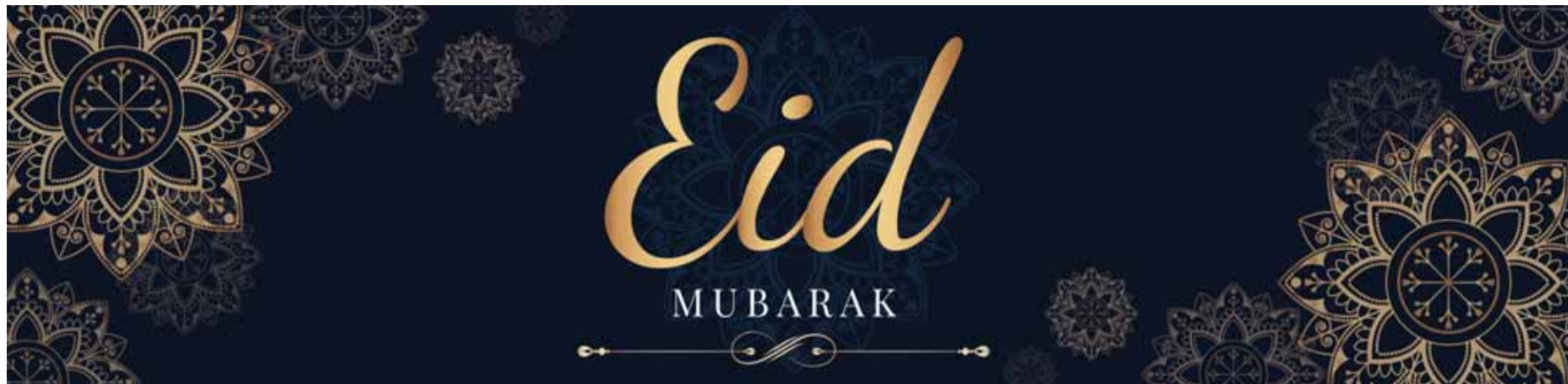




NOTICE

Eid Mubarak to all our readers! Kuwait Times will not be published from August 12-14, 2019. Our next issue will hit the newsstands on Thursday, August 15, 2019. However, readers can stay updated on breaking news and events on our digital media channels including our website www.kuwaittimes.net and on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.



2.5 million hajj pilgrims scale Mount Arafat to atone for sins

Amir extends Eid greetings to citizens, expats, Arab and Muslim leaders

MOUNT ARAFAT: Nearly 2.5 million Muslim hajj pilgrims converged on Mount Arafat in Saudi Arabia yesterday to atone for their sins and seek God's forgiveness, marshalled by tens of thousands of stewards in a bid to prevent any repetition of previous years' deadly stampedes. Movable crowd control barriers were erected all around the foot of the rocky hill outside Makkah, also known as Jabal Al-Rahma or Mount of Mercy, where the faithful arrived on foot and in a seemingly endless line of buses. Raising their palms skywards, the pilgrims set off on the climb to the summit where they held prayers to atone for their sins in a ritual that is regarded as the high point of the annual hajj.

"Really, I am very satisfied," said Lassina Coulibaly, a 47-year-old Malian business employee. "Fatigue is part of the pilgrimage," added the father of seven. Clutching brightly colored umbrellas, pilgrims first braved the blazing sun and then heavy downpours that many welcomed as a blessing. Some burst into tears as they chanted prayers. Thousands of faithful had spent the night under the stars, sleeping on prayer rugs or pieces of cardboard.

Trucks were parked at regular intervals on the route leading up to the hill, distributing bottles of water and meals. Thousands of workers prepared to clear the rubbish that littered the ground. Helicopters crisscrossed over-

head, part of the tight security precautions taken by the pilgrimage's Saudi hosts. The hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam which every Muslim is required to complete at least once in their lifetime if they are healthy enough and have the means to do so.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah extended greetings to citizens and expatriates on the advent of Eid Al-Adha, a statement by the Amiri Diwan said Friday. The Diwan added HH the Amir extended similar greetings to Arab and Islamic nations, wishing those countries and Kuwait evermore progress and prosperity. HH the Amir yesterday exchanged cables of congratulations with Arab and Muslim leaders on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. The Amir addressed heartfelt and sincere greetings to the leaders, wishing all Arab and Muslim countries perpetual security, stability and prosperity.

"I came last year during Ramadan, now I am there for the hajj," said Indonesian pilgrim Zakir Uddin. "It is an honor, praise be to God," added the 27-year-old cook. Like other male pilgrims, he wears a seamless white garment that covers only one shoulder and emphasizes unity regardless of social status or nationality. The women wear loose dresses, most of them white, exposing only their faces and hands.

Continued on Page 24



MOUNT ARAFAT: Muslim pilgrims pray on Jabal Al-Rahma (Mount of Mercy) at Mount Arafat southeast of the holy city of Makkah during the climax of the hajj pilgrimage yesterday. — AFP

Southern Yemen separatists seize all govt camps

ADEN: Yemen's southern separatists took control of all government military camps in Aden yesterday, officials said, after four days of clashes between nominal allies who have turned on each other, complicating UN efforts to end the four-year war. The separatists also surrounded the all-but empty presidential palace of the internationally recognized government that is temporarily based in the port city, a government official and another local official told Reuters.

At least eight civilians were killed on Friday in fighting between the separatists and government forces, according to medical

sources. Fighting resumed early yesterday but has since abated, residents said. The combatants are both part of the Saudi-led pro-government coalition that has been battling the Iran-aligned armed Houthi movement in Yemen since March 2015, indicating a rift within the alliance. The war has killed tens of thousands and pushed the poorest Arabian Peninsula nation to the brink of famine.

"It is all over, the (Southern Transitional Council) forces are in control of all the military camps," an official in President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's government told Reuters. He said the two sides had agreed the separatist forces would not try to seize the palace, located in the predominantly residential Crater district, while government forces would refrain from attacking them. The separatists also took over the house of Interior Minister Ahmed Al-Mayssari after he was evacuated from his residence with the help of coalition forces, government officials said.

Hadi is based in the Saudi capital Riyadh.

There was no immediate comment from the Western-backed coalition led by Saudi Arabia that intervened in Yemen after the Houthis ousted Hadi's government from power in the capital Sanaa in late 2014. Alliance member the United Arab Emirates, which has armed and trained thousands of southern separatist fighters, earlier called for calm and for the two sides to focus on opposing the Houthis. Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed called on UN special envoy Martin Griffiths, who is trying to de-escalate tensions across Yemen, "to deploy efforts and exert pressure" to that purpose.

The Norwegian Refugee Council said the battles had trapped civilians in their homes with dwindling supplies of food and water. The aid group said prolonged fighting in Aden, a gateway for commercial and aid supplies, could impact efforts to tackle the

Continued on Page 24



ADEN: Yemeni supporters of the southern separatist movement pose for a picture in Khor Maksar in this southern port city yesterday. — AFP

Iran unveils new 'overhauled' air defense system

TEHRAN: Iran unveiled a new air defense system yesterday it says is capable of detecting missiles and drones at a range of 400 km, ISNA news agency reported. The "Falagh" is a locally overhauled version of the imported "Gamma" surveillance radar, the semi-official news agency said, in an apparent reference to a Russian-made system of that name. It had been inoperable due to "sanctions, lack of spare parts and the inability of foreign engineers to carry out repairs", it added.

The unveiling comes at a time of rising tensions with the United States, which have escalated ever since US President Donald Trump withdrew from a 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and reimposed sanctions. Iran shot down a US Global Hawk drone with a surface-to-air missile in June for allegedly violating its airspace, which the United States denies.

"This radar is capable of identifying and finding all types of cruise missiles, stealth aircraft, drone systems and also ballistic



A handout picture shows the Iranian new missile defense system called "Falagh" on display at an undisclosed location. — AFP

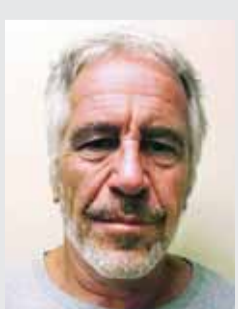
missiles within a 400-kilometre range," ISNA quoted army air defense force chief Brigadier General Alireza Sabahi-Fard as saying during the unveiling ceremony. The Falagh was also capable of connecting to the Islamic republic's air defense network and completing the coverage of the S-300 missile system it acquired from Russia, the news agency said. Iran installed the S-300 system in March 2016 following several years of delay after a nuclear agreement reached with world powers allowed the lifting of international sanctions. — AFP

US sex trafficker Epstein commits suicide in prison

NEW YORK: Disgraced US financier Jeffrey Epstein has committed suicide in prison while awaiting trial on charges that he trafficked underage girls for sex, officials and US news media reported yesterday. Epstein, a convicted pedophile who befriended numerous politicians and celebrities over the years, was found unresponsive in his cell at the Metropolitan Correctional Center from "an apparent suicide", the US Department of Justice said.

He was discovered around 6:30 am (11:30 GMT) and rushed to hospital in New York where he was pronounced dead, it added in a statement. "The FBI is investigating the incident," the department said. The New York Times and other media quoted

Continued on Page 24



Jeffrey Epstein

India monsoon floods kill 100

NEW DELHI: Floods have killed at least 100 people and displaced hundreds of thousands across much of India with the southern state of Kerala worst hit, authorities said yesterday. With rains predicted to worsen in coming days, the government ordered military teams to form rescue units and airlift food to stranded villages across Kerala. At least 48 people have died since Thursday in floods in Kerala, where the beaches and hill resorts are a major

international tourist magnet, state police spokesman Pramod Kumar told AFP.

In neighboring Karnataka, at least 24 people have been killed with nine people missing. The western states of Maharashtra and Gujarat have also been badly hit by annual monsoon storms. Media reports said at least 27 people have lost their lives in Maharashtra, with several major roads closed by floods.

Continued on Page 24



KOCHI, India: Residents are evacuated from their homes to a safer place on a wooden boat in the Indian state of Kerala yesterday. — AFP

Amir, Crown Prince receive congratulations on Eid Al-Adha

Sheikh Nawaf receives call from Abu Dhabi Crown Prince

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a cable of congratulations from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. His Highness the Amir received similar cables from President of Kuwait National Guard His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Kuwait National Guard Deputy Chief Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, President of the Supreme Judicial Council Yousef Jassim Al-Mutawaa and First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. In their cables, they wished His Highness the best of health and more prosperity for Kuwait and its people under his guidance. His Highness the Amir sent them reply cables of thanks, wishing all the best.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Al-Adha occasion and wished him good health and the Kuwaiti people with more prosperity under the guidance of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as the humanitarian leader. In turn, Sheikh Nawaf thanked him on his sincere sentiments, wished him good health, and for Emirati people prosperity under the leadership of the President of the UAE Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

Ministers send greetings

First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Friday sent a cable to the His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah congratulating him on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. Sheikh Nasser in the cable said that it is an honor to mark this occasion on behalf of the Defense Ministry and its employees congratulating him on this blessed occasion. Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad also sent cables to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah congratulating them on Eid Al-Adha.

In the meantime, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah sent cables to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to congratulate them on Eid Al-Adha. According to a statement by the Interior Ministry, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah also sent congratulatory cables to National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, Kuwait National Guard Chief His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Deputy Commander of Kuwait National Guard Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. The interior minister also sent similar cables to First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Crown Prince receives congratulations

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a cable of congratulations from National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha on behalf of members of the National Assembly, wishing His Highness the best of health and more prosperity for Kuwait under the guidance of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince sent a reply cable of thanks to Al-Ghanem, asking Almighty Allah to bestow his blessing upon Kuwait under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent cables of congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Sheikh Mubarak Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah on Eid Al-Adha. His Highness also received reply cables of thanks from His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Sheikh Mubarak Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on the occa-

sion of Eid Al-Adha.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received cables of congratu-



Ministers congratulate political leadership

lations from senior sheikhs, Deputy Chief of Kuwait National Guard Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-

Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, President of the Supreme Judicial Council and President of the Court of Cassation and the Constitutional Court Counselor Yousef Jasem Al-Mutawaa, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. His Highness also received congratulatory cables on Eid Al-Adha from ministers, governors, and senior officials, members of the diplomatic corps, fellow citizens and loyal residents inside and outside Kuwait. His Highness the Crown Prince sent reply cables of thanks, wishing all the best.

