry body in a bid to promote diversity in the aftermath of the #OscarsSoWhite campaign. The scheme is targeted at those from underrepresented backgrounds—women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities.

It sees aspiring filmmakers attend panels and workshops across Los Angeles in collaboration with Tinseltown giants including Disney, Sony and Paramount—before each is paired up with a mentor. Crudo—a member of the Academy, which hands out the Oscars—says Hollywood has taken these steps after finally realizing its rich, white male-centered universe was "just an untenable situation." "It's hard for everyone to crack in, and especially hard for minority people and people who've been underrepresented in the industry for many years," he says. "It was time—it was high time."

'Getting there'

On this day, the interns have been split into five groups, each tasked with turning the same deliberately opaque script into a movie scene showcasing a genre of their choosing. The current team has opted for "alternative" and is aiming for a surreal, David Lynchian aesthetic—cue a laughing mannequin in a cowboy hat, plenty of intense brooding stares and that bizarre mushroom. Optimism about the industry's direction among the young auteurs—some of whom started working in movies after the #OscarsSoWhite, #MeToo and #TimesUp movements began—is palpable.

"We have a very good thing happening. Do I think it's at my pace? Like, no, I would have half this crew... it would be equal," says 22-year-old Alyssah Powell, cinematographer for the day. "The day that I can go to the Oscars, and there's as many female nominees as there are male nominees, then I'll be satisfied for sure. "But, you know—we're getting there." Many of the 120-odd trainees participating in the program run by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences had already obtained internships or work at major studios, and were hand-picked to apply.

Powell, who started in film at 19 and has minor credits for "Kong: Skull Island" and "Pacific Rim: Uprising," feels lucky to have gained a toehold so early—but also credits her own perseverance. "If I always went into an interview, or went on to a set being like, 'Oh, well,

I'm a woman...,' not only am I thinking that, now I'm projecting that onto others," she says. "It's easy to also get discouraged by stuff like that. But, you know, take it with a grain of salt. We're on the up—this is a good movement."

'Stubbornly static'

There is also awareness that change takes time, more is required, and opportunities such as this program are not available for everyone. This year's "Hollywood Diversity Report" found women and minorities have made modest gains but remain underrepresented in the industry compared with their share of the population. Women held 32.9 percent of lead acting roles in movies—up nearly two percentage points from 2016, but still far short of their share of 50 percent of the overall population. "Advances for people of color and women remain fairly incremental, if not stubbornly static," the University of California Los Angeles authors wrote.

The interns who spoke with AFP all say they have not personally experienced discrimination in the industry due to their race, gender or background, but know plenty around them who have. "When the directors and the production company heads don't normally look like you, it can be difficult," says Terion Ford, a 26-year-old African-American from Dallas. Ford says he believes change is coming about because Hollywood executives have finally realized that viewers want to see stories told from the perspective of those living them. "Not everybody's on board, not everybody wants change," he says. "But I'm saying there's going to be a point where they're going to be like, 'Alright, we can't beat them—we've got to join them.'"—AFP



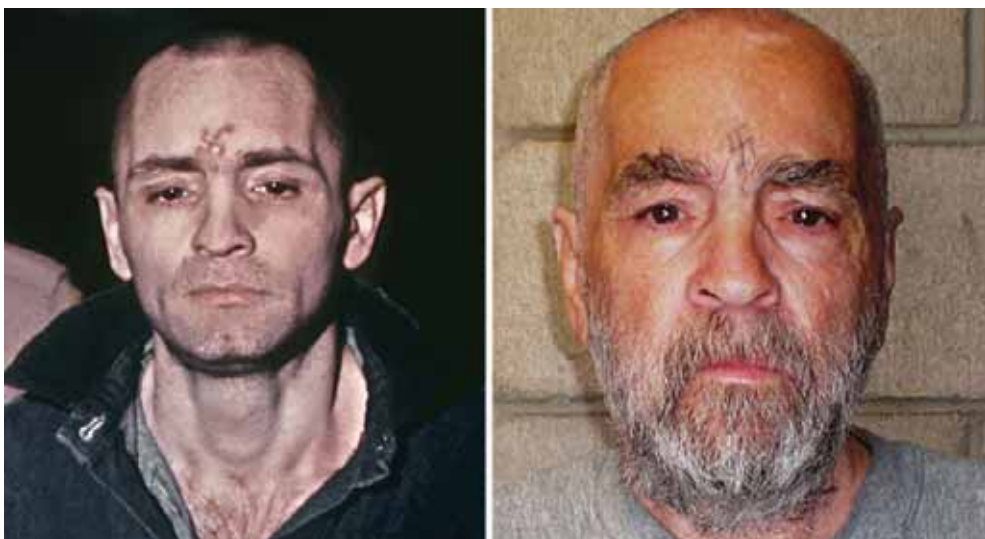
Participant Alyssah Powell works as cinematographer as interns shoot a scene during a session.



US cinematographer Richard Crudo poses during a session with interns as part of the Academy Gold Production Track Program at Warner Bros Ranch in Burbank, California. — AFP photos



Participant Terion Ford poses during a session of the Academy Gold Production Track Program at Warner Bros Ranch in Burbank, California.



The handout image (right) released by the California State Prison, Corcoran, taken on March 18, 2009, shows mass murderer Charles Manson compared to the file image (left) taken in March, 1971, during his trial.



Souvenirs related to the movie "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood" are displayed at the Dearly Departed Tours and Artifact Museum in Los Angeles.

Manson murders grip tourists and Tarantino 50 years on

As a tour guide specializing in notorious Hollywood deaths, Scott Michaels is well aware of America's morbid fascination with the dark side of Tinseltown. But on the 50th anniversary of the murders of actress Sharon Tate and four others at the hands of Charles Manson's apocalyptic cult, he has never seen anything like it. "It's unprecedented really. I've never seen the attention," he told AFP at his museum in Los Angeles. "I'm running extra tours, two or three extra tours a week. The attention is crazy." Michaels drives his customers up to Cielo Drive, the leafy and winding road above exclusive Beverly Hills where director Roman Polanski's wife Tate-eight-and-a-half months pregnant—was stabbed to death in the early hours of August 9, 1969.



A new home (left), seen August 7, 2019, on Cielo Drive in Beverly Hills, California, has replaced the now razed home in which Sharon Tate and four others were killed by the Manson Family 50 years ago.

One of those customers last year was director Quentin Tarantino, undertaking research for his new hit movie "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood" which takes the killings as its backdrop. The deaths terrorized Hollywood and made headlines around the world. Manson, portrayed at his trial as a drug-crazed loner with mesmerizing powers of persuasion, ordered devotees to carry out killings in wealthy white neighborhoods in an effort to trigger a race war. The film features Margot Robbie as an innocent and carefree Tate, and has intensified interest in a tragedy often described as a seminal moment in US history—the end of the 1960s era of peace and love. "Sharon was beautiful... She's become this sort of true crime symbol of absolute good, whereas

Manson is the opposite," says Michaels, who is credited as a technical consultant on the film.

Rock stars and monsters

Manson died in a California prison in 2017, but the gruesome details of the murders he ordered live on. Tate, just 26, pleaded for the life of her unborn child as she was stabbed to death by Manson's disciples, four of whom broke into her house at night. Polanski was away in Europe, but four other guests in their home were also butchered. Abigail Folger, a coffee heiress, was peacefully reading her book in bed when the attackers stormed in and killed her.

While Michaels' "Dearly Departed" museum in Los Angeles serves up a range of macabre mementos and grisly guided tours of deaths ranging from Janis Joplin to the "Black Dahlia," the Manson murders stand apart. "It's my favorite case. Favorite sounds awful. But it is, I gotta admit to that," says Michaels, noting that the story "includes rock stars and movie stars and glamor and monsters." Peggy Miles, 56, who grew up close to the killings in west Los Angeles and is similarly fascinated, is taking the "Helter Skelter" tour.

She says that in the eyes of many Americans, the killings transformed the hippie counter-culture from a fringe curiosity or nuisance into something dangerous or even evil. "It made it into a really scary thing when you saw the hippies—it was like 'Oh my God, I don't want to go near them,'" she says. Many of her neighbors installed gates or bought guns, and she was no longer allowed to walk to school alone.

'Kill for him'

The tour is named after Manson's crazed plan to spark a race war in the United States—itsself named after the Beatles song. Also on the bus is 28-year-old Lauren Kershner, who became obsessed with Manson's cult as a young teenager and has read prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi's bestselling book on the case five times. "I'm pretty much in town for the 50th anniversary," she said. "Manson had such complete mind control over people that he could get them to kill for him. That's just really fascinating to me," she added.

Michaels says such fascination with the details is common, extending even to Tarantino who contacted him ahead of shooting "Once Upon a Time" for assistance with research and location scouting. The director asked Michaels endless questions ranging from the Cielo Drive house's previous occupants to which book Folger was reading when she died. "I mean, this is something I've never tired of reading about, never tired of discussing," Michaels says. "I'm not celebrating it. But this is what I do." — AFP

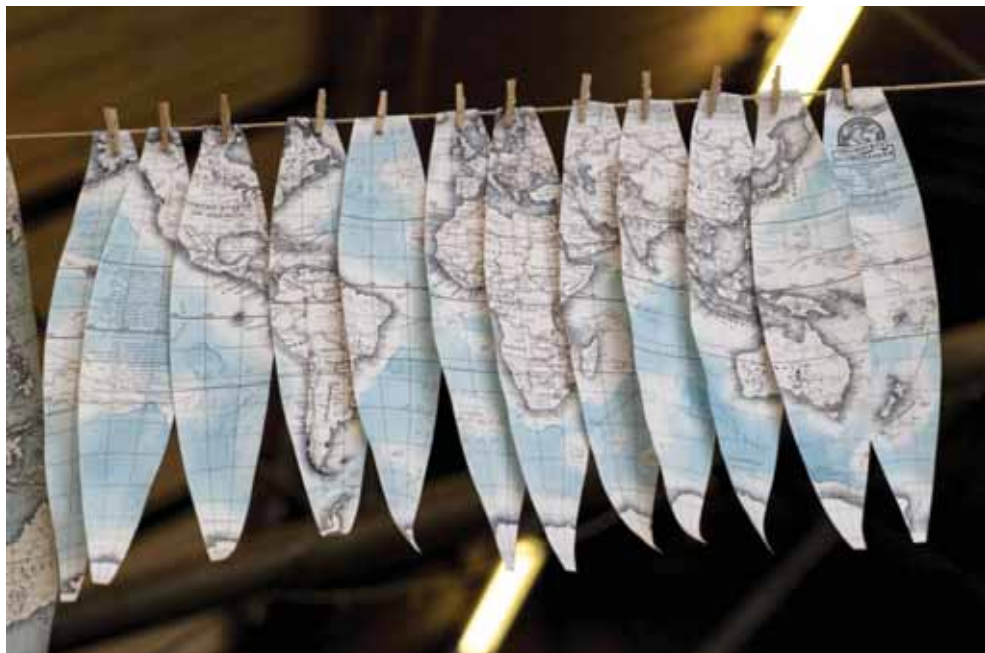


In this file image from January 20, 1968, US Actress Sharon Tate and French Director Roman Polanski stand on the steps at the Chelsea register Office in London after their wedding. — AFP photos



One the myriad DVDs, books and movies about the Manson Family murders of 1969 is displayed at the Dearly Departed Tours and Artifact Museum in Los Angeles.

Lifestyle | Feature



Hand-painted cartography on oval shaped strips called "gores" dry at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop and headquarters in Stoke Newington in north London. — AFP photos



An artist applies paintwork to a globe at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.



An artist applies paintwork to a globe at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.

In a London workshop, artisans craft **bespoke globes**

In 2008, Peter Bellerby set out to buy his father a high quality handmade globe as an 80th birthday present. When he could not find one, the Briton decided to make it himself—and, in the process, catapulted himself into a new profession. Just over a decade later, his company Bellerby and Co claims to be the finest globemaker in the world, selling tailor-made products to an array of international buyers. They include heads of state and big companies as well as everyday people wanting to mark a special occasion.

"There's no one really making bespoke globes like this, with the involvement we have with customers," Bellerby told AFP, during a tour of his 4,000-square-foot (370-square-metre) manufacturing studio on a quiet London backstreet. It was littered with

half-finished globes as his team of two dozen illustrators, painters, cartographers, constructors, engravers and woodworkers toiled beneath strips of paper drying on washing lines overhead. "It's not a career you ever think about," the 54-year-old said.

"I'm really proud of where we've got to." The scale of the operation contrasts with its humble beginnings when Bellerby, an ex-property developer among other former professions, began making just a handful of globes each year in a small shop around the corner. Now the business turns out around 600 globes annually—some destined to sit in grand mansions and aboard yachts. They range in size and price, with the smallest starting at 1,200 pounds (1,300 euros, \$1,500) and the biggest costing around 79,000 pounds.



Globes are displayed at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.



A detail of a globe is pictured at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.

Lifestyle | Feature



Artisan globemakers are pictured at work at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.

Instagram progress reports

Bellerby spent much of the first year or two of the venture perfecting how to make his globes, largely by trial and error, before passing on the know-how. Trainees will toil for around a year learning the craft before being trusted to work on finishing products. The creative process starts by sourcing composite or resin spheres, which form the basis of the globes, from another company—the only stage not done in-house. Illustrators and cartographers work with clients—over months, sometimes years—to decide what will appear on its surface, with requests for everything from animals to ocean liners on the maps.

Wide-format printers, using ink guaranteed for 80 to 200 years, are used to relay the basic geographical outlines chosen onto special paper, whose properties allow it to be dunked in water and then stretched. Once printed, the paper is cut into precise shapes called gores, then painted by hand using watercolours.

After the paper is delicately applied to the globe, it undergoes further rounds of watercolour painting before it is finally sealed with either a gloss or a matte finish. “The really difficult process to work out is how to stretch a piece of paper, that just wants to rip and tear, over a sphere,” Bellerby said. The completed globe is next paired with a base, traditionally a wooden axis on a table but now increasingly an alternative to this with roller bearings, which allow the whole globe to rotate and be more accessible. The entire process—which can take from just weeks to as long as 18 months, depending on the size—is documented on the firm's In-

stagram account so customers can see their orders progress. Machines are avoided as much as possible.

'Churchill globes'

Bellerby's biggest offerings — 50 inches (125 centimeters) in diameter—were inspired by 48-inch globes made by the US Army during World War II for president Franklin Roosevelt and British prime minister Winston Churchill. Bellerby has vowed to make just 40 of these “Churchill globes”, and has already completed 17, turning out a couple a year. “It's probably the largest printed globe ever made,” he said, noting that they differ from so-called manuscript globes—which have blank paper attached to them ready to be painted—and another variant which sees oil paints applied directly onto the sphere.

Bellerby has learned that mapping can present a minefield of political grievances and sensitivities, and worse. Indian customs officials temporarily impounded one globe over how their country's border with Pakistan was depicted, while several customers have asked for Israel not to be included on their map—which Bellerby said he politely declined to do. He also must keep abreast of countries changing their names, such as Swaziland becoming eSwatini last year. “The problem with cartography is each country has its own idea of the world,” Bellerby said. — AFP



Paintbrushes are displayed at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.



A toolbox is pictured at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.



An artist prepares a glue-mix at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.



Wooden fittings are displayed on a shelf at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.



An artist applies paintwork to a globe at the Bellerby and Co Globemakers' workshop.

Lifestyle | Features



Beatles lookalike band 'Fab Gear' and fans of The Beatles pose at the famous Abbey Road zebra crossing in London, England yesterday, the 50th anniversary of the day that the iconic Beatles album cover photograph was taken. — AFP photos



Beatles lookalike band 'Fab Gear' member John Lennon arrives in his replica psychedelic Rolls-Royce to join fans at the famous Abbey Road zebra crossing in London.

Beatles fans come together for 50th anniversary of Abbey Road photo

Hundreds of Beatles fans came together outside London's Abbey Road Studios yesterday to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the band making one of the most iconic album covers of all time. Fans mobbed the pedestrian crossing exactly five decades on from the moment when Britain's legendary Fab Four walked across for the photo that was used on the sleeve of their final studio album, "Abbey Road". The shot of John Lennon leading band mates Ringo Starr, Paul McCartney and George Harrison over the zebra crossing is instantly recognized all over the world. Beatles tribute band Fab Gear pulled up in a psychedelic Rolls-Royce and recreated the moment, as fans halted the traffic.

Mary Anne Laffin, 66, flew in from New York to be at what she called a "holy shrine". As a youngster, she ran on the pitch when The Beatles played at New York's Shea Stadium in 1966. "I was 12 years old, saved up \$5.50 to get a ticket and it was like being in heaven for 38 minutes," the midwife said. "I was overcome, climbed over all the seats and ran, trying to get to the stage. I got carted off by the police." She added: "It's exciting to see all these people that also love them, and how much they've meant to the world."

Six shots, six stripes

The idea stemmed from a sketch by McCartney of stickmen



Beatles lookalike band 'Fab Gear' member John Lennon waves from his replica psychedelic Rolls-Royce.

on the zebra crossing. The picture was taken at around 11:35 am on August 8, 1969 by Scottish photographer Iain Macmillan. The time of day was chosen to avoid fans, who knew that the band typically turned up at the studios in the mid-afternoon. Macmillan stood on a stepladder in the street, while a policeman stopped the traffic.

Macmillan took six frames, of which the fifth one was used—the only one with the band stepping in unison over the six zebra stripes. The photo shoot was over in about 10 minutes.

Conspiracy theories

The album's final recordings were done 12 days later on August 20. "Abbey Road" was released on September 26 — six days after Lennon privately told his band mates he was quitting the group. The album contained 17 tracks, including Harrison's "Something" and "Here Comes the Sun", Starr's "Octopus's Garden", Lennon's "Come Together", and the closing medley of scraps of unfinished songs largely by McCartney.

The front cover, unusually, did not feature the name of the band or the album. However, the record, and its sleeve became cherished classics. The cover also fuelled the "Paul Is Dead" conspiracy theory. Some people believed that McCartney having a cigarette in his right hand despite being left-handed proved he was an imposter, and saw hidden messages in him walking out of step with the others and being barefoot.

Pilgrimage site

Abbey Road Studios is in St John's Wood, a wealthy residential part of northwest London, and McCartney still lives a few streets away. Some 190 of The Beatles' 210 songs were recorded at the world's first purpose-built recording studio. It has drawn Beatles pilgrims from across the world ever since, with countless fans having walked over the zebra crossing, replicating the picture.