In the meantime, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a call from Abu Dhabi Crown Prince, Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. Sheikh Mohammad congratulated His Highness the Crown Prince on the Eid

Happy Eid Al-Adha

local spotlight



By Muna Al-Fuzal

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

Eid Al-Adha is an important holiday of the Islamic calendar along with Eid Al-Fitr (the end of the holy month of Ramadan). Eid Al-Adha marks the climax of the annual hajj pilgrimage to Makkah in Saudi Arabia. Twenty Arab countries will celebrate Eid Al-Adha today, but three countries announced the first day of Eid will be tomorrow! These differences raise questions among the public for the reasons that prevent all Muslims from agreeing on a specific day for religious holidays, whether it's Ramadan or the pilgrimage season, and whether political and sectarian tensions have a role in this dispute.

I think it is becoming very common to witness such differences in the Arab world, but Kuwait usually follows Saudi Arabia on religious events. I really believe it is for the best interest of everyone to avoid creating unnecessary disputes and confusion among people.

Eid Al-Adha is the second of two Islamic holidays celebrated worldwide each year, and Muslims around the world observe this event as a celebration of the pilgrimages. The local greetings on this day are Eid Mubarak or Eid Sa'eed, used to convey best wishes. This holiday is a good time for many families to visit relatives and donate money to the poor.

Eid Al-Adha this year falls during the summer holidays, creating a valuable opportunity to combine the two holidays in a touristic atmosphere. Many people have taken the week off to travel, while some will stay at home to avoid the heat and others will head to the beach. In all cases, these days are the right time for relaxation and enjoying quality time with friends and family.

The ways of celebrating Eid Al-Adha may differ between nations - however, joy and goodness itself does not change, and increases during these times. It is interesting that almost all Arab countries agree on the importance of food - especially sweets and sacrifice, which is part of religious rituals.

Another important and humanitarian aspect is that there are many poor workers who feel happy on such occasions, so I hope people share the joy by giving them a little money in charity. It is undoubtedly a beautiful thing to do on these days. This holiday is an opportunity to reform oneself and feel grateful for all the blessings we have in life.

I wish everyone a happy holiday and Eid Sa'eed!

Eid perfect time for families to come closer

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Kuwait Times spoke to some people to learn about how they will spend the Eid Al-Adha holiday.

Tala Al-Muhtaseb, 18, told Kuwait Times that Eid is an important religious festival in Kuwait. "Eid is a festival that spreads the message of peace and love to the whole world. Muslims wait for this time of the year to gather with their families and celebrate Eid together. We start the first day of Eid by praying, embracing and greeting each other. Other than gatherings, everyone loves Eid because of the money we get from the elders. Eid is a holiday in which families have the opportunity to form closer bonds with each other," she said.

"The first thing I do on Eid is go to the mosque early in the morning for Eid prayers. After that, I go back home to



Tala Al-Muhtaseb



Mostafa Mahmoud Salem



Ahmad Hassan

dress up and style my hair, since I visit my relatives. To be specific, I'll be visiting my maternal grandmother's house, where my relatives will gather to have lunch and socialize with each other. The kids look forward to receiving money from the elders," Tala said.

On the second day of Eid, Tala likes to hang out with her friends and watch a movie at The Avenues, then eat her favorite meal of steak at Entrecote. "On the last day of Eid, my parents and I like

to spend time together at Babel, a Lebanese restaurant in Salmyia, to have lunch and chat with each other. Then my mother and I like to continue the day shopping at The Avenues," she said.

Mostafa Mahmoud Salem, 34, spends Eid with family and friends. "The first day is always for the family. Then I hang out with friends all night in cafes and restaurants," he said. Salem noted that the rest of the days of Eid will be spent between entertainment places with his children

and eating at restaurants and cafes.

Ahmad Hassan, 26, said he heads for Eid prayers held outdoors early in the morning, then has breakfast with his family at home. "The first day is considered a must day for family gatherings. We will visit relatives, then I will go out with friends to have lunch and roam around Kuwait in the car. I will be spending the rest of Eid with the usual routine - Marina Mall, Avenues, cinema and lastly, at the chalet," he said.

NBK first in Kuwait to launch year-round cash delivery

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait is dedicated to providing unique services to its customers, and has signed a one-year partnership with Peacock Concierge to provide its Private, Privilege and Thahabi Banking customers an exclusive range of concierge services in Kuwait and around the world, offering them comfort and convenience in their everyday lives. The Services will be launched starting September 1, 2019. Through the partnership, NBK introduces for the first time in Kuwait round the Year Cash delivery services inside of Kuwait exclusively to Private and Privilege Banking Customers.

Other than the Cash Delivery Service, there is a suite of services that range from personal assistant, travel and restaurants reservations, government paperwork services, visa services, airport pick-up and drop, baggage home delivery, payment of school tuition fees, limousine with driver services and road assistance exclusively to Private, Privilege and Thahabi Banking Customers.

Commenting on the new partnership, General Manager of Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait, Mohammad Al-Othman, said: "We are well aware of the needs of our customers as we ensure that our products and services add value and more to their banking experience. We are focused on providing them with unique and exceptional services that align with their lifestyles, giving them access to personal assistance that eases the load of their daily requirements through the partnership with Peacock Concierge which will offer them many advantages."

Othman added: "We aim at NBK to be at the forefront of providing exclusive banking services to our



customers, enabling us to maintain our leadership position in Kuwait's banking sector and in all divisions." Othman affirmed NBK's commitment to providing advanced and innovative products and services that meet the lifestyle of each customer segment.

Meanwhile, Hasan Al-Suwaidi CEO of Peacock Concierge, said: "We are pleased to be partnering with NBK as we ensure that its customers receive an exceptional level of services that provide ease and convenience thanks to a team that is renowned for its expertise in providing assistance to every customer."

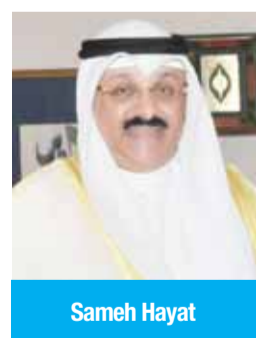
Suwaidi added that Peacock Concierge has been providing world-class services since its establishment in Kuwait in 2011, supported by a network of trusted partners. The Company aims to deliver unprecedented features and advantages in the field of concierge services and lifestyle management.

NBK is committed to offering its customers with added value and many benefits through its partnerships, ensuring they meet their aspirations and provide them with the highest standards of comfort, luxury and convenience.

General Consulate in Shanghai within Kuwaiti-Chinese interest

BEIJING: Establishing a General Consulate in the city of Shanghai will be within the interest of Kuwait and China, a Kuwaiti diplomat said on Friday.

Kuwait's Ambassador to China Sameh Hayat said that a team from the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry would be heading to Shanghai this week to review measures to establish the consulate. Shanghai is the economic capital city of China and important component of the belt and road initiative; therefore, Kuwait is keen on establishing a consulate there, said the Ambassador. Ambassador Hayat said that China and Kuwait had expanded their relations in recent years especially after the last visit by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in 2018, which in turn require a heightened diplomatic presence for Kuwait in the country. Establishing a consulate in Shanghai will add to the diplomatic presence in China after consulates in Hong Kong and Quanzhou as well as the embassy in Beijing, indicated the diplomat who noted that this was befitting of the 50 years of diplomatic relations between China and Kuwait. The General Consulate in Shanghai is expected to open next month and will be led by General Consul Meshal Al-Shemali. — KUNA



Sameh Hayat

Local

Two fishermen deported for urging protests against new auction regulations

Plan to issue fishing licenses to Kuwaiti youth as small businesses



KUWAIT: A large crowd of people are seen at the main fish market in Sharq on Thursday. —Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



Ministry of Commerce and Industry inspectors and other officials monitor the fish auction.

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Two Egyptian fishermen were deported due to violations at the fish market, informed sources said. They were also refusing to go to sea, and urged other fishermen not to fish in protest against the commerce ministry's decisions with regards to organizing fish auctions, the sources added. The commerce ministry sought the help of the interior ministry to deport the fishermen, and provided names of another group of fishermen, who are awaiting deportation, the sources further indicated.

The sources said the commerce min-

istry coordinated with the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources and the Public Authority for Manpower to check violations by expat workers as well as fishermen at the fish market. They said names of all fishermen are accounted for and registered at the three government entities. Meanwhile, the agriculture authority is contemplating granting new fishing licenses to Kuwaitis, which is expected to be announced within two months. They said the plan is to accept National Assembly proposals to issue the licenses to Kuwaiti youth under the umbrella of supporting small business projects.

Kuwait Competition Protection Agency had said Thursday it was investigating alleged practices harmful to competition in the fish market, which were reported by newspapers and social media. The agency sent a team to monitor alleged illegal practices and to take action accordingly, the agency's Executive Director Dr Abdullah Al-Uwaisi said in a statement. He asserted the agency was pursuing all measures to address monopoly in order to guarantee fair prices for all consumers. Uwaisi officially asked the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for documents related to the alleged violations monitored by the ministry's inspectors at the fish

market. The agency is a government department tasked with monitoring competition in markets in Kuwait.

The commerce ministry's new circular released last week helped drop prices before a reported fishermen strike caused prices to soar back to their original high rates. Ministry inspectors were present at the daily auction to monitor the implementation of the new circular, which was imposed with hopes of preventing alleged manipulation of prices. The circular had been released in response 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.

In other news, Director of Public Relations at the Social Affairs Ministry Abdullah Al-Hamdan said there is joint cooperation between his ministry and the interior ministry with regards to checking donation collecting violations. He said in case any person is found collecting donations personally, he will face consequences. He said the social affairs ministry received applications for donation collection for the udhiya (sacrifice) project in April, and the number of participating charitable societies reached 37 for projects outside Kuwait and 22 for udhiya inside the country.

Two hurt in Subhan printing press fire



KUWAIT: Heavy damage left by a fire reported near a printing press in Subhan.



Firemen extinguish a fire that engulfed a truck.

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Two security guards working at a printing press in Subhan suffered hand and foot burns in a fire that broke out in a mobile home the guards stay in. The fire spread to a nearby factory and a vehicle parked nearby. Meanwhile, Subhan, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Mishref and backup fire sta-

tions rushed to a fire that engulfed four municipal vehicles in an open area. The fire was contained and put out. No injuries were reported. In a separate incident, Mishref and Ardiya fire stations put out a fire in garbage in an open area in Subhan, which spread to eight vehicles. They started an investigation to find the cause of the blaze.

Firefighters control chemical warehouse blaze



KUWAIT: Firefighters succeeded in controlling a fire that broke out in a warehouse in Al-Jahra city used for chemical and materials, tissues and detergents, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) said Thursday. No

injuries were reported. Firefighters scrambled to fight the blaze in the 1,000-square-meter warehouse, KFSD said in a statement. It added that an investigation was underway to reveal the causes of the fire. — KUNA

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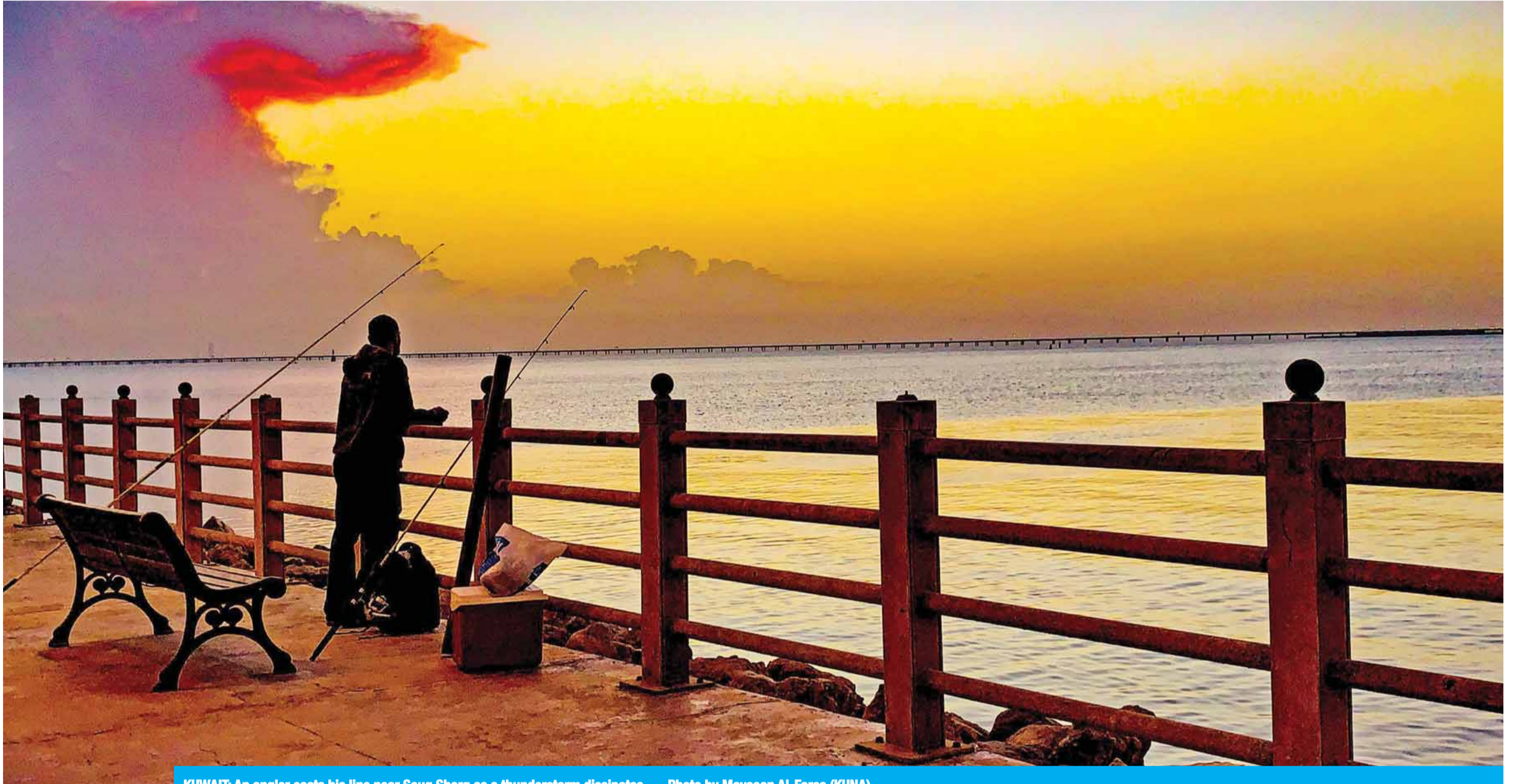
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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: An angler casts his line near Souq Sharq as a thunderstorm dissipates. — Photo by Maysoun Al-Fares (KUNA)

Kuwaiti humanitarian activities continue covering several areas

World Food Program acknowledge Kuwait's 'generous contributions'



Head of the Kuwaiti Relief Society Jamal Al-Nouri assesses the humanitarian situation and needs in Yemen.



KUWAIT: Kuwait's humanitarian aid activities continued to cover several areas and targeted people that are most in need. Last week, Acting Charge D'affaires of Kuwait's embassy in Iran, Falah Al-Hajraf has announced a new Kuwaiti financial contribution of about \$75,000 to the victims of the floods that swept through large areas of Iran last April. "Kuwait is working to fulfill its humanitarian duty by sending relief aid to flood victims in Iran," Hajraf said in a statement. Meanwhile, the representative of the World Food Program and regional director in Iran, Najjar Germani pointed out that these generous contributions by

Kuwait will provide support for the province of Laurstan. Head of Kuwaiti Relief Society Jamal Al-Nouri said that the humanitarian aid provided by Kuwait contributed to alleviating the suffering of the Yemenis, thanks to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti government. In a statement during his visit to Yemen, Nouri affirmed that the Kuwaiti assistance provided during the past years was very much needed and went to the right place to contribute to saving lives and settling families and treating patients. Kuwait, as a global center for humanitarian action, has adopted effective

and continuous relief efforts to alleviate the suffering of Yemenis, he added.

Nouri pointed out that the Kuwaiti government has allocated KD 100 million support for the 'Kuwait by your side' campaign to support the sectors of health, education, accommodation, food and livelihoods two years ago, hoping to complete the use and allocation of this support during this third year and will be requested after additional support from the Kuwaiti government. The society's delegation visit to Yemen aims to assess the humanitarian situation and needs in various Yemeni regions and to identify priorities for humani-

tarian work for the next stage, he added. He expressed happiness to see Kuwaiti health and education projects in various Yemeni governorates since the 1970s and 1980s and lead its function to this day, adding that Kuwait's intervention and contributions were very suitable to serve successive generations in most of the projects implemented in Yemen. Nouri highly appreciated the Kuwaiti government's support for humanitarian work in Yemen and various countries, noting that the humanitarian role of His Highness the Amir is known at the international level reflected at various levels, ministries, and government institutions. — KUNA

Artist transforms pottery to Islamic calligraphy art pieces

KUWAIT: Artist Mohammad Shah stood out in the field of ceramic arts through inscribing verses from the Holy Quran onto pottery vessels, transforming them into Islamic calligraphy pieces of arts. Shah, who experimented in this field for four years, takes roughly 15 days to carve each piece. — KUNA



Local

WhatsApp effective tool for govt to receive complaints, suggestions

Interior Ministry uses WhatsApp to communicate with public

KUWAIT: Being the prime means of social media in Kuwait, WhatsApp has become a growingly significant tool used by ministries and state agencies to receive citizens' complaints and suggestions. Targeting the largest possible number of people, some Kuwaiti ministries tap this effective technology by means of sending and receiving instant messages encompassing texts, photos, videos and recordings. WhatsApp Web is even applied by several state departments as a quick and easy way to use WhatsApp messages on computers, with on-duty staff receiving queries and giving immediate replies.

Speaking about this impressive technology, senior officials of public relations and media at several ministries and state bodies said that the mounting use of WhatsApp service is undoubtedly a source of pride to them. The Interior Ministry's Media and Public Relations Manager Nasser Busleib said that the ministry uses WhatsApp as an effective type of communication between its various units and citizens. The ministry has got specialized and efficient staff working round the clock to get complaints and proposals from citizens and residents, and reply to them at once, Busleib boasted. However, the official urged people to avert using WhatsApp services while driving, otherwise they would be brought to book.

Effective tool

Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations and Media Manager Mohammad Al-Mutairi said WhatsApp is, in fact, an appropriate and effective tool of social communication that helps in setting



locations, receiving grievances and remarks and addressing them immediately. However, he lamented that WhatsApp provides a significant, but limited, service in general while other tools like Twitter and Instagram, for instance, are more useful and valuable. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Electricity and Water's Social Media Chief Khadeeja Meshari said there has been a wide-scale application of this technological service since it was initially launched at the ministry's various departments.

She acclaimed the use of WhatsApp at state agencies as an impressive type of social communication that has become very common in the Kuwaiti society in general. WhatsApp services have already been put in place at the ministries of interior, social affairs, commerce and industry and electricity and water, Public Institution for Social Security, Expropriation of Public Welfare Department, Public Authority for Minor Affairs. Other authorities and bodies are expected to follow suit in the near future. — KUNA

Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre presents special festival

KUWAIT: On the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre will be hosting special educational programs for children, designed to increase their knowledge in different fields. Providing exposure to groundbreaking inventions around the world and creative ways to absorb new skills, the comprehensive activities develop the young children's intellectual and cognitive skills.

The festival will host a series of tailor-made educational workshops and games which will start tomorrow, August 12, 2019, and continue until Saturday, August 17, 2019. Contributing to the progress of the society through its future generations, the children will be able to absorb new knowledge and advance their current comprehension of theories through unique learning tactics and devices.

The innovative platforms, catered to visitors aged five and above, interweave the use of mental and physical abilities to promote basic and modern knowledge acquisition. The multi-dimensional activities, which will be held over six days, fall under one of the Centre's museums, namely, Human Body Museum, Science and Technology Museum and the Transportation and Robots Museum.

Present at the Learning zone in the Human Body Museum, one can experiment with the award-winning circuit scribe non-toxic conductive silver ink pen to create circuits and switches that illuminate electronic devices during the 'Lights' workshop. Additionally, inspiring new thinking and educational eco-friendly ideology, children can discover the art of recreating models and structures combining cut wood. Through a workshop on 'Our Skeleton', par-



ticipants will learn more about the parts of the skeleton which will end by connecting the parts made of paper with woolen threads.

Children can be immersed in captivating 'Storytelling' session to raise an understanding, respect and appreciation for other cultures at the Kids Library in the Fine Arts Centre. Enhancing their little minds via engaging tools, the participants can enjoy smart puzzles and interactive virtual reality videos with 3D holograms to create shapes offering a truly memorable experience.

The Transportation and Robots Museum will be introduced to chess games using life size props, discover 'Science in the Kitchen' through activities that explains the science of food and how we benefit from experimenting with food followed by The 'Greeting Robot', a home automation robot for sunsets and sunrise, where the robot will feel the sunset and turn on the LED light to be an automatic lighting system.

The Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre is one the many projects developed by the Amiri Diwan to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and promote critical, creative, and interpretive thinking within the Kuwaiti society through world-class exhibitions and educational public programs.

بيت التمويل الكويتي
Kuwait Finance House

Eid Mubarak

Wishing you a peaceful and blessed Eid Al-Adha

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Chechnya sends 'Islamic State' women to schools

Kashmir's clampdown pushes some in Pakistan to discuss rejoining militants



MOROGORO, Tanzania: Police tape cordons off the area where the carcass of a burnt out fuel tanker is seen along the side of the road following an explosion yesterday in Morogoro, 200 kilometers west of the Tanzanian capital Dar es Salaam. — AFP

Tanzania fuel tanker blast kills 60

The latest in a series of similar disasters in Africa

MOROGORO: At least 60 people perished in Tanzania yesterday when a fuel tanker overturned and then exploded as people rushed to syphon off leaking fuel. The deadly blast, which took place near the town of Morogoro, west of the economic capital Dar es Salaam, is the latest in a series of similar disasters in Africa. Morogoro governor Stephen Kebwe said the bodies of 60 victims were at the morgue of the local hospital, where more than 70 people were also being treated for injuries. He warned that the toll could rise with victims possibly trapped under the truck.

Regional police chief Willbrod Mtafungwa told reporters there was a "huge explosion" after the vehicle overturned. Witnesses told AFP by telephone they could see charred remains of motorcycle taxis and trees scorched by the power

of the explosion. Mtafungwa said the dead were mainly drivers of the taxis known as "boda-boda" and local residents flocking to the scene for the fuel after the crash. A video posted on social media showed dozens of people busy trying to recover fuel in yellow jerricans.

'Never seen such disaster'

The governor said the explosion was triggered when a man tried to pull out the truck's battery, while witnesses said one of the people looting the fuel was smoking a cigarette. Police later announced the blaze had been brought under control. "The Morogoro region had never experienced a disaster of such magnitude," Kebwe told reporters at the scene in the locality of Msamvu, about 200 kilometers (125 miles)

west of Dar es Salaam. He said the tanker truck overturned on the roadside and the "fuel began to flow freely". "We have mobilized all the doctors at the Morogoro regional hospital so the wounded can be treated," he added.

Such disasters are not uncommon in Africa. Last month, at least 45 people were killed and more than 100 injured in central Nigeria when a petrol tanker crashed and then exploded as people were trying to gather fuel. In May, a similar incident occurred in Niger just a short distance from the airport in the capital Niamey, leaving almost 80 people dead. Among the deadliest such disasters, 292 people lost their lives in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in July 2010, and in September 2015 at least 203 people perished in the town of Maridi in South Sudan. — AFP

98 candidates eyeing Tunisian presidential seat

TUNIS: Nearly 100 people including the prime minister have thrown their hats into the ring to become Tunisia's next president, with a last minute rush to meet Friday's registration deadline. A total of 98 presidential hopefuls submitted their paperwork by the official 6:00 pm deadline, the country's electoral commission told AFP. On Friday alone, 42 people registered their candidacy.

"Political ratatouille," the French-language daily Le Temps dubbed the electoral manoeuvring ahead of the September 15 elections. Prime Minister Youssef Chahed, who announced on Thursday he would run, presented his application surrounded by supporters, and confirmed he would not resign. "Anyone who is seeking my resignation is in fact aiming to delay the elections and my resignation means the resignation of the government," he said.

Originally scheduled for November, the presidential polls in the North African country have been brought forward following the death of incumbent Beji Caid Essebsi late last month. Chahed, 43, the country's youngest prime minister, faces possible competition from Abdelfattah Mourou of the Islamist-inspired Ennahdha party as well as from controversial media magnate Nabil Karoui.

Ennahdha won the first polls held after the 2011 uprising which ousted autocratic president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and is currently the largest party in parliament. Tunisia has been praised as a rare case of democratic transition to emerge from the Arab Spring uprisings. But it has struggled with repeated jihadist attacks, along with inflation and unemployment that have hit Chahed's popularity. — AFP



ABECHE: A farmer walks among his herd of livestock on the road between Adre and Farchana, in the region of Ouaddai, Chad. At least 37 people have been killed in fresh fighting between rival ethnic groups in Chad, President Idriss Deby says, calling the violence a 'terrible phenomenon'. — AFP

Dozens dead in fresh Chad ethnic fighting

N'DJAMENA: At least 37 people have been killed in fresh fighting this week between farmers and herders from rival ethnic groups in Chad, President Idriss Deby said yesterday. The violence broke out over three days in the province of Ouaddai, a strategic area on the eastern border with Sudan, he said.