The crossing is also continuously live-streamed on the studio's website. The crossing gained Grade II protected status in 2010, meaning that it is recognized as nationally important and of special interest. "It was very emotional and moving. There was an aura about it," said Janet Barnett, 68, from Broadstairs in south-east England, after joining in the 50th anniversary celebrations. Chris Barnett, 63, added: "They changed music forever. They sang about love and peace and you could feel that. "In another 50 years, people will still be here doing it." — AFP

'Raucous' seagulls: Parisians' new noisy neighbors

Parisians need no longer go to the beach, in the time-honored August tradition, to hear the plaintive cries of seagulls, but the birds' growing cacophony is ruffling many feathers in the French capital. Despite being a two-hour drive from the sea, Paris has attracted a growing number of gulls jostling with pigeons for a perch on the city's rooftops. "In the spring we used to hear sparrows, it was the sound of dawn and was very pleasant. But now it's the raucous cries of these bothersome gulls!" said Anne Castro, a psychiatrist in the hilly Belleville district in the city's northeast, one of the birds' favorite nesting places.

Rodolphe Ghelfi, a security guard in his fifties who also lives in the neighborhood, also feels tormented by the cawing. "When I moved to Paris 20 years ago I had the pleasure of listening to pigeons cooing and sparrows singing. But in recent years these huge gulls have landed on the roofs of Paris and begin bawling early in the morning," he said. "I no longer have to set the alarm," he told AFP, clearly riled by what he called the "hellish" sound. Gilles Teillac took a more benign view of his feathered neighbors, whose presence has lent a maritime air to the French capital.

"You can be two blocks from your home and make your wife believe you're calling from a telephone booth in Le Havre," on the Normandy coast, the affable pensioner joked. Among the spots where the gulls tend to congregate are the environs of the fire-damaged Notre-Dame Cathedral, on an island in the middle of the Seine, as well as the old Jewish quarter of Le Marais.

Jean-Philippe Sibley, an ornithologist at the Natural History Museum in Paris, linked the gulls' move to the city to their growing difficulty in finding food along the coasts, where ecosystems are increasingly upset by tourism and construction. In the open-air dumps on the outskirts of Paris, the omnivores have found rich pickings. "In winter they think nothing of flying dozens of kilometers to an open-air dump... they eat plenty and are therefore more likely to survive, which means each year they are more numerous to return (to Paris)," Sibley said. The roofs of Parisian buildings, most of which have seven or more storeys, also offer the gulls a haven from predators. "The only predators they need to watch out for are cats and foxes, which rarely make it to those heights," Sibley said.—AFP



Seagulls fly over the frozen surface of the bassin de la Villette in Paris.



In this file photo seagulls sit on a wall at the Trocadero esplanade in front of the Eiffel tower in Paris. — AFP photos

Born in the USA, 'Boss' the bull fetches record price in Bangladesh

Boss", a Brahman bull born in the USA but raised in Bangladesh, has been sold for a record price as the country prepares to sacrifice over 10 million animals to celebrate the Muslim festival of Eid Al-Adha next week, officials said yesterday. Tens of millions of Bangladeshis travel back to their homes across the country to celebrate the annual three-day religious holiday, which is known as the festival of sacrifice. Muslims slaughter an animal—a goat, sheep, cow, or camel—during the festivities in a ritual stemming from the story of the prophet Abraham, commanded by God to slaughter his beloved son Ismail.

The meat is distributed in equal parts to the poor, relatives, and consumed by the family themselves. Millions of hides are donated to poor people and orphanages. Raising animals for Eid Al-Adha is a major job creator, and there is fierce competition among farmers throughout the South Asian nation to rear the best-looking and heaviest cattle. "Boss", imported from the United States and reared at a farm on the outskirts of the capital, Dhaka, broke all records when

it became the country's most expensive sacrificial animal. "It was sold for 3.7 million taka (US\$43,750)," owner Mohammad Imran Hossain said of the 1,400-kilogramme (about 3,100-pound) behemoth. He told AFP the buyer was a garment factory owner.

Another Brahman bull named "Messi" after the Argentine football star and raised at the same farm—sold for 2.8 million taka, the second-highest price this year. Titanic, an Australian Holstein Friesian, fetched 1.7 million Taka. Animal rights groups criticize Bangladesh's practice of slaughtering animals at homes and front yards. But authorities see the price war for Eid animals as a boon for the impoverished economy, particularly for farmers who have suffered heavy losses amid plunging rice prices in local markets. "This year we have estimated that a record 10.7-million animal cows, goats, sheep and camels would be sacrificed during the Eid," the head of the government's livestock department, Hitesh Chandra Basak, told AFP.

He said local goats would make up some 60 percent of the sacrificial animals, followed by cattle. In the past millions of head of cattle



Mohammad Imran Hossain, owner of Sadeeq Agro farm feeds "Boss", the ox which was sold for a record price of 3.7 million taka (43,750 USD), in Dhaka. — AFP

were smuggled from India to be slaughtered during Eid. But tough border patrols imposed by the Hindu nationalist government in India,

where Hindus consider cows sacred, sharply curtailed the trade. —AFP

Donkey diva: Singing beast of burden becomes Indian sensation

An unorthodox Indian music star has won hearts online with her big teeth, lustrous white coat, four legs and melodic braying at mealtime. Emily, a donkey living at an animal shelter in the Indian city of Pune, became an internet sensation last year after a clip of her "singing" went viral. Staff at the center—where cats, dogs, cows and even large buffaloes are cared for—were playing with Emily when she started crooning. They recorded a video of Emily showing off her vocal range and uploaded it onto their social media page, where it became an instant hit.

"Usually our videos have a lot of sick animals and animals being rescued, and it's generally heavy and sad," RESQ Charitable Trust head Jessica Roberts told AFP. "So for a change we decided to put this video of Emily singing, and the response from the public has been amazing." Roberts said they were inspired by Harriet, a singing donkey from Ireland who also shot to social media fame for her "operatic singing". "I think Emily's singing started because she likes to beg for treats. The moment she sees a treat bucket she starts singing," she added. Donkeys and mules are often exploited in many Indian industries,

where they are used as beasts of burden in harsh conditions.

Emily's life has been tough and her road to recovery—and budding musical stardom—has been long. She was found abandoned on the streets two years ago with a prolapsed uterus and infected wounds. When RESQ staff brought Emily in, she was "sad, depressed and hostile", Roberts said. "But slowly over time she started trusting the staff, she started trusting us and now she's openly greedy and even begs for food." — AFP



Rescued female donkey Emily is fed a papaya by RESQ Charitable Trust head Jessica Roberts at the RESQ animal rescue and rehabilitation center in Pune. — AFP photos



Rescued female donkey Emily (right) interacts with another donkey at the RESQ animal rescue and rehabilitation center in Pune.



Rescued female donkey Emily (center) looks on as other donkeys feed at the RESQ animal rescue and rehabilitation center in Pune.

Pizza for breakfast: The perfect dish for brunch guests

Although it sounds like a bad Saturday morning commercial (Pizza?! For breakfast?!), it turns out breakfast pizza is just a creative version of the classic bread-eggs-cheese-meat combo. It makes an ideal dish for a brunch crowd and isn't difficult if you start with store-bought pizza dough. Our challenge was getting a crisp crust without overcooking the eggs. To get there, we pressed room-temperature dough into a lightly oiled baking sheet and parbaked it for 5 minutes to give the crust a head start before we added the toppings.

The remaining minutes in the oven cooked the eggs just right. The surprising addition of cottage cheese tethered all the ingredients together with a silky creaminess. Room-temperature dough is much easier to shape than cold, so pull the dough from the fridge about 1 hour before you start cooking.

BREAKFAST PIZZA

Ingredients

Servings: 6

Start to finish: 1 hour

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling

8 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded (2 cups)

1 ounce Parmesan cheese, grated (1/2 cup)

4 ounces (1/2 cup) small-curd cottage cheese

1/4 teaspoon dried oregano

Turkey bacon

Salt and pepper

Pinch cayenne pepper

1 pound store-bought pizza dough, room temperature

6 large eggs

2 scallions, sliced thin

2 tablespoons minced fresh chives

Preparation

Adjust oven rack to lowest position and heat oven to 500 F. Grease rimmed baking sheet with 1 tablespoon oil.

Cook the turkey bacon in 12-inch skillet over medium heat until crisp, 7 to 9 minutes. Transfer to paper towel-lined plate; when cool enough to handle, crumble the turkey bacon. Combine mozzarella and Parmesan in bowl; set aside. Combine cottage cheese, oregano, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, cayenne, and 1 tablespoon oil in separate bowl; set aside.

Sprinkle counter lightly with flour. Roll dough into 15-by-11-inch rectangle with rolling pin, pulling on corners to help make distinct rectangle. Transfer dough to prepared sheet and press to edges of sheet. Brush edges of dough with remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Bake dough until top appears dry and bottom is just beginning to brown, about 5 minutes.

Remove crust from oven and, using spatula, press down on any air bubbles. Spread cottage cheese mixture evenly over top, leaving 1-inch border around edges. Sprinkle the turkey bacon evenly over cottage cheese mixture. Sprinkle mozzarella mixture evenly over pizza, leaving 1/2-inch border. Create 2 rows of 3 evenly spaced small wells in cheese, each about 3 inches in diameter (6 wells total). Crack 1 egg into each well, then season each egg with salt and pepper.

Return pizza to oven and bake until crust is light golden around edges and eggs are just set, 9 to 10 minutes for slightly runny yolks or 11 to 12 minutes for soft-cooked yolks, rotating sheet halfway through baking. Transfer pan to wire rack and let pizza cool for 5 minutes. Transfer pizza to cutting board. Sprinkle with scallions and chives and drizzle with extra oil. Slice and serve.



BREAKFAST PIZZA



Make your stuffed tomatoes next level with this recipe

Named for the hotel where it was invented in Sweden, Hasselbacking is a technique where a vegetable (traditionally potatoes) is partially sliced, accordion style, brushed with butter, sprinkled with bread crumbs, and baked. This approach is also great for tomatoes; think of them as leveled-up stuffed tomatoes featuring tons of crispy edges and great browning. We started with meaty, well-shaped plum tomatoes.

We cored them, then cut into them and spread a potent, flavorful homemade basil pesto mixed with some crunchy panko bread crumbs over the interiors. We then topped the tomatoes with shredded Gruyère cheese for added punch and placed the stuffed tomatoes under the broiler for just 5 minutes to melt the cheese and slightly soften the tomatoes without turning them to mush. For the best results, we recommend buying ripe tomatoes of similar weight and size. We developed this recipe with tomatoes that averaged 3 ounces in weight and 2 1/2 inches in length.

HASSELBACK TOMATOES

Ingredients

Servings: 4-6

Start to finish: 45 minutes

8 ripe plum tomatoes, cored

7 ounces Gruyère cheese, shredded (1 3/4 cups)

1 1/2 cups fresh basil leaves

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1/4 cup panko bread crumbs

1 garlic clove, minced

Salt and pepper

Preparation

Line rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and set wire rack in sheet. Using serrated knife, cut 1/4 inch-thick slice from 1 long side of each tomato to create a flat base. Turn tomatoes onto cut sides so they sit flat, then slice crosswise at 1/4 inch intervals, leaving bottom 1/4 inch of each tomato intact.

Process 3/4 cup Gruyère, basil, oil, panko, garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in food processor until smooth, scraping down sides of bowl with rubber spatula as needed, about 10 seconds.

Adjust oven rack 6 inches from broiler element and heat broiler. Combine 3/4 teaspoon salt and 3/4 teaspoon pepper in bowl. Carefully open tomato slices and sprinkle with salt-pepper mixture. Using small spoon, spread basil mixture evenly between tomato slices (about 2 tablespoons per tomato). Arrange tomatoes on prepared wire rack. Sprinkle remaining 1 cup Gruyère over tomatoes. Broil until cheese is golden brown, about 5 minutes. Serve.

Nutrition information per serving: 286 calories; 218 calories from fat; 24 g fat (8 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 36 mg cholesterol; 414 mg sodium; 6 g carbohydrate; 1 g fiber; 2 g sugar; 11 g protein.

How to spend a perfect weekend in **HOI AN**



Hoi An
is almost
always
bursting
with tourists

It's hard to think of a more visitor-friendly town than Hoi An. A ridiculously photogenic Ancient Town? Hundreds of tailor and leather shops offering custom-made items for less than off-the-rack back home? Palm-lined beaches and nearby islands? Yes, please! However, being blessed with culture, history, shopping, and beaches, all within a compact area means Hoi An is almost always bursting with tourists, with over- and underwhelmed visitors inevitably split on whether they loved or hated the experience. Here are ideas for how to spend a perfect weekend in Hoi An, including alternate tips for returning travelers who've already been to the major attractions.

DAY ONE

Morning

Pick up a ticket to Hoi An's Old Town and decide which five attractions you'll visit. There are old wood frame houses with lovely courtyards, colourful Chinese assembly halls, the iconic covered Japanese Bridge and more. While you're walking the town, place your order for tailored garments, a Hoi An specialty. To speed up the process, have images or a sample to show the tailors. Most can turnaround orders in 24 hours, but it's best to give it a bit of extra time for any needed alterations. As lunchtime approaches, head over to Banh Mi Phuong for what celebrity-

Lifestyle | Travel

chef Anthony Bourdain called 'a symphony in a sandwich'. If you've been there before, walk 10 minutes across town to rival Madam Khanh's aka The Banh Mi Queen.

Afternoon

The key to enjoying Hoi An is limiting your exposure to the crowds. This afternoon, hop on a bicycle and head towards the beach. In just a few minutes, you'll find yourself surrounded by rice fields, shrimp ponds, and curious buffalo. Get lost along the dirt paths, with a stop at the famed Tra Que gardens for a cooking class making use of flavorful organic herbs. Or, if you prefer to leave the peddling to someone else, take a vintage sidecar for a jaunt around the countryside. If you still have some energy, continue on to the nearby beaches of Cua Dai or An Bang for some late afternoon sun and sea. Returning visitors might consider a half-day trip to the nearby Cham Islands instead, with their quiet beaches and good snorkeling and diving.

Evening

Spend an hour browsing Hoi An's incredibly kitschy Night Market lined with souvenir stalls along the Thu Bon River. Have a Vietnamese fusion dinner at Mango Mango while watching the brightly lit up boats bobbing on the water and people releasing floating candles for good luck. If you like Mango Mango, end the night at ThirtySeven Woodfired Grill + Bar, a chic new steakhouse by the same owner specializing in locally-sourced ingredients cooked over the coals of coffee and cashew woods. Sip on a cocktail (the 'Tropical Darkness' with Flor de CaOa, cardamom, pineapple, and charcoal gets rave reviews) at the copper bar or enjoy a Cuban at the upstairs cigar club.



Lifestyle | Travel



DAY TWO

Morning

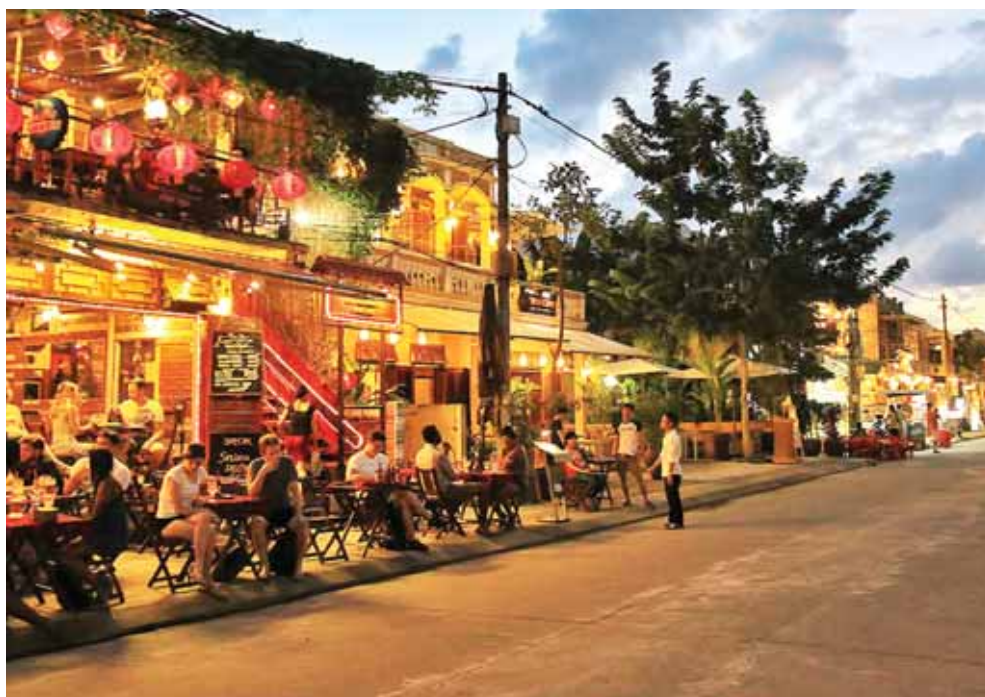
Wake up early while all the other tourists are still making their way down to the breakfast buffet and visit the Ancient Town with its ochre-colored walls bathed in early morning light. Bring your camera because it'll be the only time you won't have dozens of people in your frame. The Hoi An Market will be bustling with locals, and the small boats ferrying shoppers over the river make for spectacular photos. After a bowl of mi quang noodle soup, explore one of the nearby single-craft villages specializing in woodworking or pottery. While accessible via a short drive, a boat cruise makes for a more memorable experience, with bonus views of fishers deftly casting their traditional circular nets.

Afternoon

Time to pick up the clothes you had made and perhaps a few gifts for friends back home. Most of the kitsch souvenirs are actually made in China, so you'll get better value (sentimental and otherwise) from products handmade in Hoi An. Reaching Out has beautiful homewares handmade on-site by people with disabilities, or watch as a silversmith crafts a personal memento for you at Silver Lanterns (120 Nguyen Thai Hoc). Ties are another good deal, as the tailors often fashion bits of leftover fabric into ties for less than US\$5. As you're shopping, use up the rest of your entrance ticket. The well-preserved Quan Thang House with its original wooden beams and beautiful furniture inlaid with mother-of-pearl is worth a visit, and there's even a tiny eatery at the very back where you can watch staff make shrimp dumplings by hand, known as 'White Rose'.