"The intercommunal conflict has become a national concern," Deby told a press conference to mark the country's independence day. "We are witnessing a terrible phenomenon." Eastern Chad is in the grip of a cycle of violence between nomadic camel herders-many from the Zaghawa ethnic group from which Deby hails-and sedentary farmers from the Ouaddian community. Drought and population growth have aggra-

vated the conflict. The latest fighting erupted on Monday in the Wadi Hamra district after a rancher was found dead, said a local charity representative who asked not to be named for their safety. Three more killings followed that discovery, the representative said. Fresh violence flared up at another nearby location the following day, a local tribal official told AFP. "The communities clashed with firearms. The fighting was particularly deadly," the official said, saying that at least 25 people were killed. One hospital source told AFP the death toll was as high as 44.

The clashes on Tuesday were linked to the death of the young rancher, historian and head of the Centre for the study of prevention of extremism in Chad, Ahmat Yacoub Dabio said. Describing the clashes, Deby said that police sent to the scene came under fire. "Those with guns are not hesitating to shoot the police. We must wage a total war against those who carry weapons and are killing people," he said. Deby said he would visit the area in the future, without saying when.

Guns from Sudan

Last month Deby, who has been in power for almost three decades, hinted that military courts may be reintroduced in a bid to curb the unrest, a suggestion denounced by the country's opposition. Deby said the decades-long conflict over land in Ouaddai had spread since the start of this year to other regions where previously the communities lived side by side in an "exemplary" manner.

He cited the eastern province of Sila where he said more than 40 people had been killed since January. Deby blamed the surge in violence partly on an influx of guns to Chad from conflict zones in neighboring Libya, Central African Republic and Sudan, where a protest movement ousted the president in April.

"The government has created special disarmament units. We take away the weapons, but the next day more arrive." Legislative elections in Chad are scheduled to take place by the end of the year. They have been postponed several times since 2015 as Deby, who grabbed power in 1990, looks to maintain his grip on the country. — AFP



TUNIS: Raoudha Rezgui submits her candidacy for the upcoming early presidential elections at the Independent High Authority for Elections (ISIE) in the capital Tunis. — AFP

International

Born in Israel, hundreds of Filipino kids risk expulsion

Filipino families in Israel caught up in a legal battle

TEL AVIV: In the heat of the summer, Sivan Noel and her sister Michal say they rarely venture outside of their family's small, basement apartment in Tel Aviv. The two girls, 11 and nine, risk being deported to the family's home country, the Philippines, even though they've never set foot there. "I was born here," said Sivan, the 11-year-old. "It's really unfair that after being born here and having a family, friends, school and studies, we are being told that... we now must leave to a place that we hardly know."

They and hundreds of other Filipino families in Israel are caught up in a legal battle that has put them at risk of deportation. Many of the 28,000 Filipinos in Israel arrived to work as caregivers and domestic helpers, but according to the United Children of Israel (UCI) association, some 600 families could now face expulsion over a loss of residency status. The issue holds particular resonance in Israel, where there are long-term fears about maintaining a Jewish majority in the country founded as a national homeland for Jews in the wake of the Holocaust. But children such as Sivan and Michal pose a special case.

They were born in Israel, attend school in the country, speak and write on social media in Hebrew and dress in the same tank tops, shorts and sandals as other children in Tel Aviv. Their mother, Ramela Noel, arrived legally in the country in 2003 as a domestic worker. She later met her husband, who is also Filipino, and became pregnant with Sivan, the oldest of the two girls. She then faced a heart-breaking choice: either leave the country or send her child to the Philippines in order to maintain her visa, as spelled out in her employment contract.

'I started crying'

Noel said she initially chose to remain and send her child back to the Philippines to live with her sister, Sivan's aunt. "When I gave birth to Sivan and they put her on my tummy, that's when I started crying," the 39-year-old said, the memory again bringing tears to her eyes.

She couldn't bring herself to send the baby away, so the family began to live clandestinely. The two girls have no legal status and their parents cannot renew their work visas without risking expulsion. Noel and her husband scrape out a living cleaning homes. "Every time we go out on the street - the fear that I have every time I go on the street - it's terrifying," she said. This week, a mother and her 13-year-old child were detained in southern Tel Aviv ahead of a planned deportation.

Since the start of the year, members of 36 families, 24 of them Filipino, have been arrested. They were released on the condition they leave by August 1, but no one has been deported for now, according to UCI, created to help those involved. The adults were arrested for being in the country illegally, but their children were allowed to finish the school year, according to a statement from Israel's immigration authority, which declined an interview request.

With the school vacation underway, the threat of deportation is back. "Israel encouraged them to come. There are recruitment services abroad for them," said Sigal Rozen, one of the founders of the Israeli organization Hotline for Refugees and Migrants. Filipinos were brought to Israel to fill a labor shortage. One member of UCI who spoke on condition of anonymity said she cared for the elderly for nine years. "What do you expect me to do in nine years? Not to have sex, not to have love?" she said.

'Not make me forget'

In 2006 and in 2010, while facing criticism to act, Israeli authorities granted permanent visas to nearly 5,000 people, said Rozen. Catholic church heads have joined condemnations of the deportations, asking in a statement: "Does this policy respect the contribution of these women's labor to the Israeli society?" Filipinos recently held a protest in Tel Aviv, supported by Israelis. "We can't send children away," said 83-year-old Drora Lustiger, who said her husband survived the Holocaust.



TEL AVIV: Ramela Noel (right), a Filipina domestic worker, talks to her daughter, 11-year-old Sivan, at their home in Tel Aviv. — AFP

Nearby, separated from the crowd by a security cordon, around a dozen counter-protesters called for the deportations to move ahead. "I'm concerned about the majority of the Jewish in Israel," said Sigal Sudai. "In many other countries in the world, when their visa ends, they go back to their land."

But Sivan and her sister, who have never travelled, say they consider Israel home. "It would feel like I'm in a foreign place, a place that I don't know," said Sivan. "Maybe I will meet new friends or have new memories there, but it will not make me forget that I have friends here, and a family." — AFP

Israel army kills 4 armed Palestinians

JERUSALEM: Israeli troops shot dead four heavily armed Palestinians on the Gaza border yesterday, one of whom had managed to cross and throw a grenade at troops, the army said. There have been frequent clashes along the Gaza border since the Palestinians began organizing regular mass protests there in March 2018 but yesterday's exchange was unusual because of the weaponry the army said was involved on the Palestinian side.

"The terrorists were equipped with AK-47 assault rifles, RPG grenade launchers and hand grenades," an army statement said. A spokeswoman said: "The army opened fire after one of the terrorists scaled the barrier and hurled a grenade at the soldiers." No casualties were reported in Israeli ranks. Palestinian demonstrations at the Gaza border demanding the lifting of Israel's more than decade-old blockade have often led to violence and a deadly response from the Israeli army.

At least 301 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in Gaza or the border area since March 2018, the majority during the demonstrations. Seven Israelis have also been killed. The protests have declined in intensity in recent months following a truce brokered by UN officials and Egypt.

Under the truce, Israel agreed to take steps to ease aspects of its blockade in return for calm on the border. Sporadic violence has continued but the Israeli army has said most of it has consisted of lone-wolf attacks. On August 1, a Palestinian seeking to avenge his brother's death by Israeli fire entered Israel from Gaza armed with a Kalashnikov assault rifle and hand grenades. He was killed and three Israeli soldiers wounded, the army said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is widely seen as wanting to avoid a major flare-up in the Palestinian territories as Israel prepares for a snap general election on September 17, its second this year. But he is likely to face political pressure to act firmly against any significant attack. Israel and Hamas have fought three wars since 2008. The border exchange came as Palestinians prepare to mark Eid al-Adha, the feast of the sacrifice. — AFP



KFAR QADDUM: An Israeli soldier runs past burning tires during clashes with Palestinian protesters following a weekly protest against the expropriation of Palestinian land by Israel in the village of Kfar Qaddum. — AFP

Displaced by fighting, Libyans fear ending up 'on the street'

TRIPOLI: Libyans who fled fighting outside Tripoli dream of returning to their homes as they prepare for the Eid Al-Adha festival with heavy hearts, worried they will end up living on the streets. In early April, Mohamad Kreir and his family fled their home south of capital as fierce clashes flared between rival forces turning the area into a battleground within hours.

Kreir and others like him were moved into hotels paid for by a crisis committee set up by the Tripoli-based UN-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) to cope with the influx of displaced. The committee is now asking them to leave the hotels but has given no reason for its decision. "A few days ago, they tell us we have to leave the hotel. What should I do? Live in the street with my family? I have nowhere to go," Kreir said.

Another man added: "My family and I are at a hotel and I don't even have a quarter dinar in my pocket." They were speaking during a gathering of some 50 displaced people in a gymnasium organized by an NGO in the Libyan capital. "I realized that the crisis they're going through is more serious than Eid," said Entisar Elgleib, head of a Libyan coalition of civil society organizations, who attended the gathering. Eid Al-Adha is usually a time of festivities, but for many of the displaced families, this year's holiday will be a frugal one, as the fighting drags on around Tripoli and many complain of dwindling savings.

'Nowhere to go'

Kreir recalled how he and his family fled their home near the Al-Toghar mosque in the Swani district after Libyan strongman Khalifa Haftar launched in early April an assault to seize Tripoli from the GNA. "We left in a rush without taking even the bare minimum," he said, before the crisis committee set them up in a hotel. In his 50s, Kreir still suffers from the effects of a stroke he had a few years ago and struggles to stay upright.

Fatma Bachir, a married mother of two, lived in Khallet al-Ferjan in southern Tripoli, one of the first areas where fighting caused residents to flee. An official at the postal service, Bachir has spent all her savings since leaving her home. "I spent more than 7,000 dinars (around \$5,000, 4,450 euros) - that is all my savings. We have nothing left, my husband and I, so we borrowed money", she said. "Since then, we moved from one house to another staying with relatives before going to a hotel for the month of Ramadan."

Indebted

This situation is "abnormal and unbearable. We are going to end up in the street, in debt", Bachir added. According to a report released Friday by the UN refugee agency, fighting on the outskirts of Tripoli has killed 1,093 people, wounded 5,752 and displaced 120,000. Many families who fled the violence are dissatisfied with the crisis committee's efforts at support. But committee member Abdel Barri Chenbar told a news conference last week that since its creation, the crisis committee has "been able to provide some solutions". "The GNA has allocated 10 million dinars to refurbish public buildings to house families staying in schools" since April, he said.

But Elgleib said the committee "is not close enough to the people and its response is slow" and called for authorities to meet with the families affected by the fighting. "A displaced person doesn't need a liter of oil or a can of tomato paste... but to be listened to", she said. With the lack of prospects and money, some say they prefer to return to their homes, even if these areas are still considered dangerous. "I want to go home even though I fear for my children because of the security situation and the fighting," Kreir said. — AFP



PAUNG: The body of a landslide victim is seen in Paung township, Mon state. — AFP

Myanmar landslide kills 34, many more feared missing

MAWLAMYINE: The death toll from a landslide triggered by monsoon rains in eastern Myanmar rose to at least 34, an official said yesterday, as emergency workers continued a desperate search through thick mud for scores more feared missing. A huge brown gash on the hillside marked where the deluge of mud flooded onto Ye Pyar Kone village in Mon state on Friday, wiping out 16 homes.

Search and rescue teams worked through the night with excavators and their bare hands trying to find survivors and recover bodies from the deep sludge, continuing through yesterday. "We found 34 dead, and the search for dead bodies is still ongoing," local administrator Myo Min Tun told AFP. So far, 47 people have been injured while officials believe that more than 80 people could still be missing. Myanmar is battered annually by a monsoon season which strikes countries across Southeast Asia, leaving tens of thousands displaced from flooded homes and setting off deadly landslides.

Aerial pictures of Ye Pyar Kone village showed shattered remnants of rooftops and other debris from the houses strewn next to trucks knocked over by the force of the onslaught. Its hillside temple was left inundated, leaving the pagoda's golden spire peeking out from beneath the mud. Htay Htay Win, 32 said that two of her daughters and five other relatives had still not been found. She only survived because she had left her home minutes earlier to look at the flooding nearby. "I heard a huge noise and turned round to see my home

being hit by the mud," she said, crying.

Mud and water

Rescue workers yesterday continued to carry out excavated bodies wrapped in plastic to waiting ambulances, wading through pools of water and ankle-deep sludge. Crying relatives of the missing watched on helpless under a steady torrent of rain, as nearby floodwaters edged closer to the village.

Tin Htay, who escaped with his family from their home, described his efforts to rescue others trapped by the mud. "I dragged a woman and two children from a car but I could not reach two other people, so I had to leave them," the 30-year-old said. Emergency crews had to unblock the main highway from Yangon to Mawlamyine, buried under six feet of sludge. Torrential downpours have burst riverbanks across the country while coastal communities have been warned of higher tides.

In the town of Shwegyin in eastern Bago region, residents waded out through waist-deep waters or waited to be rescued by boat after the Sittaung river burst its banks, swallowing entire homes. Around 89,000 people have been displaced by floods in recent weeks, although many have since been able to return home, according to the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Vietnam has also experienced heavy flooding this week with at least eight people killed in the country's central highlands and rescuers using a zipline to carry dozens of others to safety. — AFP

Afghans prepare for Eid, hope for peace

JALALABAD: At a bustling outdoor market in the eastern Afghanistan city of Jalalabad, farmers tend to long-haired goats and customers choose an animal to slaughter for the upcoming Islamic festival of Eid al-Adha. But a key question looms over preparations: is peace about to come to Afghanistan, or will four decades of war continue unabated? "We are thirsty for peace in Afghanistan."

Every day, large numbers of our people are getting killed," local resident Sayed Jan said. "We are celebrating Eid with sad news." Like many Afghans, Jan remembers well a short ceasefire between Taliban and Afghan forces during last year's Eid al-Fitr, another key Muslim festival, when the wartime foes put down guns and exchanged greetings.

This year, the United States and the Taliban are widely believed to be in the final stretch of a push for a deal that would see America quit Afghanistan in return for

various Taliban guarantees. However, even as the negotiations have appeared to progress, the battlefield and civilian toll has continued to climb, with July the deadliest month for more than two years, and it remains unclear when a ceasefire might come.

A much-anticipated Eid greeting from the Taliban's top leader Haibatullah Akhundzada on Thursday made no mention of the truce that many Afghans long for. "The Taliban should sit with the Afghan government for a peace agreement and they should announce a ceasefire during Eid," said Hamim Sadiq, another local resident. "The Afghan people should celebrate Eid in peace. We have lost everything during more than 40 years of war."

Jalalabad is one part of Afghanistan that has suffered deeply. Aside from Taliban fighting, the Islamic State group has maintained a stubborn presence here since 2015 and the city has been the scene of frequent attacks.

On Wednesday, at the market in Jalalabad, customers examined the wide selection of goats, which ranged in size and color. Some had been daubed bright pink, while others had lanky black hair. Within a few days, all will be slaughtered and eaten for the annual Eid al-Adha festival. — AFP



JALALABAD: A man looks over livestock feeding at an outdoor market set up for the upcoming Islamic festival of Eid Al-Adha in the eastern city of Jalalabad. — AFP

International

Chechnya sends 'Islamic State' women into schools, not jails

Mother of 5 says she was 'tricked' into joining jihadists

GROZNY: Mother of five Zalina Gabibulayeva says she was "tricked" into joining the jihadists in Syria five years ago. Now, repentant and repatriated to Russia's Chechnya, she goes into schools to teach others of the dangers of extremism. Countries around the world are grappling with the question of how to treat citizens who travelled to the Islamic State "caliphate" and have since decided to return.

That problem is felt particularly keenly in Russia, which has seen thousands of people leave to fight alongside jihadists in Syria, according to President Vladimir Putin. While some Western nations have stripped IS recruits of citizenship or banned them from coming back, Russia has actively repatriated women and children though the return of women was suspended more than a year ago over security concerns.

Most of Russia's IS recruits came from Muslim-majority Caucasus republics such as Chechnya, the site of two bloody separatist conflicts with Moscow in the 1990s and now notorious for human rights abuses. The republic however has welcomed in women like Gabibulayeva-with the expectation some go to work to prevent young Muslims from becoming radicalized. "We're useful. We can tell the new generation about what happened to us, so they don't make the same mistakes we did," the 38-year-old says as her two youngest children play on the floor of her flat in regional capital Grozny. Wearing a leopard-print khimar veil covering her head and body, she describes vis-

iting schools or colleges a couple of times a week across Chechnya and neighboring republic Ingushetia. There she tells young people how she fell for propaganda from the Islamic State group before her family moved to the "caliphate" and found "cruelty, horror...it had nothing to do with Islam".

'To show they repent'

Gabibulayeva was already widowed when she went to Syria with her children, but married a Macedonian there after discovering discrimination against women without a husband. Later the pair tried to escape via Iraq, where he was arrested and she was sent to a refugee camp, from which she was eventually brought back to Russia. Gabibulayeva moved to Chechnya after receiving a suspended sentence in her native republic of Dagestan.

While using former members of extremist groups in education is not unusual, analysts said this was the first such schools program they were aware of using returnees from the Islamic State. "It's very difficult for (the women) to talk about their experience but we get them to understand it's a way to show they repent," says Kheda Saratova, who sits on the rights council of Chechnya's authoritarian leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

Saratova-who manages repatriation efforts with Kadyrov and Moscow's backing-said young people were turned off by traditional lecturing about the dangers of extremism. "But when someone appears before them to say in detail how they

were radicalized, what they did there, how they managed to escape...they see the real picture, the real face of this terrorist organization."

Showcase

In a video from one of the classes, another returnee's voice cracks as she describes the pain she caused her family by going to IS. "There were special groups who taught children how to fight, they treated it as a game, they taught them how to shoot," the woman tells the class of Grozny teenagers. Saratova hopes Russian federal authorities will remove their ban on repatriating women from Syria and Iraq. The activist says around 200 women and children have already been brought back, and she is planning a trip to collect more children of Russian families. "Eventually they will come back to their countries-especially the children. But in what capacity?" she said. Ekaterina Sokirianskaia, director of the independent Conflict Analysis and Prevention Centre, said in some ways the initiative was a "showcase" to balance out reports of rights abuses from Chechnya.

At the same time she believes the use of such personal experience "is considered to be one of the most effective ways of trying to ideologically counter terrorism." "It's not easy to do because usually in democratic states you can't push people to speak-you have to ask for their consent and most are reluctant to do it" because of psychological difficulties, stigma or personal risk. Fenna Keijzer of the European



MOSCOW: Kheda Saratova attends an AFP interview in Moscow. Repentant and repatriated to Russia's Chechnya, Saratova goes into schools to teach others of the dangers of extremism. — AFP

Union's Radicalisation Awareness Network said similar education projects in other countries tended to use the experience of people who had been longer out of extremist environments. Saratova insisted that the five women involved in the program, which has reached

around 600 young people over the last year and is seeking support to continue, took part voluntarily. But she suggested there was an element of quid pro quo in the arrangement. "You have to pay for everything in this life," she said. — AFP

Five nuclear agency staff killed in Russia missile test explosion

MOSCOW: Russia said yesterday an explosion at an Arctic missile testing site killed five nuclear agency staff and involved radioactive isotopes after a nearby city reported a spike in radiation levels. In a statement, Russia's nuclear agency Rosatom said the accident on Thursday at a secret military facility also left three staff with burns and other injuries. The military had not previously described the accident as involving nuclear fuel and said radiation levels were normal afterwards.

But officials in the nearby city of Severodvinsk reported that radiation levels were briefly raised after the accident. The accident occurred in the far northern Arkhangelsk region during testing of a liquid propellant jet engine. An explosion sparked a fire, killing two, the defense ministry said in a brief statement. Rosatom said its staff were providing engineering and technical support for the "isotope power source" of the engine being tested.

The authorities have released few details of the accident at the Nyonoksa test site on the White Sea, used for testing missiles deployed in nuclear submarines and ships since the Soviet era. The defense ministry said six defense ministry employees and a developer were injured while two "specialists" died of their wounds. It was not immediately clear whether the death toll reported by Rosatom included the fatalities announced earlier by the defense ministry. Russian state news agencies quoted a defense ministry source as saying both defense ministry and Rosatom employees were killed.

Radiation spike

The authorities in Severodvinsk, 30 kilometers from the test site, said on their website on Thursday that automatic radiation detection sensors in the city "recorded a brief rise in radiation levels" around noon that day. The post was later taken down and the defense ministry said that radiation levels were normal after the accident. An official responsible for civil defense, Valentin Magomedov, told TASS state news agency on Thursday that radiation levels rose to 2.0 microsieverts per hour for half an hour from 11:50 am (0850 GMT), before falling sharply.

He said this exceeded the permitted limit of 0.6 microsieverts, TASS reported. Greenpeace Russia published a letter from officials at a Moscow nuclear research center giving the same figure, but saying higher radiation levels lasted for an hour. The officials said this did not present any significant risk to public health. Russian online media published unattributed video that journalists said showed a line of ambulances speeding through Moscow to take the injured to a centre that specializes in the treatment of radiation victims. Rosatom said that the injured were being treated at a "specialized medical centre".

Iodine panic

An expert from Moscow's Institute for Nuclear Research, Boris Zhuikov, told RBK independent news site that isotope power sources are mainly used in spacecraft and are not usually dangerous for people working with them. "If they are damaged, people who are nearby could be hurt. Isotope sources use various types of fuel: plutonium, promethium or cerium," Zhuikov said. The radioactivity levels involved are "absolutely not comparable with those during serious accidents at reactors," he added.

The news of the accident prompted residents of Severodvinsk to rush to pharmacies on Thursday to stock up on iodine, which can be taken to stop the thyroid gland absorbing radiation. "People started to panic. Within a matter of an hour all the iodine and iodine-containing drugs were sold out," pharmacist Yelena Varinskaya said. The Soviet Union saw the world's worst nuclear accident at Chernobyl in 1986, when the authorities sought to cover up the seriousness of the disaster. — AFP

Guatemala burdened by poverty, violence

PARIS: Central America's most populated nation, Guatemala is scarred by civil war, gang violence and poverty, its people among the streams of migrants heading north to the United States. Ahead of the presidential run-off vote today, here are some facts about the country that is home to 17.7 million people.

Rural poor

While Guatemala has the biggest economy of Central America's seven countries, it also has some of the worst poverty, malnutrition and maternal-child mortality rates in Latin America, the World Bank says. Economic growth stood at three percent in 2018 and is projected at 2.9 percent in 2019, with textiles and clothing, coffee, sugar, silver and bananas among its main exports. However, nearly 60 percent of its population lives below the poverty line of \$1.50 a day, most in rural and indigenous areas. The United States is Guatemala's top trading partner, with remittances in 2018 amounting to about 12 percent of its GDP.

Guatemala's homicide rate, among the highest in the world, has been dropping: by late 2018 the rate was 22.4 murders per 100,000 people, down from 26.1 one year earlier, according to official figures. Around



MIXCO: Guatemalan presidential candidate for the Union Nacional de la Esperanza (National Union of Hope) party, Sandra Torres, waves as she poses with her dog during her campaign's closing rally in Mixco municipality, Guatemala. — AFP

half the killings are blamed on drug trafficking and extortion by powerful gangs. Guatemala has also produced two Nobel laureates: Miguel Angel Asturias for Literature in 1967, and Rigoberta Menchu for Peace in 1992.

Migrant gateway

Located on Mexico's southern border, Guatemala is a gateway for the vast numbers of Central American migrants aiming to reach United States by land. In July 2019,

the US and Guatemala governments signed an agreement under which these migrants must request asylum when they enter Guatemala. The accord, which has come under fire for designating Guatemala with its high murder rate a "safe third country," is tied up in court and has yet to come into effect. US President Donald Trump has also pressured Mexico to halt migrants at its porous border with Guatemala. The Guatemalan National Migrant Assistance Council estimates that about 1.5 million

Guatemalans live in the United States. Of those, only between 300,000 and 400,000 have legal residence.

36-year civil war

Once a center of the Mayan civilization, Guatemala was ruled by Spain from 1524 until its independence in 1821. Spanish remains its official language, but there are also 24 native languages, all but two of Maya origin. In 1954, the leftist government of freely elected President Jacobo Arbenz Guzman was overthrown in a US-backed coup, leading to a string of pro-American, right-wing regimes and the outbreak of civil war.

The fighting between government troops, left-wing rebels and right-wing vigilante groups ended with a peace accord in 1996. Some 200,000 people died or were forcibly disappeared during that period, more than 80 percent of them ethnic Mayas, according to United Nations figures. About 1.5 million people were displaced or exiled. Military dictator Efraim Rios Montt, who ruled from 1982 to 1983, died in 2018 while on trial for genocide committed at the peak of the war.

'Ring of Fire'

Guatemala is situated in the "Pacific Ring of Fire," a vast region where around 85 percent of the world's seismic activity is concentrated. The Fuego volcano, 35 kilometers southeast of the capital Guatemala City, erupted five times in 2018, claiming around 200 lives in June. Three other volcanoes surround its landmark Lake Atitlan, Guatemala's most important tourist attraction. — AFP

Allegations of serious labor abuses dogged Mississippi facilities

MISSISSIPPI: Long before US immigration authorities arrested 680 people at agricultural processing facilities in Mississippi this week, one of the five targeted companies faced allegations of serious labor violations including intimidation, harassment and exploitation of its largely immigrant work force, according to a federal lawsuit.