Evening

You can't leave Hoi An without trying one of its amazing specialties: chicken and rice or cao lau, available at posh restaurants and streetside stalls. The chicken and rice gets its intense flavor from using every part of the chicken, from the chicken broth to boil the rice, to the innards being made into a gravy, to the chewy strips of chicken itself. Broad cao lau noodles get their distinctive texture from soaking in lye water only available in Hoi An, which means you'll likely not find it anywhere else in Vietnam. Grab a seat by the window at one of Hoi An Roastery's seven locations throughout the Ancient Town and enjoy an after-dinner coffee while people watching, or join the town's expats at the wrap-around veranda of Mia Coffee, known for its delectable desserts, on a quiet side street lined with galleries and boutiques just beyond the Hoi An Market. — (www.lonelyplanet.com)



Comic

Word Search

Canada

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 47 letters spell a secret message.

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

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| ALBERTA | HOCKEY | NEWFOUNDLAND | REGINA |
| BEARS | IQUALUIT | NORTHWEST TERRITORIES | SASKATCHEWAN |
| BEAVERS | LABRADOR | NOVA SCOTIA | SNOW |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA | LAKES | NUNAVUT | ST. JOHN'S |
| CARIBOU | LOONIE | OIL | TOQUE |
| CHARLOTTETOWN | MANITOBA | ONTARIO | TORONTO |
| CURLING | MAPLE LEAF | OTTAWA | VICTORIA |
| EDMONTON | MAPLE SYRUP | PRAIRIES | WHITEHORSE |
| FORESTS | MOOSE | PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND | WINNIPEG |
| FREDERICTON | MOUNTAINS | QUEBEC | YELLOWKNIFE |
| GESE | NEW BRUNSWICK | RCMP | YUKON |
| HALIFAX | | | |

Yesterday's Solution

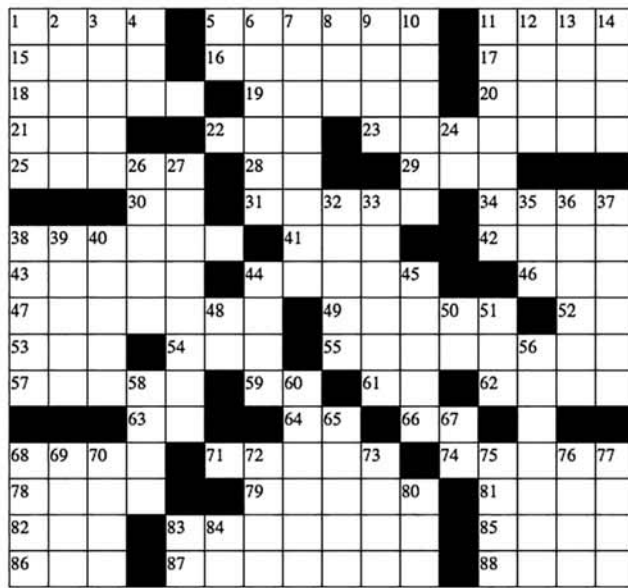
Breakfast

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

- | | | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------|----------|
| BACON | EGGS | JELLY | ROLLS |
| BAGELS | FRUIT | MARMALADE | SAUSAGES |
| BISCUITS | GRANOLA | MILK | TEA |
| BREAD | HAM | MUFFINS | TOAST |
| CEREAL | HASH BROWNS | OATMEAL | WAFFLES |
| COFFEE | HONEY | OMELETS | YOGURT |
| CROISSANTS | HOT CHOCOLATE | PANCAKES | |
| DOUGHNUTS | JAM | PORRIDGE | |

The hidden message is: ORANGE JUICE

Crossword 2279



ACROSS

- A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
- A distinct feature or element in a problem.
- (usually followed by 'to') Having the necessary means or skill or know-how or authority to do something.
- An independent ruler or chieftain (especially in Africa or Arabia).
- A genus of Sterninae.
- A verbalization that encourages you to attempt something.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- The feeling of being bored by something tedious.
- French filmmaker (1908-1982).
- A dark-skinned member of a race of people living in Australia when Europeans arrived.
- In favor of (an action or proposal etc.).
- A member of a seafaring group of North American Indians living in southern Alaska.
- Of or in or relating to the nose.
- Half the width of an em.
- The compass point midway between northeast and east.
- A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.
- The cardinal number that is the sum of seven and one.
- (used especially of vegetation) Having lost all moisture.
- Separate or cut with a tool, such as a sharp instrument.
- (Greek mythology) The winged goddess of the dawn in ancient mythology.
- Interface consisting of a standard port between a computer and its peripherals that is used in some computers.
- A board game in which players try to move their pieces into their opponent's bases.
- A bachelor's degree in theology.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Asia or the peoples of Asia or their languages or culture.
- (nautical) Of an anchor.
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
- Having any of numerous bright or strong colors reminiscent of the color of blood or cherries or tomatoes or rubies.
- Electronic warfare undertaken to prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
- Relating to or included in the zodiac.
- Depressing in character or appearance.
- (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
- One of a set of small pieces of stiff paper marked in various ways and used for playing games or for telling fortunes.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- A metric unit of volume equal to one thousandth of a liter.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- The rising of a body of water and its overflowing onto normally dry land.
- The hair growing on the lower part of a man's face.
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.

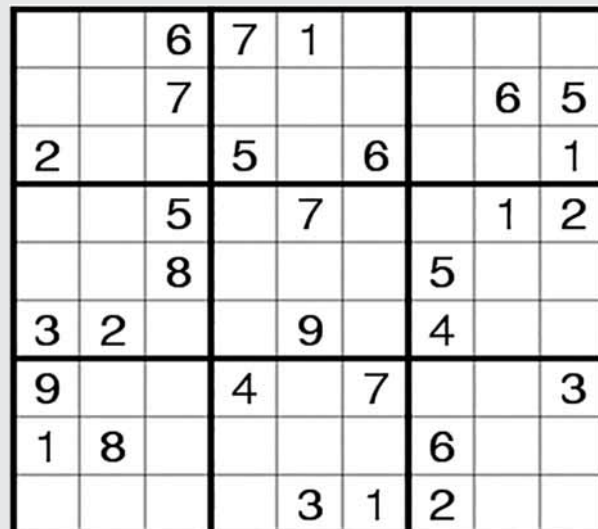
DOWN

- Large dark brown North American arboreal carnivorous mammal.
- Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
- Wild ox.
- A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
- A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
- (electronics) Designating sound transmission from two sources through two channels.
- A small pennant borne on a lance.
- Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.
- King of Denmark and Norway who forced Edmund II to divide England with him.
- Having a tail.
- A disposition to behave in a certain way.
- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- The basic unit of money in Lesotho.
- Make editorial changes (in a text).
- Not out.
- Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
- Widespread genus or herbs or soft-wooded arborescent shrubs cultivated for their showy flowers.
- A yellow quartz.
- British choreographer (1906-1988).
- The administration of a strong electric current that passes through the brain to induce convulsions and coma.
- A rectangular block of hewn stone used for building purposes.
- Humorously vulgar.
- (Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation) Optical device that produces an intense monochromatic beam of coherent light.
- Leave or strike out, as of vowels.
- The highest level or degree attainable.
- Type genus of the Ardeidae.
- Being nine more than ninety.
- Being one more than one.
- Committee formed by a special-interest group to raise money for their favorite political candidates.
- Genus of tall smooth herbs of forested mountains of Europe and Asia minor.
- In bed.
- Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
- A mountain peak in the Saint Elias Range in the southwestern Yukon Territory in Canada (19,850 feet high).
- A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
- A dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain.
- A barrier consisting of a horizontal bar and supports.
- (Welsh) Corresponds to Iris Ler.
- The state of owing money.
- (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
- A network of intersecting blood vessels or intersecting nerves or intersecting lymph vessels.
- Keep in mind or convey as a conviction or view.
- The seed of the cereal grass.
- Being one hundred more than three hundred.
- A rare polyvalent metallic element of the platinum group.

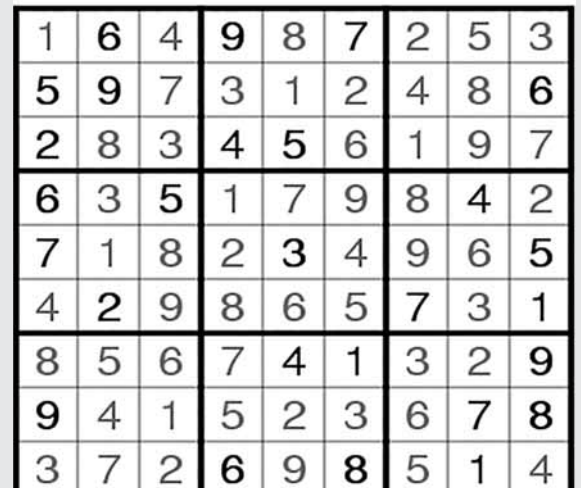
Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



TV Listings



01:15 The Belko Experiment
02:45 R.I.P.D.
04:25 Captain America: The Winter Soldier
06:40 Confidential Assignment
08:50 Faster
10:40 Megan Leavey
12:35 R.I.P.D.
14:10 Fishing Without Nets
16:00 Megan Leavey
17:55 A Knight's Tale
20:10 The Unseen
22:00 Friday The 13th Part IV: The Final Chapter
23:50 Crank



00:45 North Woods Law
01:40 Alaska Monsters
02:35 Wolves And Warriors
03:25 Lone Star Law
04:15 North Woods Law
05:02 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees
06:36 Vet On The Loose
07:00 Vet On The Loose
07:25 Evan Goes Wild
12:50 Wolves And Warriors
13:45 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
14:40 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved
15:05 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved
15:35 Alaska Monsters
16:30 Flying Wild Alaska
17:25 Animal Cops Houston
18:20 Wolves And Warriors
19:15 The Vet Life
20:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
21:05 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
22:00 Alaska Monsters
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees
23:50 The Vet Life



00:20 The Witness For The Prosecution
01:25 Holby City
02:20 Inside No. 9
02:50 The Detectorists
03:15 EastEnders
03:45 EastEnders
04:15 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 Inside No. 9
16:10 Casualty
17:05 Holby City
18:00 The Detectorists
18:30 Agatha Raisin
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 Nightmare In Suburbia
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 Homicide: Hours To Kill

07:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
07:20 The First 48
08:50 Homicide Hunter
10:30 Homicide: Hours To Kill
12:20 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
13:15 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 Homicide: Hours To Kill
18:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Homicide Hunter
21:00 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
02:07 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
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 3alwagef
09:50 Takeshis Castle Thailand
10:15 Friends
12:20 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
21:30 Teachers
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
22:30 Nick Kroll: Thank You Very Cool
23:30 Broad City



00:05 Kids vs Film
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 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
04:40 Kids vs Film
05:05 Kids vs Film
05:30 My Cat From Hell
06:15 Bad Dog
07:00 The Carbonaro Effect
07:25 The Carbonaro Effect
07:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
08:40 Weather Top Tens
09:30 How We Invented The World
10:20 How The Earth Works
11:10 Kids vs Film
11:35 Kids vs Film
12:00 Xtreme Waterparks
12:25 Xtreme Waterparks
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 Kids vs Film
16:35 Kids vs Film
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 Kids vs Film



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 Scott Peterson: Pregnant Wife Missing
05:20 Border Control: Spain
05:45 Border Control: Spain
06:10 Blood Relatives
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 Scott Peterson: Pregnant Wife Missing
12:30 Scott Peterson: Pregnant Wife Missing
13:25 Blood Relatives
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 Obsession: Dark Desires
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
03:55 Zou
04:10 Zou
04:25 The Hive
04:35 The Hive S2
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 S2
07:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Y3
07:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
08:00 PJ Masks
08:30 Vampirina
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 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse: A Goofy Fairytale
12:00 PJ Masks S2
13:00 PJ Masks
13:30 Vampirina S1
14:30 Vampirina
15:00 Puppy Dog Pals S1 Splits
16:00 The Lion Guard
16:30 Elena Of Avalor S2
17:00 Gigantosaurus S1
17:25 Paprika S1 Shorts
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
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 Paprika S1 Shorts
20:30 Doc McStuffins
21:00 Gigantosaurus S1
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
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 What On Earth?
03:20 Wheeler Dealers

04:05 Fast N' Loud
04:50 Diesel Brothers
05:35 Garage Gold
06:00 Shed And Buried
06:20 Garage Gold
06:45 Ultimate Survival
07:35 Deadliest Catch
08:20 Garage Rehab
09:10 Chasing Classic Cars
09:55 Salvage Hunters
10:45 Diesel Brothers
11:30 Wheeler Dealers
12:20 Fast N' Loud
13:05 Shed And Buried
13:30 Garage Gold
13:55 Salvage Hunters
14:40 Into Alaska
15:30 Wildest Indochina
16:15 American Chopper
17:05 Chasing Classic Cars
17:50 Garage Rehab
18:40 Diesel Brothers
19:25 Wheeler Dealers
20:15 Evermoor Chronicles
21:00 Unique Rides
21:50 American Chopper
22:40 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman
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
03:45 Boyster
04:10 Counterfeit Cat
04:35 Counterfeit Cat
05:00 Furiki Wheels
05:29 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
14:35 Phineas And Ferb
15:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
15:25 Phineas And Ferb
15:35 Space Chickens In Space
16:00 Big City Greens
16:25 Big Hero 6 The Series
16:50 Lab Rats
18:29 Mech-X4
19:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
19:25 Marvel's Spider-Man
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
22:29 Milo Murphy's Law
23:00 Furiki Wheels
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost
23:50 Dude That's My Ghost



00:00 Botched
01:00 Botched
02:00 E! News
03:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry

04:00 WAGs
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop
08:55 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
16:15 Kourtney & Khloe Take Miami
16:40 Kourtney & Khloe Take Miami
17:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
17:35 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
18:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
18:30 Kourtney & Kim Take New York
19:00 E! News
20:00 Kourtney & Kim Take New York
20:30 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
21:00 Kourtney & Kim Take New York
22:00 Botched
23:00 Very Cavallari



00:10 Culinary Genius
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 The Chase
03:25 Martin Clunes: Islands Of America
04:20 Rich House Poor House
05:15 Culinary Genius
06:15 Royal Recipes
07:10 The Chase
08:05 Martin Clunes: Islands Of America
09:00 Rich House Poor House
09:55 Culinary Genius
10:55 Royal Recipes
11:50 The Chase
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Royal Recipes
15:10 The Chase
16:00 This Time Next Year
16:55 Rich House Poor House
17:50 Culinary Genius
18:50 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 The Chase
21:00 This Time Next Year
21:55 Rich House Poor House
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street



00:15 Clash Of Warriors
01:00 UFO Hunters
01:45 Ancient Impossible
02:30 The Universe
03:15 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
04:00 Ancient Aliens
04:45 Mummy Forensics
05:30 Lost Worlds
06:15 How The States Got Their Shapes
07:00 UFO Hunters
07:45 Ancient Impossible
08:30 The Universe
09:15 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
10:00 Ancient Aliens
10:45 Mummy Forensics
11:30 Lost Worlds
12:15 How The States Got Their Shapes
13:00 Ancient Impossible
13:45 The Universe
14:30 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
15:15 Ancient Aliens
16:00 Mummy Forensics
16:45 Lost Worlds
17:30 How The States Got Their Shapes
18:15 UFO Hunters
19:00 Ancient Impossible
19:45 The Universe
20:30 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
21:15 Ancient Aliens
22:00 MysteryQuest
22:45 Lost Worlds
23:30 Million Dollar Genius

Stars



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Your attitude about your work is commendable. If there is a job, you can do it. As a strong worker, you pour yourself into any task with absolute determination. You may find that your co-workers seek you out to ask for your psychological insight and understanding. Sometimes they complain and sometimes they make comments about others or their work. Your insight is helpful in turning the negative situations into a positive. This afternoon you may take a notion to paint a wall or create your own decorative art display for this time of the year. It may be that the leaves or nature's other ornaments are ripe for the picking. . . . A few pine cones here or there and a few colorful pieces of fruit or a colorful plant would work nicely. This is a great time to decorate.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have an inner urge for order and organization and a great sense of responsibility. You are competent, ambitious and cool. This marks the coming of a good time as far as career and social life are concerned. If you have not discovered this already, it seems your time of paying dues is over; real accomplishment and focus are possible now. You are a very hard worker and are driven to accomplish whatever is set out for you. You like to manipulate a situation for its own benefit and would make a natural supervisor. You can demonstrate great understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others just now and may find yourself as a representative or possibly a politician when it comes to your community. A hobby keeps you busy and laughing tonight.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You have an inner urge for order and organization and a great sense of responsibility. You are competent, ambitious and cool. This marks the coming of a good time as far as career and social life are concerned. If you have not discovered this already, it seems your time of paying dues is over; real accomplishment and focus are possible now. You are a very hard worker and are driven to accomplish whatever is set out for you. You like to manipulate a situation for its own benefit and would make a natural supervisor. You can demonstrate great understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others just now and may find yourself as a representative or possibly a politician when it comes to your community. A hobby keeps you busy and laughing tonight.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Big changes affecting your career, status and reputation are likely at this time. Daring to be different gets you noticed and could get you ahead in ways you never expected. Today is a time of reaping the rewards for your hard work. Regardless of how differently you may have attempted to accomplish some project, the end results of your work have successful vibrations. A high tech or idealistic approach sets you apart. You are at your mental best with sharp ideas and clear thoughts. You seem to have developed a knack for being in the right place at the right time—and that can win you the admiration of others. A drive to probe and penetrate may find you examining and working through many changes. Look through a telescope tonight; it's cool.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your ambition is strong. Things seem to fall in place and progress is good. Following the trends of business and investments in the world, you may have some interesting ideas for your own business. You are wise to save a bit of time to follow up on facts and confirm costs. You will prosper through an independent point of view. Ridding yourself of excess and what is nonessential may also be a key move to better working opportunities. Some interest in a subject that is fascinating to you may have you doing a bit of shopping at your favorite bookstore as well as study through the internet. You may even stay up for a bit this evening to read and learn about this new subject. Your work and your private life are becoming increasingly stimulating.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