Last August, Illinois-based poultry supplier Koch Foods settled a multi-year lawsuit brought by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on behalf of more than 100 workers at the Morton, Mississippi, plant over claims the company knew - or should have known - of sexual and physical assaults against its Hispanic workers.

Mark Kaminsky, chief operating officer at Koch, said the company admitted no wrongdoing in the settlement and maintains, after fighting the matter in court for more than eight years, that all the allegations contained in the lawsuit are false. The workers' complaints spanned 2004 to 2008, when the plant employed more than 500 people.

They alleged that a manager would grope women from behind while they were working, punch employees and throw chicken parts at them. Workers also alleged that supervisors coerced payments from them for everything from medical leave and promotions to bathroom breaks. Privately held Koch Foods, run by billionaire Joseph Grendys, in court filings called the claims of abuse and harassment "baffling" and "outrageous."

Kaminsky said a third-party review of 9 months of 24-hour video surveillance at the plant found "absolutely no evidence" of their veracity. Koch said the plaintiffs made uncorroborated claims against the company as a means to obtain US visas for crime victims who collaborate with US authorities that would allow them to stay legally in the United States.

The company settled the allegations last year by paying \$3.75 million and entering a three-year consent decree to prevent future violations. It agreed to implement new policies such as creating a 24-hour complaint hotline and publicly posting anti-discrimination policies, according to the EEOC. Some workers at the Mississippi plant who lacked legal immigration status alleged in court documents that supervisors threatened to turn them in to authorities if



This image released by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) shows a Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) officer guarding suspected illegal aliens. — AFP

they spoke out about their concerns. Former federal officials and immigration attorneys said mass deportation operations like the ones conducted by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on Wednesday in Mississippi can have a chilling effect on future labor complaints. "If workers are being threatened with being turned over to ICE, and then here comes ICE and arrests workers," people could be more reluctant to speak up, said John Sandweg, a former acting ICE director during the Obama administration.

In the EEOC lawsuit, one Koch Foods employee without legal immigration status alleged that a manager sexually harassed his wife and made him pay to use the bathroom, once waiting until he had soiled himself to give him permission to leave his spot on the production line.

"If he found out that I had talked about anything that he was doing, charging money, the way he mistreated us, the dirty words he used; he told me that if I went to complain in the office that he had contacts in immigration," the worker said in a 2012 deposition that was filed as part of the suit. "And that he knew where I lived." Maria Cazorla, a Cuban immigrant and lead plaintiff in a lawsuit against the company that was wrapped into the EEOC case, said in an interview on Thursday that a manager inappropriately touched her and hit her then-husband, also a co-worker, in the ribs while he was working.

According to Cazorla's interview and court documents, her husband at the time was targeted by management and fired over his immigration status after she filed her lawsuit against the company in 2010. — Reuters

Thousands join opposition rally in Moscow after crackdown

MOSCOW: Thousands of opposition supporters rallied in Moscow yesterday after mass police detentions at recent protests that have been among the largest since President Vladimir Putin's return to the Kremlin in 2012. On a rainy afternoon, protesters huddled under umbrellas on the central Prospekt Andreyevskaya street, where city authorities had given permission for the rally to take place.

The White Counter, an NGO that tracks participants in rallies, counted 7,200 people, while the massive police presence included officers in riot gear. In recent weeks, thousands have attended street protests calling for free and fair elections after the exclusion of several opposition figures, including allies of top Putin critic Alexei Navalny, from local Moscow polls next month. Riot police and the national guard detained more than 2,000 at the previous two rallies, which were not authorized by city officials.

Yesterday, some protesters carried placards with slogans such as "Give us the right to vote!" and "You've lied to us enough" while others held up pictures of activists arrested at earlier demonstrations. Most opposition candidates who have been banned from participating in the vote have been jailed for violating protest laws. A dozen protesters including university students face criminal charges of "mass disorder" that risk lengthy prison terms, despite their supporters insisting protests were peaceful.

Yesterday's rally was authorized, meaning participants should not face detention. But Navalny, who is currently in jail, urged supporters to walk peacefully through the city afterwards, when they will risk detention for illegal protests. "After the demonstration we're going for a walk round Moscow," his team wrote on social media yesterday. Moscow police and the powerful Investigative Committee issued a warning against participating in unsanctioned protests which it said would be "immediately halted."

"They need blood," pro-Kremlin tabloid Komsomolskaya Pravda wrote of the opposition yesterday, quoting several celebrities warning against taking part in unauthorized protests. — AFP

International

Kashmir's clampdown pushes some in Pakistan to discuss rejoining militants

Pakistan fumes as India tighten its grip on Kashmir

MUZAFFARABAD: Three decades ago, Ali Mohamad says he made a trip into Indian-controlled Kashmir to join a small armed militant group. Now he works in a shop on the Pakistani side of the region, but he hasn't given up thoughts of returning to the conflict. After the Indian government clamped down on Kashmir this week, Ali has again been thinking of going back. "I have not left, we are all watching", he said, adding that he believes all Kashmiris will take up arms when needed.

"I fought for my rights. When someone crushes you then what else can you do?" said Ali, 53, who was born in Indian-controlled Kashmir and then moved to the Pakistani side. Seeking to tighten its grip on the region, India this week withdrew special rights for Jammu and Kashmir state. It has cut off almost all communications, prohibited assemblies of more than four people and detained hundreds of political and separatist leaders.

The constitutional change will mean that non-residents will be able to buy property, get government jobs and take college places in the state, to the fury of arch-rival Pakistan, which claims the region as its own and accuses India of trying to change the demographics of its only Muslim-majority state. It has also

angered many on both sides of Kashmir who see India as imposing its will on the region without giving the people a chance of self-determination.

Ali is not alone in wondering whether he might rejoin the armed struggle. In the 1990s, Tanveer-ul-Islam was one of the top commanders of Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen, a group resisting Indian rule that was banned as a terrorist organization by New Delhi in February. He and many other militants renounced violence decades ago, but said some veterans of the Kashmir conflict had been outraged by India's decision. "If the situation continues it might compel us to take up arms again. It is not just me, there are many others."

If the views of Ali and Tanveer are representative of a fraction of the people in Kashmir, it could create a worsening threat of armed attacks for India. To be sure, the majority of the refugees from Indian-controlled Kashmir whom Reuters spoke to in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistani-controlled Kashmir, said they didn't support an armed struggle, with some saying it just ended up hurting ordinary Kashmiris. Instead, they wanted to see stronger action against India by Pakistan and the international community.

Historic conflict

Nuclear-armed neighbors India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir and engaged in an aerial clash in February after a militant group based in Pakistan claimed responsibility for an attack on an Indian military convoy. India has long accused Pakistan of funding and harboring the groups. Islamabad denies this, saying it provides only diplomatic and moral support to non-violent separatists on the Indian side. In the small town of Chakothi, three kilometers from the Line of Control (LoC) that divides Indian and Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, Zeeshan Sadiq said families are beginning to rebuild underground shelters.

Indian shells hit the area in February. "The neighbors also came to stay in here as their bunkers were in disrepair," Sadiq said, crouched in a claustrophobic reinforced concrete room under his home. "Now everyone here is rebuilding them". Last week, Pakistan accused India of using illegal cluster bombs, killing two civilians and wounding 11. India has denied using such weapons. Exchange of fire between the two countries has intensified in the past few years along the LoC. — Reuters



MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistani Kashmiri shout anti-Indian slogans during a protest in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. — AFP

Separated Bangladeshi twins stable

DHAKA: Conjoined Bangladeshi twins who were separated last week are in a stable condition, the team of Hungarian and Bangladeshi doctors who carried out the marathon operation said yesterday. Three-year-old Rabeya and Rukaya who were joined at the head suffered from a rare embryological disorder affecting an estimated one in every five to six million births. The girls were recovering after the 30-hour operation to separate their skulls and brains at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka.

A surgical team of 35 Hungarians and more than 100

Bangladeshi doctors took part in the delicate procedure which they dubbed "Operation Freedom". The girls were in stable condition after the final separation, the last phase in a lengthy series of surgeries since last year, said Gergely Pataki, founder of Action for Defenceless People Foundation (ADPF) which led the huge team of doctors.

"But keeping in mind that such rare complicated surgical procedures has its risks, complications might still occur," he told reporters at a press conference in CMH. The girls have undergone two neurosurgical operations and 44 plastic surgeries so far. Before the surgery doctors had said there was only a 50 percent chance of the twins surviving.

According to ADPF, only a handful of operations to separate twins joined at the head have been successful. The Hungarian charity was set up in 2002 by neurosurgeon Andras Csokay and plastic surgeon Pataki to provide free surgery to poor people in Hungary and abroad. In the first phase of surgery in Bangladesh last year, the shared blood vessels of the twins' brains were

separated in a 14-hour operation.

ADPF neurosurgeons and plastic surgeons supported by anaesthesiologists, radiologists and paediatricians also used innovative 3D animation software to map the two brains. The twins' overwhelmed mother Taslima Khatun said she cried tears of joy when one her daughters spoke to her yesterday. "One of my babies this morning told me, 'Mother take me on your lap.' This gave me huge peace of mind. I'm so very happy," she said.

She was however concerned about whether the twins would make a complete recovery. Anaesthesiologist Marcell Csapody said they were "hopeful and optimistic" the twins would make a full recovery but had to be realistic as the youngsters were not yet completely out of danger. "We have to be optimistic and (simultaneously) realistic," he said. ADPF has performed around 500 reconstructive surgery operations in Asia and Africa, including for Rohingya Muslim refugees in Bangladesh. — AFP

Kashmiri soccer players anxious

KOLKATA: For the Real Kashmir Football Club, known as the Snow Leopards, this has been a tough week, which is saying something for a team based in one of the most militarized regions of the world where stone pelting and the sound of gunfire are regular occurrences. Kashmiri members of the team, which plays in India's top men's league, have lost contact with their families since leaving Srinagar on Monday to head to Kolkata to play in the Durand Cup, the oldest football tournament in Asia.

Their departure coincided with a major crackdown by the Indian government, including the arrival of tens of thousands more troops in Kashmir, the detention of hundreds of local leaders and activists, the severing of phone and internet links, and a curfew-like ban on most movement by local residents. The clampdown was intended to prevent security problems, such as rioting, as the government announced on Monday that it would move to end Jammu and Kashmir state's right to set some of its own laws.

That means outsiders will now be allowed to buy property there and residents will lose their rights to state government jobs and college places. "Once we landed, we tried frantically to talk to our homes but none of the Kashmiri players have been able to do that till now," said Mohammed Hammad, a defender in the team.

They have been stuck like many Kashmiris, both in and outside the region, with no means to check in on loved ones living in Kashmir at a particularly sensitive time, just before the Eid-al-Adha holiday on Monday. The blackout has now lasted almost five days. The anxiety was so great that the owner of the team, Sandeep Chattoo, returned to Kashmir on Thursday to reassure their families and to ask for the army's help in getting some phone or Internet links with the players set up.

"We are taking care to ensure that the family members of the players are given curfew passes in Kashmir and their welfare looked after," said Chattoo. "This will help restore the players' confidence in the team management." The team's squad only has five Kashmiri players, plus six foreign players and several from other parts of India. Much of the management and backroom team are from Kashmir, though the coach David Robertson is from Scotland.

As to their performance on the field, that has been good despite the concerns about what was happening back home. They beat I-League champions Chennai City 1-0 in their first Group C game on Wednesday. Next up on Saturday in the four-team group are Army Green, one of the Indian army's teams. The top team in each of the four groups goes into the semi-finals. — Reuters

Kim made a 'small' apology for missile tests, Trump says

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said yesterday that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had apologized over a recent spate of missile tests and wants to resume denuclearization talks as soon as US-South Korean military exercises end. Trump, hours after North Korea carried out the fifth such test in two weeks, tweeted that Kim made these statements in a letter to him. Trump said he looks "forward to seeing Kim Jong Un in the not too distant future!"

"In a letter to me sent by Kim Jong Un, he stated, very nicely, that he would like to meet and start negotiations as soon as the joint US/South Korea joint exercise are over," Trump wrote. The exercises began Monday and are due to last another week. North Korea has said the recent short-range missile tests are designed to protest the war games. Yesterday, Trump again seemed to side with Kim by criticizing the exercises, which are a cornerstone of US-South Korean military cooperation.