The power of organization on a social scale, such as business or political affairs, seems to take on a larger-than-life feeling now. It's as if ambition and authority are answers in themselves, rather than means to an objective. This can lead to ambitious schemes that tend to become lost along the way. Real power is always hidden; finding it means delving into a few secret places, and that's where you are bound to look now. Look around and check out the people you admire that have reached the success you are looking for and ask yourself how they made it to their success. Perhaps you can use one of those people as a mentor. You can demonstrate great understanding to family members this evening. You also may find yourself dealing with community affairs.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Concentrated effort is important with your work just now—staying away from emotional issues is a very wise plan. Practice diplomacy when dealing with the public. Do not let feelings get in the way of clear judgment. Later today there will be time to do a little research, perhaps at the local library. This research will either help you in making a decision or in completing some project. You are learning that education wasn't as dull as you thought and the fun of discovery may point you in the direction of more education. . . . Or at the least, a few classes. Look beyond surface meanings for the insights you seek. Loved ones may give you support and, in some way, help you gain a focus this afternoon. Involve yourself with a relaxing activity this evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a beneficial time that will accommodate your efforts to achieve a balance between the physical and the emotional parts of your life. If you find it too difficult to initiate the changes that are needed for this balance, find some counseling or a business advisor for yourself. Compromise is the order of the day in the workplace. Instead of deciding you are not going to do something, think it through and try to find a beneficial end result. You may find that both your personal growth and your career may depend upon how you can handle the challenges that may be coming up. The power of organization on a social scale—business, politics and such—seems to take on an importance to you in making your day run smoothly. Obstacles are short-lived.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Work, achievement and ambition are your idea of having fun—you feel productive. You may take on a leadership role at this time. You look for new opportunities to grow and to help others grow. The spirit of cooperation and sharp mental activity makes it easy for you to move forward in your career. You may find yourself serving to guide someone younger than you in matters of importance this afternoon—perhaps through tutoring school subjects or in activity such as junior achievement. This evening you give yourself time to think through some future plans. You may reason and analyze and think about the next project. Take some time out and exercise your body through some form of dancing or other type of exercise. Perhaps a friend will join you.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself working closely with someone that you always thought you would like to mirror. Your work growth seems to take on the same route that this person has set out for his or her own progress—you are happy to follow. Concentrating on pleasing this person is not your goal but learning and asking questions is bringing you forward. You may wonder if you will ever learn enough to set the example for someone else and you most certainly will. Getting down to the essential work process is most important now. Much can be accomplished now. Your thoughts are brought to a sharp focus. This evening you and a friend may decide to work on the making of a movie. Progress around this project or some similar project is good.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a good day—one where much progress is gained. You do a professional job for the customer and the customer recommends you to another customer. This is a perfect time to move forward in whatever you want to accomplish. Respect is earned for your way of handling new ideas or practical solutions. Your career could assume a much more determined and solid form. Wonderful results are possible from your positive choices. The sound of children fills the air this afternoon. You may be responsible for their evening meal or for making sure they do their assignment from school. You may even decide to teach them a recipe they could cook for their snack or dessert as a reward for studying. This evening you appreciate the beauty in your life.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have to abandon your own ideas today but it is a commendable move that you take. Do not worry—your actions have not gone unnoticed. Your self-confidence gets a boost today. Use this cycle to get ahead professionally. Have no fear of the future challenges you see ahead. Your appreciation for hard work and discipline is natural and lifelong. Your professional standing improves. You actually love responsibility and tend to pile on the work. A positive change in financial status is possible soon. A part-time job or second job may be what you and many other people do at this time of year in order to enjoy the upcoming holidays. A cultural event involving friends and associates is quite helpful this evening. There is new information to absorb.

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 Faso	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	Niger	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	Togo	00228
Japan	0081	Tonga	00676

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

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Friday, August 9, 2019

DR. MOHAMMAD AL HAJRY
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- 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.

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DR. FAHAD S BUHAIMED
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ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

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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

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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
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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 Abscess
- ◆ Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- ◆ SIAFT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Pilonidal sinus)
- ◆ Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernia 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 department at Dar Al Shifa hospital

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Philippines 'open' to dengue vaccine as hundreds die

MANILA:As hundreds die in a severe dengue outbreak in the Philippines, many of them children, President Rodrigo Duterte said yesterday he was open to lifting his government's blanket ban on the Dengvaxia vaccine. Manila prohibited the import, sale and distribution of the drug-manufactured by French pharmaceutical firm Sanofi-after parents blamed it for the deaths of several dozen children who were among more than 700,000 people immunized in a state-run trial program.

After the Dengvaxia scare caused Filipinos to shy away from vaccines, the country was hit with measles and dengue outbreaks that have so far killed nearly a thousand people this year. The government declared a dengue epidemic on Tuesday.

While he was "in a quandary" regarding the use of Dengvaxia, Duterte said the perceived risk had to be weighed against the 662 deaths from out of the 146,000-plus dengue cases monitored by the government so far this year. "Yes, I am open to the use of Dengvaxia again. So many people are dead. It's an epidemic. Now compare it vis-a-vis, with those who died (allegedly due to the vaccine)," Duterte told reporters. Dengue, or haemorrhagic fever, is the world's most common mosquito-borne virus and infects an estimated 390 million people in more than 120 countries each year-killing more than 25,000 of them, according to the World Health Organization.

It said Dengvaxia is now licensed for use in

20 other countries. The dengue-prone Philippines in 2016 became the first nation to use Dengvaxia in a mass immunization program. But controversy arose after Sanofi disclosed a year later that it could worsen symptoms for people not previously infected by the virus. The disclosure sparked a nationwide panic, with some parents alleging the vaccine killed their children, though a government-commissioned investigation found no conclusive proof that it did.

Nonetheless, Manila banned Dengvaxia, and had Sanofi reimburse it for the vaccines used in the immunization program. The controversy also triggered a vaccine scare that the government said was a factor behind measles out-

breaks that the United Nations Children's Fund said have killed more than 200 people this year. "Me, I'd rather go on the side of science," said Duterte, whose 15-year-old daughter was among those given Dengvaxia shots. "If there's anything there, in the Western medicine, and even these herbal or Oriental, if it will mean saving people's lives, I'll go for it."

Before the government makes a decision, Duterte said he would like to "hear the word of the experts". Health Secretary Francisco Duque had said Tuesday that Dengvaxia was not recommended by the WHO for combating outbreaks, and in any case was not for children aged below nine who were the most affected in the current epidemic. — 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 - thyroid surgeries.
- Anal surgeries.

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Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Clover Center Mazaya Building

Classifieds

Friday, August 9, 2019

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ABRAHAMCHETHI PURACKAL ABRAHAM holder of Indian Passport No. K2098802 do hereby change my name as **ABRAHAM CHETHIPURACKAL ABRAHAM. (C 5574)**

I, JOSEPH GEORGE KURIAPPILLY, holder of Indian Passport No. Z3830804 having permanent address Kerala, India-683518 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: **GEORGE** and surname: **KURIAPPILLY JOSEPH (C 5666)**

I, BINDUMOL KULAT HUNKAL ABRAHAM holder of Indian Passport No. H8468361 do hereby change my name to **BINDUMOL (given name) KULATHUNKAL ABRAHAM (surname)** for all purposes. I also undertake to effect the change in all my other public documents. **(C 5571)**

I, Mookan Kumar Kannan holder of Indian Passport No. J0976988 having permanent address 173-68A, Melapidavoor, Manamadurai, Sivagangai-Dist. Tamilnadu-623707, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: **KUMAR KANNAN** and surname: **MOOKKAN. (C 5573)**
8-8-2019

I, NETTARWALA FOZIA FIROZ,

holder of Indian Passport No. J3509812, having permanent address 6/62 Meenakshi Apts., Dockyard Road, Mazgaon, Mumbai 400010, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: **FOZIA FIROZ** and surname: **NETTARWALA (C 5570)**
7-8-2019

I, JOAQUIM ANTONIO FILOMENO CAESAR HENRIQUES holder of Indian Passport No. P7117842, having permanent address at Molla, Chandor, Salcete, Goa-India, PinCode 403714, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given Name: **JOAQUIM ANTÓNIO FILOMENO CÉSAR** and Last Name: **HENRIQUES (C 5665)**
6-8-2019

I, SUSAN JOHN (given name) holder of Indian Passport S 3697819 do hereby change my name to **SUSAN (given name) JOHN (surname)** for all purposes. I also undertake to effect the change in all my other public documents.
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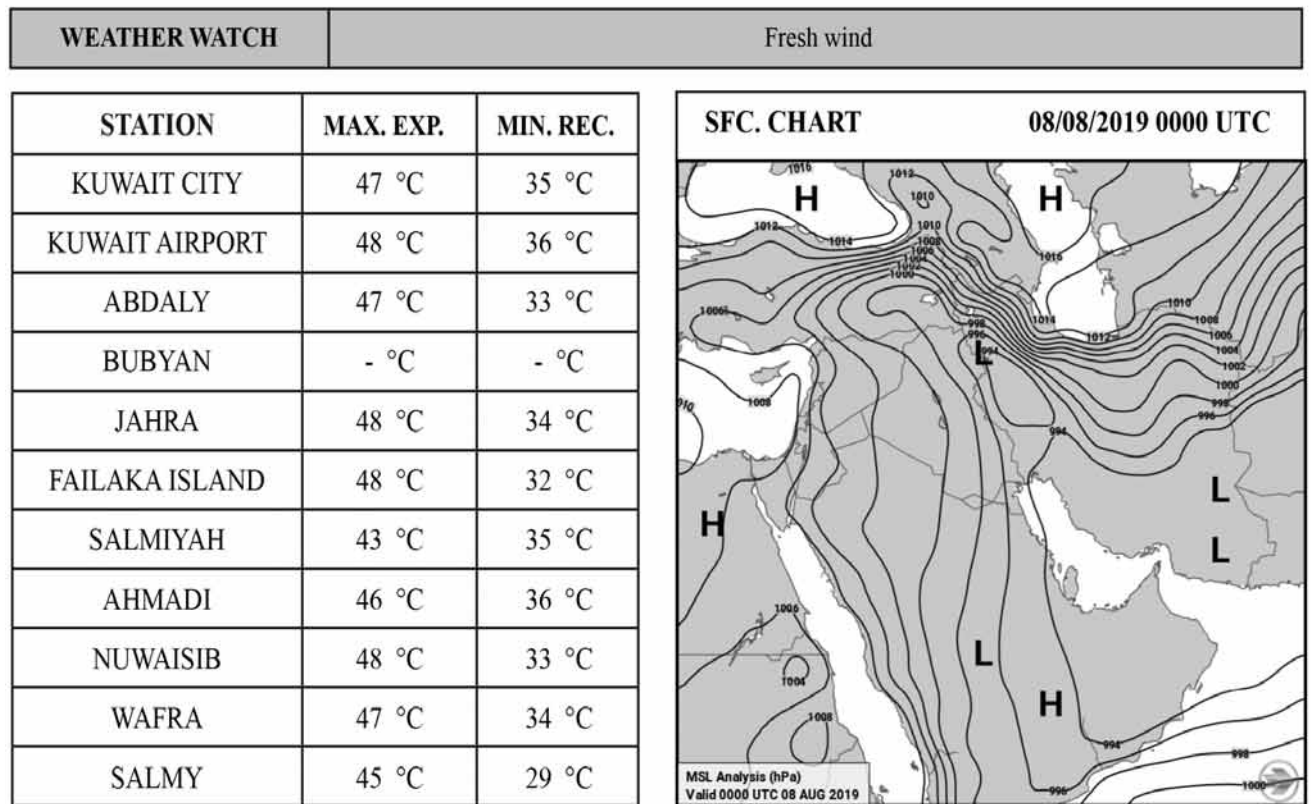
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot with moderate to fresh north westerly wind, with speed of 22 - 55 km/h causing rising dust and some high clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Hot to relatively hot with moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 45 km/h and some high clouds will appear.



4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	08/09	Very hot with a chance for rising dust and some high clouds will appear	49 °C	35 °C	NW	20 - 45 km/h
Saturday	08/10	Very hot with a chance for rising dust	49 °C	35 °C	NW	20 - 50 km/h
Sunday	08/11	Very hot with a chance for rising dust	49 °C	36 °C	NW	20 - 50 km/h
Monday	08/12	Very hot	50 °C	35 °C	NW	12 - 32 km/h

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	03:45
Sunrise	05:12
Zuhr	11:54
Asr	15:29
Sunset	18:35
Isha	19:59

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	48 °C
MIN. Temp.	36 °C
MAX. RH	21 %
MIN. RH	08 %
MAX. Wind	N 57 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22456700
Air India EXPRESS	22438185/4
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines`	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493

Business

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9, 2019

39 French Deliveroo cyclists urge clients to boycott in pay dispute



40 In wealthy Silicon Valley, a \$500m plan to save threatened farmland

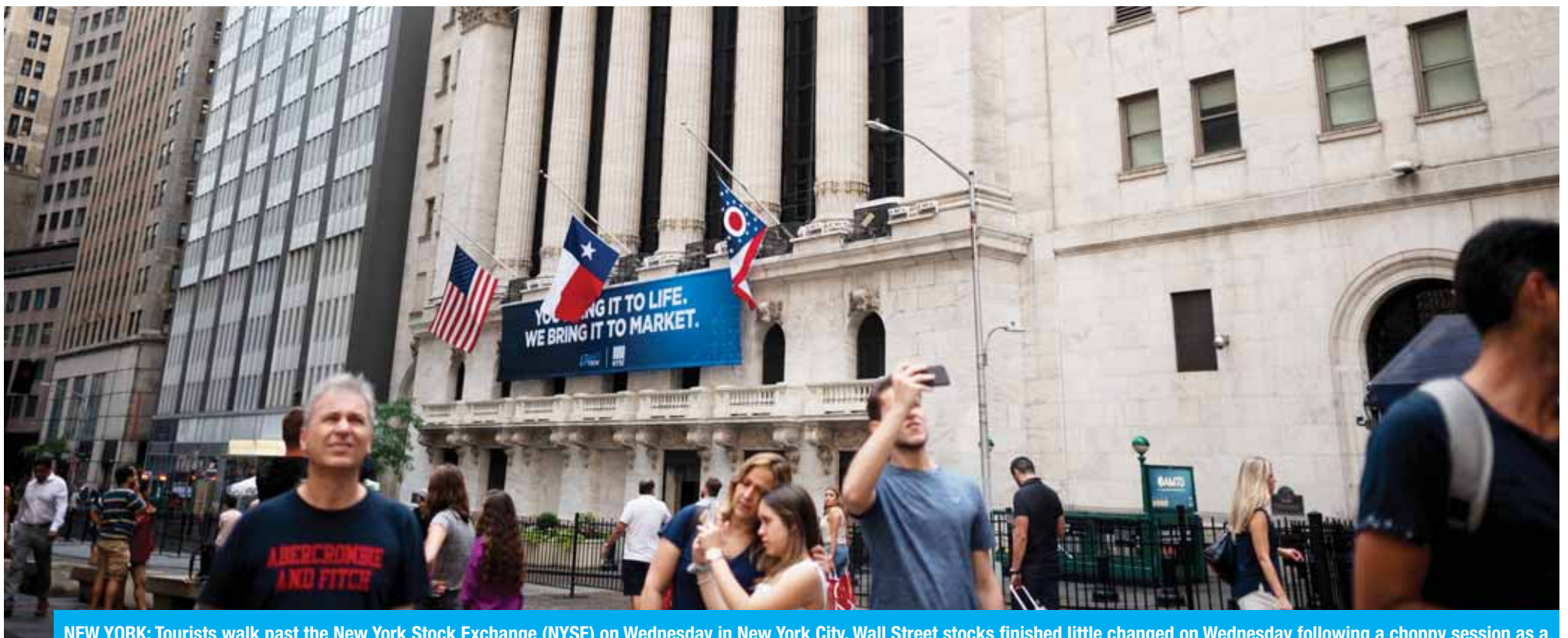


41 US weekly jobless claims fall; labor market strong



Recession fears grip global investors

Fed may be forced to reassure stressed global markets



NEW YORK: Tourists walk past the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on Wednesday in New York City. Wall Street stocks finished little changed on Wednesday following a choppy session as a plunge in treasury bond yields underscored worries about a weakening global economy. — AFP

LONDON: Global investors are flocking towards the safety of the dollar, euro and yen and prime-rated government bonds as fears of a recession and a downturn in equity valuations surge. The good news is that most indicators suggest the level of financial market stress remains moderate rather than severe, which will provide some reassurance for policymakers.

The bad news is that stress can move from moderate to severe very quickly, something policymakers will want to ensure does not happen. The US Treasury yield curve has continued to invert, a clear signal that bond traders expect a prolonged slowdown and more interest rate cuts.

The 3-month to 10-year segment of the curve has been continuously inverted for 2-1/2 months so far with long rates now 34 basis points below the short end, the most extreme inversion since April 2007. In the last five

decades, sustained inversions lasting three months or more have always signaled the arrival of a recession in the next 12 months. The current inversion is already more severe than the mid-cycle slowdowns of 1995 and 1998, though not yet quite as serious as before the end-of-cycle recessions in 2001 and 2008.

Before the last two recessions, inversion peaked at 59 basis points in March 2007 (recession started in December 2007) and 85 basis points in December 2000 (recession began in March 2001). But in a sign of increasing stress that will worry policymakers, the curve has continued to invert despite the quarter-point cut in interest rates announced by the Federal Reserve at the end of July. Fed funds futures imply interest rate traders expect the US central bank to cut interest rates by at least another 50 basis points and probably 75 basis

points before the end of the year. Rate cuts totaling 75-100 basis points before year-end would be similar or slightly larger than during the downturns of 1995 (75 basis points) and 1998 (75 basis points) but smaller than during the last two recessions.

Flight to safety

Fears about a global slowdown and a fall in the price of equities and other risky assets have already prompted a traditional flight to safety from higher-risk to lower-risk assets. As bond prices have surged, yields on 10-year US Treasury Inflation Protected Securities (TIPS) have fallen to just 10 basis points, from more than 30 basis points in late July, and over 100 in November 2018.

TIPS yields are down to the lowest level since October 2016, when the central bank

was struggling to boost a sluggish economy and the federal funds rate was still set at a post-crisis rate of just 25-50 basis points. Rising perceptions of risk are also prompting the reallocation of funds to markets at the core of the system (United States, Germany and Japan) and away from OECD economies on the periphery (Australia, New Zealand) as well as emerging markets.

As carry trades unwind, the US dollar, Japanese yen and euro (low risk, low interest rate funding currencies) are all rising against the Australian and New Zealand dollars (higher risk, higher interest earning currencies). So far, however, the flight to safety remains orderly, and shows no sign of the panic that accompanied the subprime crisis (2007/08), dotcom bust (2000/01), Asian financial crisis (1997/98) and Mexico-initiated tequila crisis (1994/95). — Reuters

Business

Saudi plans to keep Aug-Sept oil exports below 7m bpd

Fee on oil transits via Belarus to rise in January: Russia

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia plans to keep its crude oil exports below 7 million barrels per day in August and September despite strong demand from customers, to help drain global oil inventories and bring the market back to balance, a Saudi oil official said. State-owned Aramco's oil nominations - the requests made by refiners and customers for Saudi crude - were high in September, a sign of healthy oil demand globally, the Saudi official, who asked not to be named, said yesterday.

Despite that, the kingdom is maintaining its oil production below 10 million bpd and keeping its exports below 7 million bpd in both August

and September, he said. "Demand was universally stronger, in all regions. But we kept exports below 7 million bpd," the official said.

"If we satisfy September demand we will produce about 10.3 million bpd because demand is much higher, but we decided to keep production and exports flat and cut customer requests by 700,000 bpd." Saudi Arabia's production target under an output-cutting deal among the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies - a grouping known as OPEC+ - is 10.3 million bpd.

In July, OPEC and allies led by Russia agreed to extend oil output cuts until March 2020 to

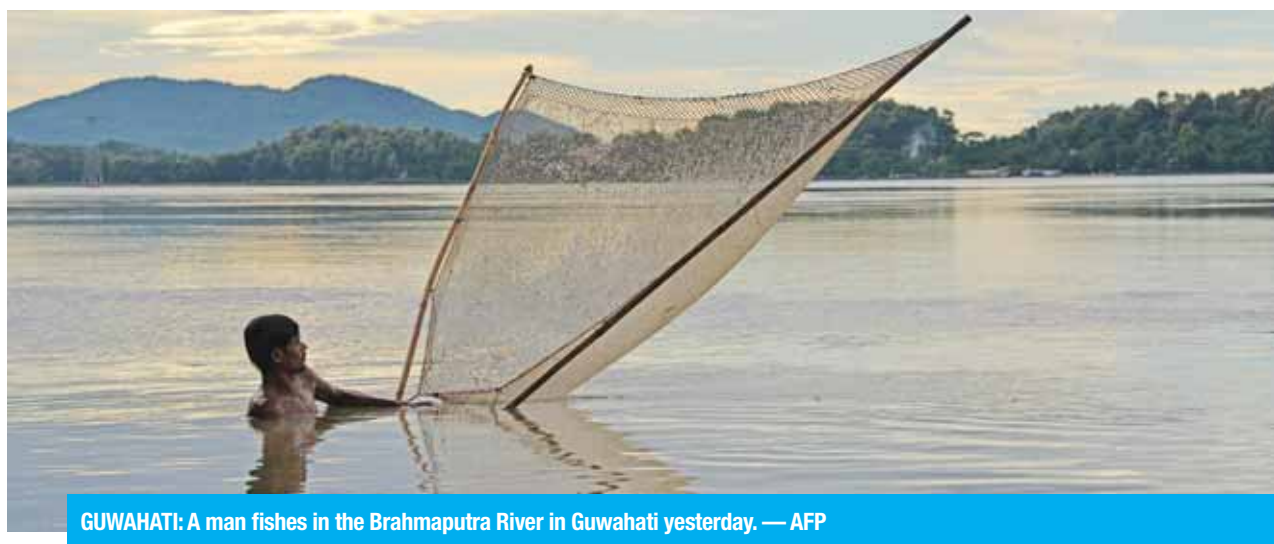
prop up the price of crude as the global economy weakens and US production soars. "Saudi Arabia is committed to do whatever it takes to keep the market balanced next year," the official said. "We believe, based on close communication with key OPEC+ countries, that they will do the same."

"The (oil market) fundamentals are good, especially on the supply side, due to a combination of strong OPEC+ over-compliance, and a lower than previously expected US outlook," the official said. Brent crude was trading at \$56.91, up 68 cents or 1.2 percent, at 1141 GMT yesterday.

The EIA on Tuesday lowered its domestic oil

growth forecasts for the year after Hurricane Barry disrupted Gulf of Mexico output in July. Production is set to rise by 1.28 million bpd to 12.27 million bpd this year, slightly lower than previous growth forecast of 1.40 million bpd.

The tariff on Russian oil transits via Belarus will be raised further on Jan. 1, 2020, after a 3.7 central increase from September this year, TASS news agency cited Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak as saying yesterday. Belarus said on Tuesday it had agreed with Russia to raise the tariff to compensate for a drop in flows linked to oil contamination earlier this year. —Reuters



GUWAHATI: A man fishes in the Brahmaputra River in Guwahati yesterday. — AFP

Egypt's headline inflation slows to four-year low of 8.7% in July

CAIRO: Egypt's headline inflation rate fell to its lowest in nearly four years, dropping to 8.7 percent in July from 9.4 percent in June, official figures from the CAPMAS statistics agency showed yesterday.

Egypt is nearing the end of a three-year International Monetary Fund economic reform program that saw inflation rise to a high of 33 percent in 2017. July's rate defied analysts' expectations. It followed a fresh round of fuel subsidy cuts that pushed domestic fuel prices up by 16 percent to 30 percent.

"It seems that the energy price hikes may have had a smaller effect than many anticipated. But inflation in most other price categories eased too, suggesting that underlying price pressures are weakening," said William Jackson, chief emerging markets economist at Capital Economics.

Scaling back fuel subsidies that strained Egyptian budgets for decades was a key plank of the \$12 billion IMF reform package signed in 2016, when Egypt's economy was struggling to recover from the turmoil that followed its 2011 uprising. The changes were

expected to push up prices for transport, food products and other goods. "Inflation increased on a month-on-month basis, which reflects the rise in fuel prices, while the year-on-year figure eased, reflecting the favorable base effects," said Nadene Johnson, an economist at NKC African Economics. In July 2018, Egypt's headline inflation rate was 13.5 percent. "It's great news for the markets because it reinforces hopes of interest rate cuts in August. I think the central bank now has enough room to restart its monetary easing policy going forward," said Allen Sandeep, head of research at Naem Brokerage.

At its last meeting on July 11, the bank's Monetary Policy Committee left key interest rates unchanged at 15.75 percent and 16.75 percent for overnight deposit and lending respectively. It last cut its rates in February. Core inflation, which strips out volatile items such as food, fell to 5.9 percent in July from 6.4 percent in June. Rising prices for vegetables and fruit had been the main driver behind rising inflation over the years, which has prompted the interior ministry and the Egyptian army to offer some food staples at below market prices.

"It seems government efforts to help the internal market limit food-price increases have been working. It is good news and, I hope, will increase the chances of the MPC at the Central Bank of Egypt to propose cutting rates," said Angus Blair, chairman of business and economic forecasting think-tank Signet. Recent CAPMAS data showed that the number of Egyptians living below the poverty line rose to 32.5 percent in the 2017-2018 financial year from 27.8 percent in 2015-2016. The statistics agency set the poverty line at an annual income of 8,827 Egyptian pounds (\$535) per person. — Reuters

Thyssenkrupp slashes outlook and flags weak units

BERLIN: German industrial conglomerate Thyssenkrupp yesterday reported lower losses in the third quarter, flagging up three struggling businesses and slashing its forecasts as it tackles a massive restructuring. Essen-based Thyssenkrupp lost 77 million euros (\$86 million) in April-June, the third quarter of its financial year, it said in a statement.

In 2018 it had lost 114 million euros over the same period. Meanwhile revenues held steady, at 10.8 billion euros, but operating, or underlying profit plunged 25 percent, to 183 million euros.

Thyssenkrupp said its woes over its first nine months—with a net loss of 170 million euros, after a profit of 229 million last year—were due to "increasingly weaker global economic momentum, a marked downturn in the automotive sector and continued high import pressure for steel."

"Added to this was the massive increase in raw material prices, especially for iron ore," the group said. Bosses highlighted three units they saw as "currently not competitive": a business making springs and stabilizers for car chassis, one building production lines for automakers and a third building heavy steel plate for construction, shipbuilding and pipelines.

While it will first attempt to restructure the operations, "the company will examine other strategic options" if necessary. Thyssenkrupp, whose products range from submarines to car parts, elevators and construction materials, gave up on a joint venture in steel with India's Tata when the European Commission's competition arm would not wave it through.

The setback also nipped in the bud a plan to split into two separate businesses that had been urged by activist investors. But TK still expects to partially float its highly profitable elevators business on the stock market next year, valued by analysts at around 14 billion euros, and switch to a looser "holding" structure. It announced some 6,000 job cuts worldwide in May, with 4,000 falling in Germany and 2,000 in the steel division. — AFP



Guido Kerkhoff, CEO of steel-maker Thyssenkrupp AG, gestures during the annual shareholders meeting in Bochum, Germany. — AFP

Business

French Deliveroo cyclists urge clients to boycott in pay dispute

Management slaps new pay scales lowering wages

PARIS: Cyclists whisking meals for the food courier service Deliveroo in France called on clients to boycott the company on Wednesday, after management imposed new pay scales they say will lower their wages. "Today we want clients to know what's going on. Just for today, we're asking them not to order via Deliveroo or to connect to the site, to support the movement," said Jean-Daniel Zamor, president of a Paris collective of freelance food deliverers.

Zamor said the wheeled couriers would also gather Wednesday night at the Place de la Republique for a protest, which would be followed by efforts to block deliveries from several restaurants. About 50 riders turned up at the traditional rallying point in Paris to press their case against the new pay scale.

"Before, I used to make about 100 euros a day, now it's 80," one of the couriers said. Another complaint is that they are not paid while they wait in restaurants to collect the client's order. Riders have already been carrying out blockages and protests in recent days, after British-based Deliveroo said it would no longer guarantee a minimum of 4.70 euros (\$5.25) per delivery in Paris—a rate that changes for each city.

The company also cut pay for shorter trips while increasing it for longer routes, which many of the riders shun because they are not worth the effort. "Deliveroo was the platform that paid more or less the best, but now it's aligning itself with its rivals," Zamor said. "It's increasing insecurity for the entire sector."

'Gig economy'

Like other big cities around the world, Paris and other French hubs such as Marseille have seen a proliferation of food delivery bikes and mopeds zipping around the streets in recent years. Usually the couriers are freelance workers who have often battled for a guaranteed number of hours' work and other benefits. Deliveroo France has said the new pay rules will lead to higher earnings for "more than 54 percent of all orders." On Wednesday, it said it was "allocating even more money to cover couriers' expenses, paying them more for longer deliveries at their own request."

It also alleged that "those calling for a boycott are not Deliv-



PARIS: Food courier service Deliveroo's freelance deliverers gather in central Paris on Wednesday during a day of protest as they called on clients to boycott the brand today, after British-based Deliveroo said it would no longer guarantee a minimum of 4.70 euros (\$5.25) per delivery in Paris. — AFP

eroo workers and do not represent them." Zamor rejected the claim, saying the new system would cut riders' earnings by 30 to 50 percent.

He said riders planned further action at the weekend, striking in several cities, including Paris. France is, after Britain, the second-largest market for Deliveroo, operating in 200 cities with 10,000 restaurant partners. Since its London launch in 2013, Deliveroo has expanded into 500 towns and cities across Europe,

Asia, Australia and the Middle East.

But at times it has drawn criticism for its reliance on freelance couriers, with many saying the so-called "gig economy" workers should be considered employees. Last month, a court in Madrid said Deliveroo wrongly hired more than 500 riders as self-employed contractors, meaning that it owned 1.2 million euros to Spain's social security system. Deliveroo said it would appeal the ruling. — AFP

Trade wars take toll as Philippine growth slows to four-year-low

MANILA: Philippine economic growth slowed to 5.5 percent in the three months to June, its slowest pace in more than four years, as trade wars took their toll, the government said yesterday. "As we have anticipated, these have been challenging times," Economic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia said, blaming rising protectionism in advanced economies, as well as the El Nino dry spell that saw grain production contract. The 5.5 percent expansion was the country's lowest through 17 quarters.

GDP growth in the first three months of the year was also at a lower-than-expected 5.6 percent, making it more challenging for Manila to attain its full-year target of 6-7 percent. With two of the Philippines' top trading partners locked in an escalating trade war since the second half of 2018, Manila's total exports last year shrank by 1.8 percent

to \$67.5 billion.

First World protectionism was also "moderating" the performance of Manila's key information technology and business process management sector that serves mainly Western companies and employs millions, Pernia said. Growth in services exports, driven by the business process outsourcing sector, eased to 3.8 percent, the Philippine Statistics Authority said, compared to a 9.7 percent expansion in the same period last year and double-digit annual growth as late as in 2016.

Meanwhile growth in goods exports slumped to 4.6 percent in the quarter, from 16.1 percent a year earlier. "It is essential for the country to diversify its products and markets," Pernia said, also calling for a push in tourism, which has been "largely insulated from the trade wars and other tensions that we have been witnessing".

While the El Nino effect on the Philippines was relatively mild this year, Pernia said it had a "severe" impact on water supply in the capital Manila, where taps ran dry as water impounded in dams shrank.

"This adversely affected consumer confidence, resulting in a slowdown in household consumption," he said. A ban on public works activities ahead of last May's midterm elections, and a delay in the passage of this year's government budget, had also squeezed government consumption, particularly in construction, he added. — AFP

Singapore ready to stimulate ailing economy: PM

SINGAPORE: Singapore's government stands ready to stimulate the economy, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said yesterday, after some of the worst economic data in years prompted warnings that a recession may be looming. In an annual speech ahead of today's national day, Lee also said the city-state - which is seen as a bellwether for global growth but also has one of the world's fastest ageing societies - would raise the retirement age.

"This year our economy has slowed down. Global demand and international trade have weakened," Lee said. "This has affected our manufacturing sector and trade related services. In particular, we are feeling the worldwide cyclical downswing for electronics," he added.

"Should it become necessary to stimulate the economy, we will do so," Lee said, without giving further details. Data next week is expected to confirm Singapore experienced its slowest pace of expansion in a decade in the second quarter on a year-on-year basis.

It is also expected to show a near 3 percent quarter-on-quarter contraction, reaffirming the risk of a possible recession later this year. Singapore's central bank is widely expected to ease policy when it meets for the second of its semi-annual policy announcements in October, if not in an off-cycle move beforehand. With the world's second-fastest ageing society after South Korea, the global financial hub is growing more dependent on older residents as birth rates fall and foreign labor is curbed.

The government reached a pact with trade unions and employers this year to raise the retirement age, now 62, and the re-employment age - which requires companies by law to offer eligible employees the option of continuing to work until they are 67. In his speech yesterday, Lee confirmed plans to raise the retirement age but said the details would be revealed in a speech on Aug. 18. — Reuters

Business

In wealthy Silicon Valley, a \$500m plan to save threatened farmland

New initiative is part of a larger county-wide agricultural preservation program

SAN MARTIN, California: With a swipe of his harvesting knife, Sam Thorpe frees a handful of spinach from its roots in the soil. "In the winter it's so sweet it's like candy," he says, examining the small yield in his palm.

For the past four years, Thorpe and his family have built a reputation among Silicon Valley restaurateurs and farmers markets for the rich, organic produce they grow as Spade & Plow. But as the business grows, the land itself is shrinking. A few months ago the owner reduced Spade & Plow's plot from 33 acres to just 16.

The same owner also just sold another farmland parcel to developers, leading Thorpe and his family to think hard before planting any long-term crops. "Even though the property we're farming on doesn't face immediate threat of development, we're still feeling the (pressure)," said Thorpe. To help farmers like him, Santa Clara County - home of tech haven Silicon Valley - is purchasing local farmland at market rates to ensure its future in agriculture, a process known as the agricultural easement.

The new initiative, so far involving just a handful of landowners, is part of a larger county-wide agricultural preservation program partially funded by greenhouse gas taxes from the state.

Similar easements have helped preserve more than 5 million acres nationwide. Sacramento County, home to California's capital, has included agricultural easements in its general plan since at least the early 1990s. Thorpe and his family have wanted to purchase farmland in Silicon Valley since they started in 2015.

"We're really looking for something long term, and we wouldn't be able to afford something in the area without an agricultural easement," he explained. County officials say it could take up to \$500 million to preserve 12,000 acres of farmland in one of the country's priciest real estate markets.

"We're talking about Silicon Valley," noted Keali'i Bright, a deputy director at the California

Department of Conservation, addressing the area's vast wealth. "Development pressures are extremely high, and anybody could develop their farm or ranch pretty quickly," he said of the area best known as home to major tech companies like Apple and Facebook.

Santa Clara Valley agriculture still supports 8,100 jobs, adding \$830 million annually to the region's economy. But in 30 years, the county has lost more than 21,100 farmland acres to non-agricultural uses like buildings and housing. Jenny Li, whose family has farmed here for 40 years, has struggled to find land that is both high-quality and affordable. Once the lease on her family's 20-acre farm ends in February, the future is uncertain. "Is he (the landowner) going to increase the rent? Or is he deciding to just sell it?" Li wondered. "If that is the case, we don't know if the business will continue."

Protect farmland, prevent sprawl

The Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation program - the state initiative helping fund Santa Clara County's effort - has provided grant money to protect 90,700 acres of fertile land since starting in 2014. Potential benefits of the program extend beyond land preservation, including cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

"You protect farmland and that prevents sprawl, and the prevention of sprawl takes more cars off the road or at least has them driving less," said Michael Meehan, a Santa Clara County planner. By purchasing the rights to farmland and designating it for agricultural use, its development potential drops, along with its value. Meehan likens it to constructing an apartment building and designating it for affordable housing.

Officials expect the benefits to reach all farmers, not just those who participate, by virtue of deregulation of agricultural employee housing and incentives for carbon neutral farming, plus other eco-conscious services.



County officials discuss the region's agricultural future.

\$20 million a year

David Cortese, a member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, said start-up funds are in place, but with about \$20 million needed each year the future is uncertain. One model they may look at is taking a few cents from each dollar of property tax, the county's main revenue source, to fund a trust - a move which voters would need to approve.

"You literally take \$20 million right off the top of property tax," Cortese explained. Tom Daniels, a land management professor at the University of Pennsylvania, said Santa Clara County is on the right path. Its efforts are in line with what Suffolk County in New York did to preserve nearly 20,000 farm acres, he added: partner with local governments and non-governmental organizations like land trusts, which can collect private donations. Despite the steep tab to preserve Santa Clara County land, "you also have an awful lot of wealth there," Daniels said.

Federal officials are also keen on the program.

"There's only so many conservation dollars to go around and really if we can focus that in specific areas to kind of build these ag reserves, you're better off in the long run," said Dean Kwasny, a U.S. Department of Agriculture easement specialist. "The last thing we want to see is that we purchase 250 acres in (a county and) it ends up being developed all around it."