"It was a long letter, much of it complaining about the ridiculous and expensive exercises. It was also a small apology for testing the short range missiles, and that this testing would stop when the exercises end," Trump said. Trump has appeared determined to secure a denuclearization agreement with North Korea ahead of next year's presidential elections in the US, despite faltering talks since he first met Kim in a historic ice-breaking summit in Singapore in June 2018.

Even after their abortive second summit in February, Trump has been reluctant to criticize the North Korean leader. In June he offered an olive branch by meeting Kim in the Panmunjon truce village in the Korean Demilitarized Zone, becoming the first sitting US president ever to step inside the North. On Friday, Trump said the missile launches were not important. "I'll say it again. There have been no nuclear tests. The missile tests have all been short-range. No ballistic missile tests, no long-range missiles," Trump said. — AFP



SEOUL: People watch a television news screen showing file footage of North Korea's missile launch, at a railway station in Seoul yesterday. — AFP



KOY-TASH: A man riding a horse holds a shield in front of a burning bus during clashes between supporters of Kyrgyzstan's former president and law enforcement in the village of Koy-Tash, some 20 kilometers from Bishkek. — AFP

Kyrgyzstan: What to expect after the bloody clashes?

BISHKEK: Kyrgyzstan is in the throes of a political crisis with former leader Almazbek Atambayev in custody after dramatic clashes between his supporters and law enforcement left one officer dead and scores of people injured. How did the fragile Central Asian country reach this point, and will history repeat itself and see a third president overthrown in less than three decades of independence?

How did we get here?

Unlike other ex-Soviet countries in Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan has fiercely contested elections and political life is often unpredictable as the constitution forbids presidents from seeking re-election. Atambayev's detention came after more than a year of tensions with the man whom he backed to succeed him in the 2017 vote, President Sooronbai Jeenbekov.

But Atambayev, whose six years in power saw few notable reforms, attempted to continue wielding power even after leaving office, and began to publicly criticize his protégé, says Arkadii Dubnov, a Moscow-based regional analyst. "Jeenbekov tolerated this for a time before deciding to punish his former mentor," Dubnov said.

"On the orders of the new president, a series of criminal cases were opened against the old one," he said. Many of his allies face long jail terms on graft charges and a once-loyal parliament voted to strip him of immunity in June, so Atambayev began a last stand at his plush compound in the picturesque village of Koi-Tash near the capital Bishkek. An attempt to detain him on Wednesday was called off after supporters resisted the assault with firearms, but Atambayev surrendered to police on Thursday.

Why is this worrying?

Impoverished Kyrgyzstan has been prone to political

infighting for much of its 28-year independence, occasionally with bloody consequences. When Atambayev, then a moderate opposition figure, was detained by police in 2010, thousands of his supporters took to the streets along with other protesters to help overthrow strongman Kurmanbek Bakiyev.

Two months later, ethnic clashes between majority Kyrgyz and minority Uzbeks in the south of the country left over 400 people dead. Because Atambayev is a northerner and Jeenbekov a southerner, their standoff risks inflaming the traditional regional and clan rivalry that characterized local politics even in Soviet times. Critics say Atambayev has played a part in fuelling north-south tensions in recent weeks by deploying inflammatory rhetoric at his public appearances. The former leader has accused Jeenbekov, whose brother is a lawmaker, of forming a "family-clan regime" along with other southern allies.

Major unrest to come?

The operation to detain Atambayev saw the people of Kyrgyzstan glued to online news coverage, but few believe Atambayev has enough political clout to launch a third revolution. Police on Thursday dispersed an unruly crowd of several hundred supporters who gathered near Bishkek's central square — the site of revolutions in 2005 and 2010 — after Atambayev was detained.

The situation in Bishkek since then has been calm. Some commentators raised fears that the return to the country Friday of another political heavyweight whom Jeenbekov defeated in the bitterly contested 2017 vote could further destabilize a tense environment. Charismatic magnate Omurbek Babanov, 49, arrived at Bishkek's main airport on Friday from Russia, where he fled after authorities loyal to Atambayev opened two probes against him during the campaign.

The State Committee for National Security (GKNB) said Babanov would "be held accountable" on his return, but security services elected not to detain the former prime minister on arrival. Analyst Dubnov says the public appetite for revolution has waned since 2005 and 2010, when leadership change did little to transform a threadbare economy or achieve institutional reforms. "Two government overthrows have left people weary," Dubnov said. "There's no energy for a new revolution." — AFP



KOLKATA: Protesters and social activists take part in a protest in Kolkata in reaction to the Indian government scrapping Article 370 that granted a special status to Jammu and Kashmir. — AFP

Business

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LONDON: Estate and rental agents' boards are pictured on a residential street in Hackney, east London on Friday. House prices and sales are "losing momentum", surveyors say amid fears that Britain's economy is on the verge of a recession. — AFP

Brexit turmoil drives UK towards recession

Economy shrank 0.2% in Q2, first contraction in seven years

LONDON: Britain's economy unexpectedly shrank in the second quarter of the year on Brexit turmoil, official data showed Friday, placing the country on the verge of recession and sending the pound tumbling to a 2.5-year low. Gross domestic product (GDP) fell 0.2 percent in the April-June period, the first time the economy has contracted in almost seven years, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement, blaming a dramatic slump in the construction and manufacturing sectors.

The data, which was worse than market expectations for zero growth and also reflects global economic strains, sent the pound diving to \$1.2056 — the lowest level since early 2017. Another contraction in the current third quarter would put Britain in an official recession, ahead of the nation's expected withdrawal from the EU at the end of October.

Sterling revisits 2-year lows as British economy shrinks

LONDON: Sterling skidded again on Friday, hitting its lowest in more than two years, after an unexpected second quarter contraction in the economy alarmed investors already fretting that Britain is headed for a no-deal Brexit.

The pound, which has lost 3.7 percent of its value against the dollar since arch-Brexit Prime Minister Boris Johnson's arrival in office in late July, sank to \$1.2056, the weakest it has been since January 2017, and was last down by 0.5 percent at \$1.2072.

Against the euro, the pound slid to a new two-year low of 92.885 pence and was last down by 0.7 percent on the day. The British currency has been close to being the worst performing in the developed world these past couple of weeks since Johnson became prime minister on July 24.

Britain's economy shrank at a quarterly rate of 0.2 percent, the first contraction since 2012 and below all forecasts in a Reuters poll. British government bond yields fell as investors sought safety in fixed income assets.

UK domestic stocks weakened, although London's export-heavy blue chip FTSE 100 index clawed its way back into positive territory as sterling plunged.

"Overall, these are clearly a disappointing set of figures which have significantly raised the likelihood of a technical

Brexit paralysis?

"The latest data reveal an economy in decline and skirting with recession as headwinds from slower global economic growth are exacerbated by Brexit-related paralysis," said IHS Markit economist Chris Williamson. The result contrasted with 0.5-percent expansion in the first quarter, when activity was boosted by companies stockpiling ahead of Brexit. Output was buoyed in the first three months of 2019 because Britain had initially been scheduled to leave the European Union at the end of March. "GDP contracted in the second quarter for the first time since 2012 after robust growth in the first quarter," said Rob Kent Smith, ONS head of GDP.

"Manufacturing output fell back after a strong start to the year, with production brought forward ahead of the UK's original departure date from the EU.

"The construction sector also weakened after a buoy-

recession," said Azad Zangana, senior European economist and strategist at Schroders. The pound has suffered a torrid few weeks as investors priced in the growing risk of Britain exiting the European Union under Johnson on Oct. 31 without a deal to smooth the transition.

BNP Paribas raised on Friday the probability of a no-deal Brexit to 50 percent from 40 percent. Some analysts say there could be more pain to come. "As the political risk premium rose, sterling was the worst-performing major



LONDON: The pound, which has lost 3.7 percent of its value against the dollar since arch-Brexit Prime Minister Boris Johnson's arrival in office in late July, sank to \$1.2056, the weakest it has been since January 2017, and was last down by 0.5 percent at \$1.2072. — AFP

currency in each of May, June and July, but the negative risk premium can still rise further," RBC Capital Markets analyst Adam Cole said. Johnson is planning to hold a parliamentary election in the days after Brexit if lawmakers sink the government with a no-confidence vote, British media have reported, further unnerving currency traders.

Vasileios Gkionakis, global head of forex strategy at Lombard Odier, said he was worried about an election, but was also ready to unload some sterling short positions he had accumulated since a lot of bad news had been already priced in. "If no-deal (Brexit) increases in probability, then of course sterling would be a sell, but until then I'm becoming a bit more neutral," Gkionakis said, adding that he expects sterling to "settle around \$1.20" before market participants reassess their expectations of that outcome.

Others in the market mirrored Gkionakis' views on Friday. Paul Hollingsworth, senior European economist at BNP Paribas, said he was "reluctant to enter short sterling positions" and that he found "risk-reward more attractive to consider entering structural long sterling positions as we get closer to September". The shrinking economic growth in the second quarter did not make investors more confident that the Bank of England will cut interest rates in September. Some economists expect the central bank to embark on more easing soon, however.

"As uncertainty continues to loom over the UK economy, the difficult run of data is expected to continue and the BoE will need to consider its next step carefully as its global peers embark on further rate cuts," said Geoffrey Yu, head of the UK Investment Office at UBS Wealth Management. Money markets are pricing in a 25 basis point cut by January 2020. — Reuters

"The government is determined to provide certainty to people and businesses on Brexit—that's why we are clear that the UK is leaving the EU on 31 October."

'Pretty grim'

The government's official forecaster last month warned that Britain would slide into a year-long recession should it leave the EU without a deal. Bank of England governor Mark Carney recently warned that a no-deal Brexit could undermine entire sectors of the economy such as the car industry and farming. "The latest look at the UK economy makes for pretty grim viewing," XTB analyst David Cheetham said in reference to Friday's data. "Given the growing threat of a no-deal Brexit that looms menacingly overhead, it would not be at all surprising if the current quarter also shows a contraction—therefore meeting the standard definition of a recession." — AFP

Global economic uncertainty threatens oil demand: IEA

PARIS: Concerns over the health of the global economy, marked by trade dispute, forced the International Energy Agency on Friday to lower its growth forecast for oil demand for 2019 and 2020. "There have been concerns about the health of the global economy expressed in recent editions of this report and shown by reduced expectations for oil demand growth," the Paris-based agency said in its monthly report.

"Now, the situation is becoming even more uncertain: trade dispute remains unresolved and in September new tariffs are due to be imposed."

"Tension between the two has increased further this week, reflected in heavy falls for stock and commodity markets. Oil prices have been caught up in the retreat." It also noted the International Monetary Fund's recent downgrading of its economic outlook. The IEA thus revised downwards its estimates for growth in global oil demand for this year by 0.1 million barrels per day to 1.1 mbd. — AFP

Business

Tame US producer price inflation supports case for another rate cut

PPI rises 1.7% year-on-year; core PPI up 1.7%

WASHINGTON: US producer prices increased moderately in July, lifted by a rebound in the cost of energy products, while underlying producer inflation retreated, which could allow the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates again next month. The benign inflation report from the Labor Department on Friday could boost expectations for a half-percentage-point cut at the Fed's Sept. 17-18 policy meeting. President Donald Trump on Friday urged the US central bank to lower rates by a full percentage point, saying there was "no inflation in our country."

Financial markets have fully priced in a 25-basis-point rate cut following a recent escalation in the bitter trade war which led to an inversion of the US Treasury yield curve and raised the risk of a recession. Fears about the trade war's impact on the economic expansion, the longest on record, prompted the Fed to lower its short-term rate last week for the first time since 2008.

"Weak producer prices are a reflection of a dramatic slowdown in manufacturing due to the global trade war," said Chris Rupkey, chief economist at MUFJ in New York. "We expect a second rate cut by the Federal Reserve in September as the manufacturing sector and world economies continue to slow." The producer price index for final demand rose 0.2 percent last month after nudging up 0.1 percent in June, the government said. In the 12 months through July the PPI increased 1.7 percent after advancing by the same margin in June. Last month's increase in the PPI was in line with economists' expectations.

Excluding the volatile food, energy and trade services components, producer prices edged down 0.1 per-

cent last month. That was the first decline since October 2015 and followed an unchanged reading in June. The so-called core PPI increased 1.7 percent in the 12 months through July, the smallest gain since January 2017, after rising 2.1 percent in June.

The Fed, which has a 2 percent inflation target, tracks the core personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index for monetary policy. The core PCE price index increased 1.6 percent on a year-on-year basis in June and has undershot its target this year. Data next week is likely to show moderate gains in consumer prices in July, according to a Reuters survey of economists.

The dollar slipped against a basket of currencies, while US Treasury prices rose slightly. US stocks fell as investors grappled with fresh trade-related tensions.