Finding the right price

Chris Borello, who with his family owns a cherry grove in Morgan Hill and other properties, is both hopeful and skeptical about the program, for which he is applying. He does not think the market rate is the appropriate price. "If the county as a whole says 'agricultural land is important to us and we want to keep farmers here and we want to buy their development rights,' then they need to pony up and pay an amount that motivates people," said Borello. — Reuters

FedEx cuts ties with Amazon in sign of new rivalry

WASHINGTON: FedEx said Wednesday it would stop making ground deliveries for Amazon in the latest sign of competition between the two firms. The move comes two months after the package delivery giant announced it was ending express service with Amazon as it moves to work with others in the online retail sector. "This change is consistent with our strategy to focus on the broader e-commerce market, which the recent announcements related to our FedEx ground network have us positioned extraordinarily well to do," a FedEx statement said.

Amazon has been bolstering its own logistics network and earlier this year offered employees \$10,000 to quit their jobs and create their own delivery enterprise. In June, FedEx said Amazon accounted for less than 1.3 percent of its total revenue for 2018 and announced it was building out a network "to serve thousands of retailers in the e-commerce space."

Amazon, which also has its own aircraft and vehicle fleet for its logistics and is experimenting with drone and robot deliveries, has faced criticism from President Donald Trump, who claimed its deal with the US Postal Service gave the company overly favorable rates.

Queried on the latest development, Amazon said in a statement: "We are constantly innovating to improve the carrier experience and sometimes that means reevaluating our carrier relationships. FedEx has been a great partner over the years and we appreciate all their work delivering packages to our customers." — AFP

Strong US growth keeps Deutsche Telekom on track

FRANKFURT: German network operator Deutsche Telekom yesterday confirmed its 2019 outlook after almost doubling profits in the second quarter, as its American mobile arm again saw surging customer numbers. In April-June, Telekom booked an increase in net profit of 91 percent year-on-year, to 944 million euros (\$1.1 billion).

The comparison to 2018's second quarter was distorted by a huge one-off payment to the German government last year over road toll business Toll Collect. Operating, or underlying profit was stable, at 2.35 billion euros, on the back of revenues up 7.1 percent at 19.6 billion. Telekom managed to outperform on rev-

enue but fall short on profitability compared with expectations from analysts surveyed by Factset. US mobile arm T-Mobile was once again the growth driver for the group, adding 1.8 million net customers in April-June to top 83 million.

It has now secured the go-ahead from American authorities to merge with competitor Sprint, creating a number-three firm in the market with the scale to compete with leaders Verizon and AT&T.

At home in Europe, massive outlays lie ahead as Telekom begins building out its next-generation 5G network in Germany, costing 2.2 billion euros. The group said its bundling of mobile and landline services was continuing to win over new customers in Germany, with similar products now on offer in all its European markets after it added Austria and Poland. Looking to the full year, Telekom stuck to its forecast of revenue growth between one and two percent and operating profit as measured by EBITDA of 23.9 billion euros, 2.5 percent higher than in 2018. — AFP

Business

US weekly jobless claims fall; labor market strong

Four-week average of claims rise 250 to 212,250

WASHINGTON: The number of Americans filing applications for unemployment benefits unexpectedly fell last week, suggesting the labor market remains strong even as the economy is slowing. Initial claims for state unemployment benefits declined 8,000 to a seasonally adjusted 209,000 for the week ended Aug. 3, the Labor Department said yesterday. Data for the prior week was revised to show 2,000 more applications received than previously reported. Last week's drop in claims pushed them to the lower end of their 193,000-244,000 range for this year. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast claims would be unchanged at 215,000 in the latest week. The Labor Department said only claims for Idaho were estimated last week.

The four-week moving average of initial claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, edged up 250 to 212,250 last week. US stock index futures held gains after the release of the data. Prices of US Treasuries dipped while the dollar was trading slightly higher. Claims will be watched over the coming weeks for signs that deteriorating trade relations which have dimmed the economy's outlook and roiled financial markets, were spilling over to the labor market.

Concerns over the impact of the bitter trade war

on the US economic expansion, the longest on record, prompted the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates last week for the first time since 2008.

With tensions between the two economic giants escalating in recent days and recession risks rising, financial markets have fully priced in another rate cut next month. Expectations for a 50-basis-point cut at the Fed's Sept. 17-18 policy meeting have also risen. While hiring has slowed, the pace of job gains remains well above the roughly 100,000 needed per month to keep up with growth in the working-age population.

Nonfarm payrolls increased by 164,000 jobs in July, down from 193,000 in June. Job growth over the last three months averaged 140,000 per month, the lowest in nearly two years, compared to 223,000 in 2018. The moderation in employment growth partly reflects a shortage of workers.

The economy grew at a 2.1 percent annualized rate in the second quarter, slowing from the first quarter's brisk 3.1 percent pace. Growth is seen below a 2.0 percent rate in the July-September quarter. Thursday's claims report also showed the number of people receiving benefits after an initial week of aid dropped 15,000 to 1.68 million for the week ended July 27. The four-week moving average of the so-called continuing claims fell 11,000 to 1.69 million. — Reuters



NEW YORK: Nonfarm payrolls increased by 164,000 jobs in July, down from 193,000 in June. — AFP

Cobalt hits headlines as Glencore shuts a key facility

LONDON: Cobalt hit the headlines Wednesday after Glencore shut a key African facility that mines the rare metal and blamed prices that have been tumbling from highs seen in recent years on battery demand. Zurich-based resources giant Glencore, which also announced slumping first-half profits, decided to temporarily halt output at its Mutanda mine in the southern Katanga province of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Here are some things to know about the metal's changing fortunes.

What is cobalt?

Cobalt is a strategic grey metal which possesses unique properties that make it ideal for high-end technology and also for its blue pigmentation for coloring.

The metal is an essential component for batteries in smartphones and electric cars, and also used in the aerospace sector as a super-alloy in engines. Many investors regard cobalt as a key component to help herald a green revolution in the auto industry.

"Cobalt is used in pigments and coloring—for glass, for example—but investors and miners have become excited about the element because of its use in batteries and especially lithium-ion cathodes," said investment director Russ Mould at British brokerage AJ Bell.

"This means that cobalt is a very important raw material for portable electronic devices and also potentially electric vehicles," he said. The rare earth metal is usually mined as a by-product of nickel and copper, he said.

Why did prices slump?

Cobalt surged between 2016 and 2018 as more carmakers unveiled long-term plans to phase out high-polluting diesel and petrol vehicles — in favor of greener electric models that use batteries. That persuaded producing nations—including Australia, Canada, Russia and Zambia—to ramp up cobalt output to meet battery demand.

Yet prices tumbled this year to strike a three-year low in July, as investors eyed abundant supplies and questioned the strength of demand from both car and smartphone manufacturers.

"According to data from the London Metal Exchange, cobalt prices are down by some 40 percent from their peak this year to \$12 per pound," Mould said. "The reason is a surge in supply, particularly from mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where Glencore is now curtailing activity at the Mutanda mine in response. "Smartphone volumes have begun to stall and it is still relatively early days for the electric vehicle market."

What is the outlook?

Market commentators do not expect demand to outpace those plentiful supplies for another three years. Sentiment is also hampered by global economic turmoil and simmering trade tensions between China and the United States. "Cobalt began to lose its luster and prices corrected," noted Darton analyst Andries Gerbens in reference to this year's price drop.

"The market balance is expected to turn in 2022, at which point demand growth is outpacing supply." The production halt at the Mutanda project in DRC's southern Katanga province came in response to the mine's "reduced economic viability," as prices for the battery metal fell, according to Glencore.

However, chief executive Ivan Glasenberg predicted that Mutanda "will recommence (operations) once economic conditions sufficiently improve". The DRC is the biggest producer with almost three quarters of world output in 2018, according to Darton Commodities. — AFP

US, Britain back rapid trade deal post-Brexit

WASHINGTON: The top US and British diplomats said on Wednesday they were prepared to move "as soon as possible" on a trade deal after Britain's planned withdrawal from the European Union on October 31. Speaking in Washington, British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab urged the EU to negotiate a new pact on Britain's departure to avoid a potentially calamitous "no-deal" Brexit.

Raab said after meeting US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo the two sides agreed on the need for quick negotiations on a two-way trade deal after Brexit strands Britain outside the current US-EU trade pact. "America is our single largest bilateral trading partner. President Trump has made clear again that he wants an ambitious free trade agreement with UK, so I hope that we can make that happen as soon as possible after we leave the EU on the 31st of October," Raab told reporters.

Standing at Raab's side, Pompeo said Washington supports London's "sovereign choice" in withdrawing

from the European Union, whatever happens. "However Brexit ultimately shakes out, we'll be on the doorstep hand-in-hand, ready to sign a new free trade agreement at the earliest possible time," Pompeo said. Raab repeated Prime Minister Boris Johnson's determination to leave the EU at the end of October whether or not the two sides set a new agreement governing post-Brexit relations. Since Johnson took office on July 24 promising to change the previously negotiated terms of the looming divorce, EU officials have refused to reopen talks. "This government, this cabinet is absolutely resolved, determined to leave the EU by the end of October," Raab said. "There's a deal to be done. The PM has expressed that to our European partners," he added.

"But I think if the EU's position is that there can be no change to the withdrawal agreement, then that would be a choice that they've made, and that makes it very difficult to see how we can move a negotiation forward."

Trump, who sees a like-minded leader in Johnson, has said that trade between the two countries could multiply once Britain leaves the EU and spoke to the British prime minister about a deal within days of his taking office last month. "Negotiating and signing an exciting new free trade agreement with the US is one of my top priorities," said Truss, who supported remaining in the EU in the 2016 referendum but later changed her position. — AFP

Sports

All Blacks stick with Barrett-Mo'unga experiment against Wallabies

PERTH: New Zealand coach Steve Hansen has demanded his team take their chances against the Wallabies in Perth tomorrow as he persisted with twin playmakers in their build-up to the World Cup.

The experiment of Beauden Barrett at 15 and Richie Mo'unga at 10 was first trialled with mixed success against South Africa two weeks ago. But when naming the team on Thursday Hansen said there was now "improved clarity of roles". Hansen made several changes to the side that drew 16-all with the Springboks, including the return of blockbusting loose forward Ardie Savea. Savea will take the six jersey, with Hansen resisting the temptation to move skipper Kieran Read, in his 120th Test, to the side of the scrum.

Other changes see Dane Coles as the starting hooker, while Scott Barrett takes over from the injured Brodie Retallick in the middle row and Sam Cane returns as the openside flanker. In the backs, Aaron Smith will start at scrum-half. It was noticeable in the South Africa Test, when he came on in the second half, that the Barrett partnership with Mo'unga meshed more smoothly.

Anton Lienert-Brown has the 12 jersey while Sonny Bill Williams remains in New Zealand to work on his match fitness. Hansen said he expected his team to step up after squandering too

many opportunities against South Africa, pointing to Barrett as a key link in the chain. "We've just got to make sure we keep providing opportunities and if you looked at the footage against South Africa we did create plenty of opportunities, didn't take too many of them," he said.

"So it's now about taking the next step and taking those opportunities that we're creating from having him (Barrett) back there." Barrett said he and Mo'unga learned a lot from each other in the last game. "Playing alongside him, there's a great sense of calmness and that's a quality of his that rubs off on the boys in those tough moments when you just need to steady the ship and keep things simple," he said.

DESPERATE AND HUNGRY

Although this is the final round of the Rugby Championship, it is also the first match in the annual Bledisloe Cup series against Australia which New Zealand rate as second in importance only to the World Cup.

"Our preparation this week here in Perth has been very good. We can tell that it's 'Bledisloe One' week as there's a real sense of purpose in everything we do, and a real desire to do it well," Hansen said. "With the extra time together, we're starting to see an improved clarity of roles out on the training park." New Zealand's current run of holding the Bledisloe Cup dates back to 2002



Beauden Barrett (left) and Richie Mo'unga.

and Hansen said they were "desperate and hungry" to win it again. "It has always been incredibly important to this team and teams before us. It's those teams, ourselves, our country and our many fans that inspire and drive us to want to go out and re-take the trophy," he said.

"We've never felt that it's about going out and 'retaining' the Cup because it's always been about earning the right to have it."

NEW ZEALAND (15-1)

Beauden Barrett; Ben Smith, Jack Goodhue, Anton Lienert-Brown, Rieko Ioane; Richie Mo'unga, Aaron Smith; Kieran Read (capt), Sam Cane, Ardie Savea; Sam Whitelock, Scott Barrett; Owen Franks, Dane Coles, Joe Moody. Replacements: Codie Taylor, Atu Moli, Angus Ta'avao, Patrick Tuipulotu, Matt Todd, TJ Pere-nara, Ngani Laumape, George Bridge. — AFP

Australia's O'Connor: From golden boy to bad boy, and back again

PERTH: James O'Connor, who went from Wallabies golden boy to exiled bad boy in a few short years, will complete his redemption tale tomorrow after being named to start against the All Blacks. The formerly wayward star played 12 minutes off the bench against Argentina a fortnight ago, but he hasn't begun a game since 2013 when his Australian Rugby Union contract was torn up.

It followed the then 23-year-old being prevented from boarding a flight from Perth to Bali for being drunk. His chequered past also includes being arrested and fined in Paris during a cocaine bust while playing for Toulon, before a move to England's Sale Sharks and then the Queensland Reds last month.

"I've been on a journey... to understanding my true self and how I'm meant to use my privileged position in rugby," he said recently. "I see now that rugby is a gift and I want my journey back to inspire possibly other young men out there who may be a little lost in the world right now."

The troubled player, who made his international debut in 2008 aged just 18, revealed last year that he faced his demons at a retreat in Iceland which used sensory deprivation, heat exhaustion and deep states of meditation.

"My reaction to each stimulus has forced me to face myself and my darkness in a way that I have never felt before. I now know who I was but more importantly, I now see who I must become," he wrote on Instagram. He added that the experience had made him re-



James O'Connor

alise "a deep desire to play for the Wallabies again". That dream has now come true with his selection at outside centre in place of Tevita Kuridrani against New Zealand in Australia's Rugby Championship clash, which doubles as a Bledisloe Cup Test.

Coach Michael Cheika said he had faith in the versatile O'Connor to deliver in Perth tomorrow, banking on the All Blacks' lack of familiarity with his game. "I think James will bring something a little bit different that we haven't seen, so definitely our opponents won't have seen it either," he said. "He seems to have handled it pretty well in training. I am looking forward to seeing him out there." O'Connor hasn't played in the centres in his 45 Tests, but Cheika said he was satisfied he wasn't throwing him in the deep end. "There will be certain set-piece requirements that he'll need to fill there and then after that it's just be there and play footy, and that's what he's good at, he's good at playing footy," he said. — AFP

Ducati face moment of truth against unstoppable Marquez in Austria

SPIELBERG: After winning the last three MotoGPs in Austria, it is make or break time for the Ducatis this weekend as they return to Spielberg, hoping to stop Marc Marquez's seemingly unstoppable march to the title.

Ducati's Andrea Dovizioso, winner of this race in 2017, is 63 points behind the Spaniard whose Honda has taken the chequered flag in the last two races in Germany and the Czech Republic. Another Marquez victory in Austria—he already has six out of 10 so far this season—and Dovizioso can all but kiss goodbye to the title even though there are a further eight races to come.

"The Red Bull Ring is an excellent track for us, this is clear from the results achieved there in the last few years," said the 33-year-old Italian who is still searching for his first world title. "But as I'm always saying, each race has its own story to tell. Last year Marquez finished ahead of me, so I'm sure that this year he will again be competitive."

The Ducatis will certainly give the Hondas a good race although the speed of the bikes of Dovizioso and Jack Miller, who finished second and third in Brno on Sunday, cannot compensate for a lack of agility on the turns.

But the Austrian circuit is fast and the record top speed of 316.5 km/h which they set in 2017 could be beaten. Marquez, though, who has never won in Austria, will be well aware that the course requires a lot of braking, one of the



Marc Marquez

strengths of his Honda. He will again be teamed up with the German Stefan Bradl while Jorge Lorenzo won here for Ducati last year—is still recovering from injuries he picked up in Assen in June. He is expected to return at Silverstone at the end of the month.

Suzuki will be a man down following Joan Mir's high speed accident during testing in Brno on Monday. "It was a big crash and I was transferred to the hospital for further checks because I rolled through the gravel many times and took a lot of hits," Mir told the team website.

"At the beginning I struggled to breathe because of the pulmonary contusion, but step by step I improved and now I'm feeling better." Although he is out of hospital, Suzuki decided Mir, who won two Moto 3 races at the Red Bull Ring, should skip the race in Austria.

With Mir absent, Alex Rins will be the sole Suzuki on the start line. Yamaha, meanwhile, are raring to get to grips with this fast circuit. Their tuned-up bikes went well in the Brno testing with young Frenchman Fabio Quartararo, Maverick Vinales and Franco Morbidelli putting in the best three performances. — AFP

Sports

Yanks sweep Orioles, set record for HRs

Marte, Gallen power D-backs past Phillies

BALTIMORE: Gio Urshela and Kyle Higashino both homered twice, and Cameron Maybin added one as the visiting New York Yankees defeated the Baltimore Orioles 14-2 on Wednesday night. New York completed a sweep of the three-game series and stretched its winning streak to eight games. The Yankees hit 16 homers in the three games, and they set a major league record for home runs in a season against one opponent with 52. The two teams still have four more meetings this season, next week at Yankee Stadium. New York ended the season with 43 homers at Camden Yards, another major league record for a team at an opposing ballpark. New York has won 15 straight games in Baltimore, a Yankees record for most consecutive road wins against another team. Orioles first baseman Chris Davis and manager Brandon Hyde had a disagreement in the dugout in the middle of the fifth inning, and Davis needed to be restrained. Hyde, who kept the details private after the game, then sent up a pinch hitter for Davis.

ASTROS 14, ROCKIES 3

Yuli Gurriel homered and had a career-high eight RBIs, Jose Altuve also hit a home run, and host Houston beat Colorado. Gurriel's RBI total tied a team record set by J.R. Towles on Sept. 20, 2007. Yordan Alvarez had three hits and Alex Bregman had two hits and three RBIs for the Astros, who have won six in a row. Gerrit Cole (14-5) allowed two runs on three hits over six innings and struck out 10. Nolan Arenado and Trevor Story homered for the Rockies, who lost all four games against the Astros this season. Colorado fell 10 games below .500 for the first time this season.

DODGERS 2, CARDINALS 1

Russell Martin grounded a two-strike, two-out single up the middle in the ninth inning to score two runs and lift Los Angeles over visiting St. Louis, completing a sweep of the three-game series. Andrew Miller retired Cody Bellinger to start the ninth, but then hit Corey Seager with a high fastball. Carlos Martinez (2-2) entered and gave up a two-strike single to rookie catcher Will Smith to put runners on first and second. Edwin Rios struck out for the second out, but a wild pitch on the first pitch to Martin moved the runners to second and third, setting up the walk-off single.

INDIANS 2, RANGERS 0 (GAME 1)

Jose Ramirez belted a two-run homer in the seventh inning as host Cleveland beat Texas in the opening game of a doubleheader. Mike Freeman and Carlos Santana each had a single for the Indians, who mustered just three hits. Nick Goody (3-0) allowed one hit and struck out three batters over two innings in relief of rookie Zach Plesac to bridge the gap to closer Brad Hand. Hand fanned Hunter Pence, Rougned Odor and Logan Forsythe on 13 pitches in the ninth to secure his 28th save of the season.

INDIANS 5, RANGERS 1 (GAME 2)

Jose Ramirez hit his second homer of the day as host Cleveland completed a doubleheader sweep of Texas. Carlos Santana and Jason Kipnis each ripped an RBI double, and Yasiel Puig had a run-scoring single for the

Indians, who have won 18 of their last 24 contests to move within two games of first-place Minnesota in the American League Central. The division rivals begin a four-game series in Minneapolis on Thursday. Cleveland elected to use a bullpen game in the nightcap, with five pitchers combining to allow just one run on four hits while striking out nine without walking a batter.

BRAVES 11, TWINS 7

Ozzie Albies went 4-for-5 with two home runs as Atlanta, despite hitting into a triple play, cruised to victory over Minnesota in the rubber game of a three-game series in Minneapolis. It was Albies' second consecutive four-hit game and the third of his career. Freddie Freeman, who homered for the third consecutive game, went 3-for-5 and scored twice. Ronald Acuna Jr. also homered for Atlanta. Charlie Culberson also had four hits and two RBIs, and Johan Camargo had three RBIs for Atlanta, which finished with 16 hits for the second straight game.

NATIONALS 4, GIANTS 1

Gerardo Parra stung his former team with a three-run home run, and Joe Ross celebrated a happy homecoming with six shutout innings, allowing Washington to complete a three-game sweep at San Francisco. Adam Eaton and Trea Turner combined for five hits and two runs for the Nationals, who finished off a 5-1 season-series win over the Giants. Washington completed the pitching-dominated, three-game road sweep without using any of its top three starters—Stephen Strasburg, Max Scherzer or Patrick Corbin.

METS 7, MARLINS 2

Michael Conforto homered twice, and Pete Alonso and Jeff McNeil added long balls for scorching New York, which capped a four-game sweep of visiting Miami. Steven Matz earned the victory with 6 2/3 solid innings for the Mets, who have won six straight and 13 of 14 — their best 14-game run since 1990. New York, which closed within one game of the National League's second wild-card spot, is a major-league-best 19-6 since the All-Star break. The Marlins have lost six in a row and eight of nine.

CUBS 10, A'S 1

Jose Quintana threw seven strong innings to earn his sixth straight winning decision, and Ian Happ's grand slam highlighted a five-run fourth as Chicago rolled over visiting Oakland. One day after being routed 11-4 by the A's, Chicago returned the favor while continuing to support Quintana (10-7). The left-hander allowed one run, two hits and struck out seven without a walk to improve to 6-0 with a 3.67 ERA over his past seven starts, all of which the Cubs have won. Kyle Schwarber added a three-run homer and Victor Caratini a solo shot for NL Central-leading Chicago, which completed a 5-1 homestand to improve to 41-19 at Wrigley Field.

BLUE JAYS 4, RAYS 3

Derek Fisher hit a two-run homer, and Lourdes Gurriel Jr. and Randal Grichuk each hit solo shots as Toronto held on to beat Tampa Bay in St. Petersburg, Fla. Toronto won



BALTIMORE: Cameron Maybin #38 of the New York Yankees dives for a single hit by Stevie Wilkerson (not pictured) #12 of the Baltimore Orioles in the seventh inning at Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore, Maryland. — AFP

the rubber match of the three-game series to complete a 7-3 road trip. It is the first time the Blue Jays have won a series against the Rays since Aug. 14-17, 2017. After Wilmer Font allowed a single and a hit batter while striking out five in 2 1/3 innings as the opener, Brock Stewart (1-0) pitched four scoreless innings in his Blue Jays debut. Stewart, claimed off waivers from the Los Angeles Dodgers on July 31, allowed two hits and two walks, hit a batter and struck out three.

BREWERS 8, PIRATES 3

Rookie Keston Hiura homered twice and doubled, driving in three runs to help visiting Milwaukee paste Pittsburgh for a three-game series sweep. Eric Thames added a two-run single, and Lorenzo Cain had a pinch-hit, two-run single for the Brewers, who played without slugger Christian Yelich (back pain) for the second straight game. Jacob Stallings hit a solo homer, and Bryan Reynolds and Starling Marte each had an RBI single for the Pirates, who are 4-21 since the All-Star break.

MARINERS 3, PADRES 2

Mallex Smith led off the eighth inning with a double and scored the go-ahead run as host Seattle snapped a five-game losing streak with a victory against San Diego. Kyle Seager homered for Seattle, which had lost to the Padres seven straight times in interleague play. Fernando Tatis Jr. and Francisco Mejia homered for the Padres.

WHITE SOX 8, TIGERS 1

James McCann had three hits and drove in three runs against his former team, Ivan Nova pitched eight scoreless innings, and visiting Chicago pounded Detroit. Nova (7-9) scat-

tered five hits, walked three and struck out one to help the White Sox win for the fourth time in five games. The Tigers lost for the sixth time in seven games. Jose Abreu had three hits, scored twice and drove in two more for the White Sox, while Tim Anderson reached base five times, including four hits, and scored three runs. Ryan Cordell added his sixth homer of the season.

DIAMONDBACKS 6, PHILLIES 1

Rookie Zac Gallen allowed one hit in five shutout innings during his Arizona debut, and Ketel Marte reached base four times in the Diamondbacks' victory over Philadelphia in Phoenix. Gallen (2-3) allowed only a single to Jean Segura in the second while walking three and striking out six. The 24-year-old, acquired from the Miami Marlins for touted shortstop prospect Jazz Chisholm last week, was pulled after 85 pitches. T.J. McFarland, Yoshihisa Hirano and Andrew Chafin each pitched scoreless innings before Bryce Harper hit his 20th home run of the season, a one-out shot to the opposite field off rookie Kevin Ginkel in the ninth.

ROYALS 4, RED SOX 4 (10TH INNING, SUSPENDED)

Host Boston and Kansas City had the rubber match of a three-game series suspended due to unrelenting rain and lightning with the score tied in the top of the 10th inning. The downpour picked up in the ninth, when both teams put the leadoff runner on but failed to score to force extras. Three pitches into the 10th, the decision to pull the tarp on the field was made, and after nearly two hours, the suspension was announced. The contest will resume Aug. 22, which had been scheduled as an off day for both teams. — Reuters

Sports

Tiger battles back stiffness as US PGA playoffs begin

NEW YORK: Tiger Woods struggled with a stiff back Wednesday, limited to chipping and putting on the back nine of his pro-am round on the eve of the US PGA playoff opener. World number five Woods tees off in yesterday's opening round of the Northern Trust, the first of three tour playoff events culminating with the Tour Championship, where Woods is the defending champion.

Woods, the reigning Masters champion, has played a limited schedule this season in hopes of keeping himself healthy at age 43, but admits he has days when he faces major back issues and others when he can drive the ball with golf's best. "This is how it is. Some days I'm stiffer than others," Woods said. "I was out there hitting it great. Driving it out there with Brooks and DJ (long-hitters Brooks Koepka and Dustin Johnson).

"Today I'm stiff. Hopefully I'm not that way tomorrow." Woods, a 15-time major champion chasing the all-time record 18 majors won by Jack Nicklaus, has 81 career US PGA titles, one shy of matching Sam Snead's all-time record.

Woods tees off alongside fellow Americans J.T. Poston and Scott Piercy on Thursday morning at Liberty National in Jersey City, New Jersey. At 28th in the season points standings, just behind his playing partners for the first two days, Woods is in danger of failing to qualify for a chance to defend his Tour Championship crown.

He must be in the top 30 after next week at

Medinah to reach the season finale at Atlanta's East Lake. Playing all three would be his longest run of events since last year's playoffs, when he was testing his recovery from a spinal fusion. "I learned a lot last year by playing too much," Woods said. "Coming back from my procedure and not really knowing what to expect, I pushed it pretty hard. I vowed I would never do that again. "Now we have a more condensed season and it's trying to figure out how to stay sharp, practice and also have my back feeling good all the time. It's a challenge."

'IT TAKES A TOLL'

Woods hasn't played back-to-back weeks since February. "There's concern, hopefully because of the pressures I'm going to be facing," Woods said. "I'm trying to get myself where I'm in contention, where it takes a toll on you."

Woods won for the first time since 2013 last year at East Lake, then captured his first major title since the 2008 US Open at the Masters in April at Augusta National. Since capturing a fifth green jacket, Woods has played only four times—missing the cut at the British Open and PGA Championship, sharing 21st at the US Open and ninth at the Nicklaus-hosted Memorial, a US Open tuneup. Woods was twice a runner-up at the Northern Trust at Liberty National, in 2009 and 2013. The latter loss, to Adam Scott by a



JERSEY CITY: Tiger Woods of the United States plays a shot out of a bunker on the 12th hole during the first round of The Northern Trust at Liberty National Golf Club yesterday in Jersey City, New Jersey. — AFP

stroke, was one of the first places where Woods was severely nagged by back spasms. Woods was at Liberty National in 2017 as a Presidents Cup assistant captain to Steve Stricker. This year, Woods will captain the American squad

that will travel to Australia to defend the trophy at Royal Melbourne. Woods ranks 12th in the standings for making the Presidents Cup team with two events remaining but says his being there as a player is not assured. — AFP

Japan provides judo training to Samoan athletes

APIA: In a large church hall near the Samoan parliament, 175-kg (386-lb) judo practitioner Derek Sua is being thrown to the mat by his Japanese coach, a black-belt who is just a third his size.

Sua welcomes the training, usually difficult for athletes in Pacific Ocean islands to secure, but now offered free by Japan's development assistance agency, to help him qualify for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

"It's not easy, because here in the Pacific for us, especially Pacific islanders, we have limited competition," Sua said. "Because we need to find funding to travel overseas and compete."

Sua added that he would train in Japan in August with several other Samoans, following an invitation he described as fostering goodwill between the two nations. But the offer is also part of a wider diplomatic effort in the Pacific by the United States and its allies, including Japan, to counter the growing influence of China, which has ramped up its sports programmes in the region.

Sometimes called "soft" or "cultural" diplomacy, such programmes can extend beyond sports to language exchanges and the arts, with the aim of advancing foreign policy goals.

Although tiny, the Pacific islands control vast swaths of resource-rich ocean and strategic infrastructure, such as airstrips and ports, provoking interest from China and a counter response from the United States.

Last week, Samoan sports minister Loau Keneti Sio said China had extended an invitation to train a "large contingent" of young athletes in sports, from athletics to badminton and volleyball, later this year. China had already hosted Samoan athletes ahead of the Olympic-styled Pacific Games, held in Samoa in July, while training chefs and performers for the opening and closing ceremonies, he added. China has soft power initiatives elsewhere in the Pacific, which include exposing regional table tennis players to the country's world-class coaches and training regimes. The judo diplomacy comple-



Derek Sua

ments similar initiatives from regional allies Australia and New Zealand, which actively use rugby union and league to forge strong ties with Pacific islands, where the football codes are dominant.

Originating in Japan, judo makes use of grip fighting and throws that have proved to be effective techniques for mixed martial art competitions.

On the mats in Samoa, Sua's coach, Kohei Kamibayashi, said judo was a sport whose most powerful practitioners did not always win the battle. The Japanese coach said his star Samoan pupil, who competed at the last Olympics in Brazil, must prepare to face bigger opponents in his 100-kg (221-lb) -plus category, where there are no weight limits.

Kamibayashi said he was helping Sua perfect his use of a technique called "seoi-nage", effective for throwing bigger opponents.

While Samoans were naturally built for a sport like judo, it was a very demanding martial art that was still struggling to win converts on the island, Sua added.

"It can be another dominant sport here in Samoa if a lot of people get interested," he said. — Reuters

S Arabia to host world's richest horse race in 2020

SAUDI ARABIA: Saudi Arabia will host the world's richest horse race in Riyadh at the King Abdulaziz Racetrack next year, with a purse of \$20 million up for grabs, the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia said yesterday. The Saudi Cup, which will be run over nine furlongs (1800 metres) on dirt on Feb. 29, will have a maximum 14 runners, with the winner set to land \$10 million.

The prize money at the Saudi Cup will eclipse the \$16 million purse at the Pegasus World Cup Invitational in Florida last year. "The introduction of the Saudi Cup as an international race is without doubt the most significant event in the history of horse racing in Saudi Arabia," Prince Bandar bin Khalid Al Faisal said in a statement.

"We look forward to welcoming international horsemen and women, the media, racing enthusiasts and the public to Riyadh in 2020." Frankie Dettori, three-times British flat racing's champion jockey, is impressed by the track.

"Of all the dirt tracks I've ridden, it's the one I like best, as you can win from the front, and you can win from behind. It's a fair track," the 48-year-old said. "The other thing I like is that the kickback is so much less than on other dirt tracks. I don't know why, but the sand seems finer and doesn't stick." — Reuters

Sports

Rafael Nadal, Thiem advance at rain-hit ATP Montreal Masters

MONTREAL: Rafael Nadal and Dominic Thiem advanced into the third round of the ATP Montreal Masters on Wednesday, with Thiem achieving a personal best in Canada. Top-seeded holder Nadal suffered through a two-hour rain interruption before dismissing Britain's Daniel Evans 7-6 (8/6), 6-4.

Austrian second seed Thiem, who claimed a clay title at the weekend at home in Kitzbuehel before crossing the Atlantic, won his first match in Canada after five losses, defeating home hero Denis Shapovalov 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

With weather forecasts dicey for the next few days, the Spanish top seed got a taste of the conditions he might face as the 18-time Grand Slam champion defends his Canadian title. "Today, the main thing was win. I've been playing and practising more or less well. Now is the moment to compete," Nadal said. "Today I competed enough well to be through. Tomorrow is another challenge."

That test will be against Argentina's Guido Pella, who beat Radu Albot 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 (7/2). Nadal is seeking his third title of the season and now stands 38-6 in 2019. He was playing for the first time since losing a Wimbledon semi-final to Roger Federer a month ago.

Thiem was relieved to have broken his duck in Canada by finally winning a match. "It's a great feeling. It's not only the first match win here, but also against a great player," he said.

"The court is pretty fast. It was a huge transition from clay to here.

"I'm very happy with the way I served. I'm also happy that I could swing free some flat serves again." Thiem on Thursday faces 2014 US Open champion Marin Cilic, who defeated Australian John Millman 6-3, 6-4.

Nadal said that re-starting on cement after a long post-Wimbledon pause takes some adjustment. "This is just the first day, first matches are always tough the first time on hardcourt," he said. "After Wimbledon always the mind goes down a little bit. I had a long clay court season, then grass, so you don't relax.

"When you finish Wimbledon, your body loses a little bit that tension, so it needs little bit of time to recover." Nadal advanced after two hours of play but because of rain it took almost four and a half hours after the first ball was struck.

RAONIC, TSITSIPAS OUT

Injury-prone Milos Raonic retired to hand 18-year-old fellow Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime a 6-3, 3-6 win. Raonic, a 2013 finalist here, was unable to go on after winning the second set to square the contest.

Auger-Aliassime got a walkover win against his compatriot last June on grass in Stuttgart when Raonic suffered a back injury. The senior Canadian beat the youngster in



MONTREAL: Rafael Nadal of Spain serves against Daniel Evans of Great Britain during day 6 of the Rogers Cup at IGA Stadium in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. — AFP

spring, 2018 in Indian Wells in their only completed match. Greek star Stefanos Tsitsipas, last year's Canada runner-up, was dumped out 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 by Poland's Hubert Hurkacz, whom the world number five had defeated in three prior matches. Japan's fifth seed Kei

Nishikori was unable to profit from a match point, losing in 3 hours nine minutes to Frenchman Richard Gasquet.

Spain's 10th seed Robert Bautista Agut advanced while number 12 John Isner was sent out in straight sets. — AFP

Serena wins first match since Wimbledon final, Osaka advances

TORONTO: Serena Williams looked solid in her first match since losing the Wimbledon final, defeating 20th-ranked Elise Mertens of Belgium 6-3, 6-3 on Wednesday at the WTA Toronto tourna ent.

The 37-year-old American, one crown shy of a record-tying 24th Grand Slam singles title, advanced in 75 minutes at her first US Open hardcourt tuneup event. "I feel like my movement is great—been working on my fitness, so I felt like it really was able to shine through today," Williams said.

"I'm loving going out there and I'm loving kind of running. So it's a good thing." Also moving into the third round was Japan's Naomi Osaka, the reigning US and Australian Open champion. She won after taking the first set 6-2 when Germany's Tatjana Maria retired with a left abdominal injury.

With Osaka's triumph, Australian Ashleigh Barty was ensured of being dethroned next week as world number one, although it could be Czech Kristyna Pliskova instead of Osaka who swipes the top spot. Williams, ranked 10th, seeks her fourth WTA Canada crown after 2001, 2011 and 2013 and improved her match record at the event to 31-4, winning half the 10 break points she earned against Mertens.

"Now that I'm just injury-free, I'm just enjoying being able to train, and I haven't been able to do it since January, really," Williams said. "So I just think that the fact that I can train and practice and get in the gym is really going to be helpful for me."

Mertens broke for a 2-1 lead but Williams answered in the sixth game to pull level at 3-3. "I know when I got down one break I got real negative," Williams said. "I don't know what happened on the first time I got down. (She) just played really well. She's obviously a really good player. I just needed to just double down and get more focused." Next in the path of the former world number one will be Russian qualifier Ekaterina Alexandrova, who eliminated China's Zhang Shuai 6-4, 6-3. Osaka had not played a match since losing to Yulia Putintseva in the first round at Wimbledon.

"I thought I played really well despite the fact that we only played one set," Osaka said. "I was able to do what I wanted, which was go for the shots that I had the opportunity to. "And, of course, there were a couple unforced errors, but I think that's part of the process. "For me, I'm just happy that it was my first match in a while and I was able to get in the groove of things quickly." The victory gives Osaka the inside track on taking the top spot in Monday's new rankings.

PLISKOVA EYES NO. 1

Pliskova could overtake Barty, the French Open champion who lost in Toronto on Tuesday, and Osaka both after beating 37th-ranked American Alison Riske 6-4, 6-7 (4/7), 6-2. The 27-year-old Czech must reach the semi-finals for any chance at taking world number one, but if Osaka makes the last eight, Pliskova must reach the final to have a hope at being number one next week.

Pliskova will next play Estonia's 19th-ranked Anett Kontaveit, who made the third round when Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro retired with an injury at 7-5, 3-1 down. Romanian fourth seed Simona Halep outlasted American Jennifer Brady 4-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/5).

Ukraine teen Dayana Yastremska beat two-time major winner and former number one Victoria Azarenka 7-5, 7-5. — AFP

Sprint queen Thompson golden but does not shine at Pan Ams

LIMA: Jamaican sprint queen Elaine Thompson may be the biggest name competing in a marquee event at the Pan Am Games but the Olympic champion failed to shine as she won gold in the 100 metres on Wednesday.

A chilled crowd at the Estadio Atletico had hoped to see something special from the 2016 Rio Games champion but cold conditions and a ho-hum field delivered an ordinary result with Thompson crossing unchallenged in a time of 11.18 seconds.

Trinidad and Tobago's Michelle-Lee Ahye took the silver in 11.27 and Brazil's Victoria Cristina Rosa the bronze (11.30).

While Thompson has clocked the season's best time of 10.73, her effort on Wednesday was not enough to crack the top 20 this year but more than enough to successfully keep in Jamaican hands the title won by four years ago by Sherone Simpson in Toronto. "It was cold but I know everyone out there was cold," Thompson told reporters.

"I just came out here to use this as preparation for the world championships. "It's my first time (here), I don't think there is anything wrong with being high profile athlete here representing myself and my country." While Thompson was blase about her win, Mike Rodgers was over the moon after grabbing the United States the men's 100m gold for the first time in 20 years.

Rodgers winning time of 10.09 was also unspectacular but the 34-year-old sprinter could not hide his delight at putting the U.S. back on top. "Very, very happy to bring gold back to the U.S. for the first time since Bernard Williams won," smiled Rodgers. "I brought home the gold. "It was cold and I didn't think I was going to run that fast. I got through it, my start wasn't the best but I just focused on my race and just out executed everybody.

"My first gold at senior level at my first Pan American Games, I'm so happy to finally have some success. — Reuters



LIMA: Jamaica's Elaine Thompson celebrates winning the Athletics Women's 100m Final during the Lima 2019 Pan-American Games in Lima. — AFP

Sports

ASBC concludes, Kuwait to host more continental championship



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: President of Kuwait Boxing Federation Mohammad Mansi said Kuwait will host two continental championships next year, following the success of the Asian Schoolboy Boxing Championship (ASBC) that concluded yesterday under the patronage of President of Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Mansi said PAS agreed on hosting any continental championship following a meeting with president of the Asian Federation Anas Al-Otaiba with PAS Deputy Director General Dr Saqer Al-Mulla.

Mansi said that a letter from the Asian Federation will be received following the Eid break to host the Asian Clubs Championship and Asian Juniors Championship.

He said the success the Asian Schoolboy Championship in which 150 boxers represented 21 countries, encouraged the Asian Federation to ask Kuwait to organize the men's championship.

He said the Asian Championship was held at the same time with the European Championship, and "we received greetings from the International Boxing Association saying that our championship was better organized and technically stronger".

Meanwhile Arab and Qatar Boxing Federations President Yousuf Kazim welcomed Kuwait's request to host the Arab Clubs Championship, adding that the Arab Federations will be happy to hold the championship in Kuwait if conditions are met.

Head of the Palestinian delegation Mahmoud Al-Sheikh lauded the "great organization of the championship, and asked for the event to be held in Kuwait every year. He said the Palestinians are proud to have participated in the tournament "despite obstacles and occupation circumstance, it is our pride to participate in a tournament held in Kuwait.

Results of the fourth day of the ASBC Asian Schoolboy Boxing Championships 2019 Kuwait.

In the (37 kg) Category:

1. Indian Aryan defeated Kazakh Damir Baipakov
2. Uzbek Mahmudov Hojiakbar defeated Tajik Ruslan Gafurov

In the (43 kg) Category:

3. Turk Dovieta Nurmuradov defeated Afghan Shirzai Masiullah
4. Uzbek Umidillo Abdurasulov defeated Kazakh Anarbayef Bakhtiyar

In the (49 kg) Category:

5. Uzbek Lazzbek Tulkonov defeated Kazakh Sultan Moldash
6. Indian Vishwakarma Vinay defeated Jordanian Zaid Medal Bers

In the (55 kg) Category:

7. Indian Malik Preet defeated Kazakh Zhasulan Abdolda
8. Uzbek Jakhongir Narziev defeated Iranian Farkhani Alireza

In the (61 kg) Category:

9. Uzbek Mirzob Nekboyev defeated Kyrgyz Baiel Samidin
10. Kazakh Viktro Litvinov defeated Iraqi Ahmed Al-Qasim

In the (67 kg) Category:

11. Kazakh Batyrkhan Seitov defeated Indian Beniwal Maksh
12. Kyrgyz Bekzat Ergeshov defeated Kuwait's Abdulaziz Al-Sarheed

In the (+70 kg) Category:

13. Indian Randeep defeated Uzbek Khusanboy Rikhsiboev
14. Kazakh Yerdos Sharipbek defeated Turk Bogdan Konstantinov

In the (33 - 35 kg) Category:

15. Uzbek Abdurasulov Khumoyunmirzo defeated Turk Daniyar Rozmetov
16. Kyrgyz Bekzat Ergeshov defeated Filipino Malunoc Robert Jr.

In the (40 kg) Category:

17. Turk Alisher Orazbayev defeated Afghan Amiri Younus Mohammad
18. Uzbek Farrukh Tulaganov defeated Kazakh Amir Seiilkhan

In the (46 kg) Category:

19. Filipino Reymond Lofranco defeated Thai Phisit Paochanthuek



20. Uzbek Boburbek defeated Kazakh Darkhan Nurzhigit

In the (52 kg) Category:

21. Kyrgyz Maksutov Amangeldi defeated UAE's Khalid Al-Kurdi
22. Uzbek Dalerjon Bozorov defeated Tajik Shahboz Dadojonov

In the (58 kg) Category:

23. Indian Yashwardhan Singh defeated Palestinian Zaid Shkokani
24. Uzbek Abdulaziz Abdurakhmonov de-

feated Kyrgyz Beksultan Kimsanov

In the (64 kg) Category:

25. Indian Saini Gaurav defeated Kyrgyz Zhanbolot Syrtbaev
26. Uzbek Shavkatjon Boltayef defeated Kazakh Zhandos Yersultanov

In the (70 kg) Category:

27. Indian Joon Bharat defeated Uzbek Aynazar Kenesbayef
28. Kyrgyz Atai Asanbekov defeated Iran's Shabgarnia Alireza.

Pakistan axe Malik, Hafeez contracts

KARACHI: Veteran players Shoaib Malik and Mohammad Hafeez lost their central contracts yesterday as Pakistan's cricket clear-out gathered pace. Fast bowler Mohammad Amir was also demoted in the new contracts, announced a day after head coach Mickey Arthur was shown the door following a disappointing World Cup.

Malik, 37, had already quit one-day internationals after a poor World Cup in which he scored only eight runs in three matches with

two ducks. At 38, Hafeez also has little chance of regaining the chance to play for Pakistan, while Amir, who retired from Tests last month to focus on limited-overs cricket, is demoted from an A-category contract to a C.

"The annual central-contracts list for the 2019-2020 is trimmed from 33 to 19, reducing the number of categories from five to three," the Pakistan Cricket Board added in a release.

Skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed, batsman Babar Azam and spinner Yasir Shah were retained in category A and will get 1.1 million rupees (6,870 US dollars) a month over the next year.

Senior batsman Asad Shafiq, Azhar Ali, Haris Sohail, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Abbas, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Wahab Riaz are in B category, which pays 750,000 rupees. The C contracts are worth 550,000 rupees a month. — AFP

Sports

Tottenham, Arsenal to splash cash on Premier League deadline day

LONDON: Tottenham made the headlines on a busy final day of the Premier League transfer window with deals in the pipeline for Giovani Lo Celso and Ryan Sessegnon, but their hopes of signing Paulo Dybala are fading.

Across north London, Arsenal are expected to complete moves for Celtic left-back Kieran Tierney and centre-back David Luiz from Chelsea. Manchester United striker Romelu Lukaku's prolonged transfer to Inter Milan is also close to completion after the clubs reportedly agreed on a deal that could rise to 80 million euros (£74 million, \$90 million).

Lukaku arrived in Milan early yesterday, leaving United facing a race against time to find a replacement despite interest in Juventus forward Mario Mandzukic. Spurs chairman Daniel Levy has been under pressure from manager Mauricio Pochettino to build on the progress made on and off the field as Tottenham moved into a new 62,000-capacity stadium and reached the Champions League final last season.

They have made just one summer signing so far, with French international midfielder Tanguy Ndombele joining for a club-record fee from Lyon, but all that is set to change in the final hours of the window.

Argentine international midfielder Lo Celso is expected to complete a season-long loan deal that will contain an obligation on Tottenham's part to make the transfer permanent next sum-

mer. And Spurs' long-running interest in England under-21 international Sessegnon will be realised in a reported £25 million deal that could rise to £30 million including add-ons.

DYBALA NO-GO

However, a sensational swoop for Dybala has reportedly broken down, with Juventus unwilling to let the Argentine leave without an adequate replacement, having missed out on Lukaku. Arsenal are badly in need of defensive recruits to shore up a backline that conceded 51 Premier League goals last season to miss out on Champions League football for a third straight year.

Tierney travelled to London on Wednesday after the payment structure of a £25-million move from Celtic was finally agreed between the clubs. Luiz is also set for a switch across London to replace departed Arsenal captain Laurent Koscielny, who joined Bordeaux earlier this week, in a £8 million transfer from Chelsea.

No more business is expected at Premier League champions Manchester City after they secured right-back Joao Cancelo from Juventus on Wednesday. Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp confirmed the European champions would not delve into the market at the last minute after making just three low-key additions in teenagers Sepp van den Berg and Harvey Elliott and back-up goalkeeper Adrian.

By contrast, Merseyside neighbours Everton

are hoping to complete a host of last-minute deals to add to six arrivals already at Goodison Park during the window. Everton are hopeful of taking Manchester United defender Marcos Rojo on loan and could still land Crystal Palace's Wilfried Zaha after the Ivorian submitted a

Liverpool bank on stability over signings to end 30-year title wait

LIVERPOOL: Missing out on the Premier League title despite a record-breaking campaign was eased by winning a sixth European Cup for Liverpool last season, but ending a 30-year wait to be crowned English champions is now more important than ever on Merseyside.

Jurgen Klopp's men are expected to strike first blood in the title race when they kick off the Premier League season against newly-promoted Norwich under the Friday night lights of Anfield. However, unlike most of their competitors who have delved into the arms race for talent in another transfer window where Premier League clubs have spent over £1 billion (\$1.2 billion), the European champions have been conspicuously quiet in the transfer market.

Teenage talents Sepp van den Berg and Harvey Elliott have been snapped up with an eye to the future, while Spanish goalkeeper Adrian will replace Simon Mignolet as back-up to Alisson Becker in three low-key arrivals.

Klopp, though, believes the foundations are already in place for another tilt at the title after spending over £230 million in the past two years on the likes of Alisson, Virgil van Dijk and Mohamed Salah. "You should never do transfers because other clubs are doing transfers," Klopp told Sky Sports. "That makes no sense, it's not

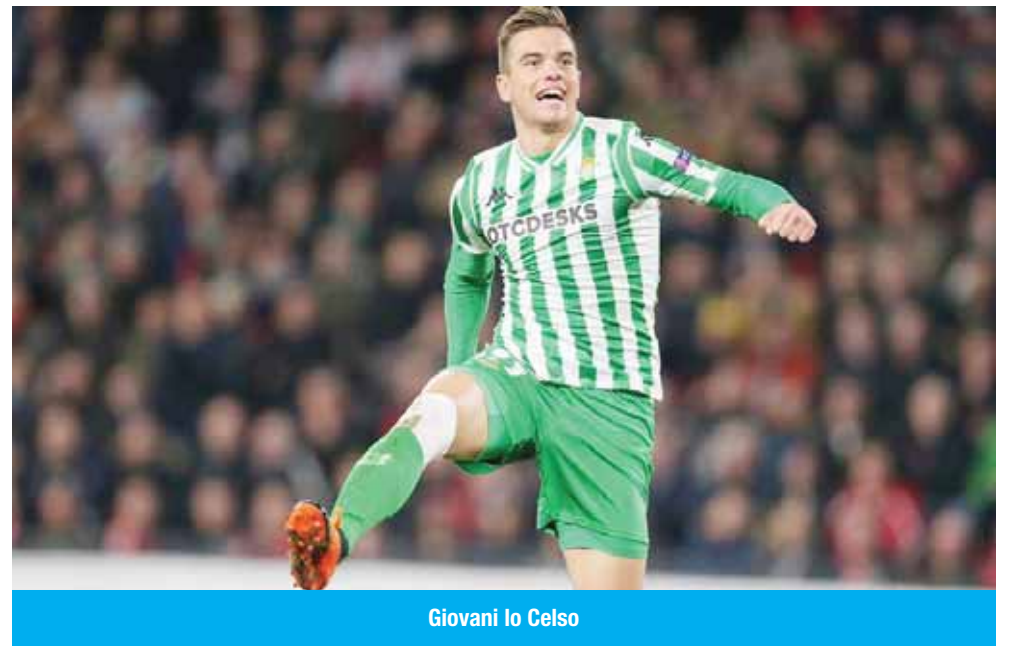
about that. And if you sit back for a second and have a look at the squad, do we need more players?" On the evidence of last season, there is precious little for Liverpool to improve on. A Premier League points tally of 97 would have won the title in any season bar the last two as Manchester City have set a new bar under Pep Guardiola. City have further strengthened the squad that won a first ever domestic treble of trophies in England last season with the club record signing of Spanish midfielder Rodri and will be the benchmark for Liverpool to beat. A 1-1 draw between the sides, with City edging a penalty shootout 5-4, in the Community Shield last weekend again highlighted how little there is to separate the English and European champions.

Yet, in contrast to last season when Liverpool were the least affected of England's big six by the late return to pre-season of players at the World Cup, Klopp has a tougher time in ensuring his side hit the ground running.

The prolific front three of Salah, Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane were all involved in international tournaments again this summer. Liverpool have decided against investing heavily in back-up for that trio and their presence was missed in a bumpy pre-season that saw an under-strength side beaten by Borussia Dortmund, Sevilla and Napoli.

But Klopp believes the squad he has assembled will be bolstered by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, Adam Lallana and Rhian Brewster's return to fitness, while Naby Keita can have a bigger impact in his second season in English football.

"People think that players from other clubs, other countries, are better than the players we have here but without really having the proof, because those players haven't played here," he said. — AFP



Giovani Lo Celso

are hoping to complete a host of last-minute deals to add to six arrivals already at Goodison Park during the window. Everton are hopeful of taking Manchester United defender Marcos Rojo on loan and could still land Crystal Palace's Wilfried Zaha after the Ivorian submitted a

transfer request and did not train with the Eagles on Thursday.

Leicester are also set to use some of the £80 million they received from Manchester United for Harry Maguire on Sampdoria midfielder Dennis Praet for 20 million euros. — AFP

FIFA sidesteps India row as league plan splits sport

NEW DELHI: World body FIFA has told Indian football to sort out its differences after a move to hand the I-League's top-tier status to the franchise-based Indian Super League drew a threat of legal action.

Swiss-based FIFA said clubs needed to work with the All India Football Federation after the national body moved to strip the I-League winners of their place in the AFC Champions League qualifiers and give it to the ISL.

Despite an appeal from aggrieved I-League club owners, FIFA refused to intervene and said they needed to find a solution with the AIFF.

"It was clear that there are numerous aspects of the recommendations that still require further consideration prior to them being implemented," FIFA wrote in a letter to the I-League clubs.

"... We therefore strongly believe that the AIFF is best placed to do this."

The collision between the rival competitions has been coming since the ISL, backed by India's richest man Mukesh Ambani, made its debut in 2014. The ISL, modelled on cricket's hugely successful Indian Super League, quickly overtook the I-League's viewing figures as it attracted veteran stars like Alessandro Del Piero and Nicolas Anelka. Six I-League clubs have challenged the plan to give the ISL winners India's

slot in the Champions League qualifiers, an honour reserved for a country's top league.

Ranjit Bajaj, owner of I-League champions Minerva Punjab, earlier promised to launch legal action if FIFA does not step in.

"I am surprised to find FIFA turning a blind eye to the clear and obvious violation of FIFA statutes and principles by the AIFF which would not be acceptable anywhere in the world," he wrote in a letter to FIFA.

"We strongly believe that the AIFF is totally incompetent in handling the crisis which is being faced by the Indian football."

But AIFF general secretary Kushal Das said the national body was not shutting the door on the I-League. "We have always maintained the body which is in the best position to direct Indian football is the AIFF," Das told AFP.

"There can be suggestions from various stakeholders, but ultimately it is the AIFF who has to implement it taking into account all practical issues, and FIFA simply said that is indeed the case. "Give us two to three years to define a proper roadmap. We are not here to destroy Indian football unlike some of the nonsensical clubs are claiming." — AFP

Live		MATCHES ON TV	
		LOCAL TIMING	
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE			
Liverpool v Norwich City		22:00	
beIN SPORTS HD 2			
FRENCH LEAGUE			
AS Monaco FC v Olympique Lyonnais		21:45	
beIN SPORTS HD 6			

LIMA: Jamaica's Elaine Thompson celebrates winning the gold medal at the podium of the Athletics Women's 100m Final during the Lima 2019 Pan-American Games in Lima. — AFP

Sprint queen Thompson golden but does not shine at Pan Ams

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