Weak services costs

Energy prices accounted for more than 80 percent of the rebound in the cost of goods last month. Wholesale food prices rose 0.2 percent in July after advancing 0.6 percent in June. Core goods prices edged up 0.1 percent after being unchanged for three straight months. The cost of services fell 0.1 percent in July, the first decrease since January, after rising 0.4 percent in June. Services were pulled down by a 4.3 percent drop in the cost of hotel and motel rooms.

The cost of healthcare services edged up 0.1 percent last month after rising 0.2 percent in June. The cost of doctor visits dropped 0.5 percent last month, the most since January 2016, after being unchanged in June. Hospital outpatient care prices surged 0.7 percent, the



NEW YORK: US inflation remains tame, despite the Federal Reserve view that low prices are temporary —AFP

largest increase since January 2018. But the cost of hospital inpatient care fell 0.2 percent.

Portfolio management fees rebounded 0.8 percent after falling 1.8 percent in June. Those fees and healthcare costs feed into the core PCE price index, leading econo-

mists to expect not much of a change in the inflation measure in July. "The PPI signals that the medical care PCE price index will be soft in July, likely coming out basically unchanged relative to June," said Daniel Silver, an economist at JPMorgan in New York. — Reuters

Japan economy grows faster than expected on new-era holidays

TOKYO: Japan's economy grew at a faster-than-expected clip in the second quarter, official data showed on Friday, helped by celebrations to usher in a new imperial era. Gross domestic product (GDP) in the world's third-biggest economy grew 0.4 percent from the previous quarter, the Cabinet Office said, beating analysts' median forecast of 0.1 percent.

The third straight period of expansion will also bolster Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's determination to push through a controversial sales tax hike in October despite warnings it could weigh on growth.

Shoppers are rushing to make purchases before the rate rises from eight percent to 10 percent on October 1 and this boost for consumption also helped push GDP higher, economists said. An unprecedented 10-day holiday for the enthronement of Emperor Naruhito, which kicked off a new imperial era in Japan, also pepped up the figures, according to analysts.

However, global trade frictions weighed on exports and corporate spending in some sectors such as machinery, said Yuichiro Nagai, senior economist at Mizuho Securities. "But investments in software, research and development, and construction were good," he said. Nagai said a rush by consumers to buy before the sales tax hike will likely become even more pronounced in the July-September quarter, helping Japan log another quarter of growth.

And while the economy would likely contract in October-December due to the higher



SEOUL: This file photo shows South Korean protestors cutting a banner with a picture of Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during a rally denouncing Japan for its recent trade restrictions against Seoul, near the Japanese embassy in Seoul. — AFP

tax, it should rebound next year and avoid slipping into a recession, Nagai said. "There is uncertainty over where the trade war will go... With the US presidential election coming next year, however, I believe the main scenario is that they will find a compromise plan" later this year, he said.

'Additional monetary easing'

The last time Japan hiked its sales tax, in 2014, the result was a slump in consumption and the wider economy and some economists have warned that now is not the time to raise the rate amid uncertainty over global trade and Brexit. But Tokyo has vowed to go through with the plan unless there is a crisis on the level of the 2008 financial meltdown and Abe has promised countermeasures to cushion the blow on the economy. SMBC Nikko Securities chief market economist Yoshimasa Maruyama said the Japanese economy would likely expand further in the

July-September period but warned it could slide into a mild recession in October-December as the global economy slows.

"By the time autumn comes, debates for a supplementary budget will start and calls for additional monetary easing will get louder," he said in a report released ahead of the GDP announcement.

But Naoya Oshikubo, senior economist at Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Asset Management, was not so gloomy. "Going forward, central banks are expected to continue easing, and the Chinese government will likely announce fiscal measures, resulting in a global economic recovery, which should help Japan maintain its momentum," Oshikubo said in a report.

Besides the planned tax hike, the impact from trade frictions between Japan and South Korea could be a headwind, he said. "But both should be limited in their effects," he said as the affected goods make up only a fraction of Japanese exports. — AFP

Slumping German exports reinforce fears of weak Q2

FRANKFURT: German exports saw a massive slump in June compared to a year ago, official data showed Friday, rounding off a run of weak data pointing to a shaky second quarter.

At 106.1 billion euros (\$118.8 billion), the country sold 8.0 percent less abroad than in June 2018, federal statistics authority Destatis said. "Today's trade data marks the end of a disappointing second quarter," said ING economist Carsten Brzeski.

"A small contraction (in GDP) has just become more likely." In the near term, the fall was less dramatic, coming in just 0.1 percent lower than in May, adjusting for seasonal and calendar effects.

With imports growing slightly month-

on-month, to 89.3 billion euros, Germany's politically divisive trade surplus shrank to 18.1 billion, after 18.7 in May. In a geographic breakdown, exports to countries outside Germany's EU neighborhood fell back most dramatically compared with last June, shedding 10.7 percent. The fall was less dramatic for exports to countries that share the euro single currency, at 5.6 percent.

Imports from non-EU countries also fell sharply, losing 8.9 percent, more than double the fall for EU goods. Indicators of business, consumer and investor confidence in Germany have suffered as a commercial conflict between Washington and Beijing intensifies.

There are fears President Donald Trump could open a second trade war front against the European Union. Along with factors like Brexit and weakness in emerging markets, the effects have braked the traditionally strong manufacturing sector. Over the full year, government and independent forecasters have slashed their growth predictions, to between 0.5 and 1.0 percent. —AFP

Indonesia threatens tariff hike on EU dairy

JAKARTA: Indonesia's trade minister Friday threatened to impose higher tariffs on EU dairy imports in response to the bloc's proposed move to hit biodiesel made from palm oil with anti-subsidy duties.

The warning could escalate a trade dispute with the European Union after Indonesia—the world's top palm oil producer—hit out at the bloc's plan to cut its use of palm-based biofuels by 2030.

Palm oil is the world's most widely used vegetable oil and a key ingredient in a wide range of products from food to

cosmetics. But environmentalists say it drives deforestation, with huge swaths of Southeast Asian rainforest logged in recent decades to make way for palm plantations.

On Friday, trade minister Enggartiasto Lukita said he had told Indonesia's dairy importers to look for new suppliers outside Europe, and threatened to hike existing tariffs on EU dairy products, which currently range from 5-10 percent. That was in response to an EU proposal for anti-subsidy duties of 8-18 percent on palm biodiesel from Indonesia, he added.

"I've spoken with dairy importers here and told them that they'd better look for other suppliers outside Europe," Lukita told a business forum in Jakarta. "(The EU) wants to impose an 8-18 percent tariff (on palm biodiesel) so to make it fair, we will also impose the same tariff when the time is right.

"We're not going to be quiet about this unfair treatment." — AFP

Malaysia launches new car project to jumpstart high-tech growth

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia launched a new mass market car project on Friday, as it looks to boost development and adoption of high technology in a renewed industrial push by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. Southeast Asia's third-largest economy is spurring industry to embrace technology so as to increase productivity and counter growing external risks from an escalating trade war.

The new project, spearheaded by Malaysian firm DreamEDGE, will be developed with technical assistance from Japan's Daihatsu Motor Corp, said Darell Leiking, Malaysia's trade and industry minister. "It's privately funded, with no government funding at all," Darell told a news conference. "We will support anything that is Malaysian made...as long as

no government money is expended or used." Daihatsu, a subsidiary of Toyota Motor Corp, owns a stake in Perodua, Malaysia's second homegrown automaker and its best-selling brand.

The domestic car industry has long been a sore point for Malaysians, who saw billions of ringgit in taxpayers' funds spent to bail out Mahathir's pet project, Proton. Darell said the new marque, which has yet to be named, would offer affordable vehicles loaded with advanced technology.

The first model, which is likely to be a C-segment sedan powered by either an advanced internal combustion engine or hybrid system, is expected to hit the road by March 2021, said Khairil Adri Adnan, the chief executive of DreamEDGE. The company is still considering its fundraising options, but expects that it will need "a few hundred million" ringgit to meet its production goal, said Khairil, the firm's founder. Domestically produced cars formed a key part of Mahathir's strategy to turn Southeast Asia's third-largest economy from an agricultural backwater to an industrialized nation during his first tenure as premier from 1981 to 2003. — Reuters

Apple loses more ground in smartphone market

SAN FRANCISCO: Apple lost more ground in the shrinking smartphone market last quarter, with a sales tracker saying the tech giant was pushed off the top-three seller list by a rival.

Apple fell to fourth place in global smartphone sales, shipping 35.3 million iPhones in the second quarter, according to a report from IHS Markit this week. South Korean consumer electronics titan Samsung remained in first place with 23 percent of the market, having shipped 75.1 million smartphones, IHS Markit calculated. "Apple continues to face challenges in terms of unit shipments—a trend that is unlikely to be fixed soon," IHS smartphone research and analysis director Jusy Hong said in an online post.

While California-based Apple has been aggressively promoting iPhones, current-generation smartphones have "super-premium" prices while models a few years old are still costly compared to bargain Android-powered handsets, the analyst reasoned.

Other smartphone market trackers such as Counterpoint Research and International Data Corporation concluded that while iPhone ship-



SAN JOSE: In this file photo, Apple CEO Tim Cook presents the keynote address during Apple's Worldwide Developer Conference (WWDC) in San Jose, California. — AFP

ments sank in the second quarter, Apple remained in third place what it came to global shipments. Apple has been striving to wean itself off its reliance on iPhone sales with a focus on services, digital content and related gadgets. In the just-ended quarter, Apple for the first time took in less than half its revenue from the iPhone, the longtime cash and profit driver for the company.

Apple managed to grow its overall revenues, albeit by a modest one percent, to \$53.8 billion,

even as iPhone revenues plunged nearly 12 percent in the April-June period. The company delivered strong growth from digital content and services including Apply Pay and Apple Music, along with wearables and accessories like the Apple Watch and Air Pods. Apple has stopped reporting iPhone unit sales, but chief executive Tim Cook said during an earnings call that there was a "strong customer response" to iPhone promotions and financing programs. —AFP

Business

International toll-free service for KFH customers in seven countries

Bank continues to deliver superior customer service

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) offers "International Toll-Free Service" to its customers in 7 countries outside Kuwait (USA, UK, Canada, Spain and France, in addition to Turkey and Germany) without any additional fees. This comes as part of the bank's strategy of delivering superior customer service, supporting the bank's continuing efforts to improve innovation and reinforcing the network of its banking services.

To use this service and reach KFH's Allo Baitak Call Center 1803333, customers can call and of the following toll-free numbers. (Local tariff charges may be applied in Turkey by local Turkish telecoms companies when calling this number)

This service in conjunction with the

travel season, enabling KFH's customers to contact the KFH Call Center from the mentioned countries at any time of the day or night, adding to the customers' peace of mind in knowing that their bank is a local phone call away, wherever they are.

KFH prides itself in delivering the best and highest standards in service quality. This new addition to KFH services allow for further enhancing these standards at the Call Center. It also has the added benefit of building trust with KFH customers by making it easy for them to contact the Call Center."

KFH is continually striving to deliver the best and most convenient in banking technology, in efforts to meet customers' aspirations.



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Meet the Huawei Mate 20 X (5G)

KUWAIT: With the era of 5G connectivity upon us, we are gearing up to enjoy the next step of connectivity with faster Internet speeds and download rates never seen before. Regionally, telecom operators have started developing 5G commercial deployments, putting GCC countries in the first wave of the 5G rollout. At the frontlines of this step is Huawei, with the Huawei Mate 20 X (5G), the first available 5G smartphone from the brand.

Powered by a dual-chipset setup consisting of the Kirin 980, Huawei's fastest chipset yet and the Balong 5000, Huawei's first multi-mode chipset which supports 2G, 3G, 4G and

5G, users can now enjoy efficient processing and unprecedented high-speed connectivity. The chipset also supports both NSA and SA network architecture. Thanks to this powerful chipset system, users can now enjoy download rates of a shocking 4.6 Gbps.

Actual user experience is based on telecom operators' networks and associated deployments. What does this mean for users? With access to this new technology, users will be able to enjoy super-fast Internet speeds like faster download speeds as well as an unprecedented network connection for all kinds of daily tasks.

Additionally, Huawei Mate 20 X (5G) users can take advantage of these high speed connections, for a superior movie streaming or gaming experience, complemented by its Ultra-large 7.2" OLED FHD+ display. Extended sessions will be free from interruptions thanks to the 5G connectivity as well as

the large 4,200 mAh battery with 40W Huawei SuperCharge. Users will also be safe from overheating with the Huawei SuperCool Technology with a graphene film and vapor chamber.

Huawei Mate 20 X (5G) users can also enjoy unrivalled photography with the powerful Matrix Triple Camera system. Packed with three Leica cameras, a 40MP wide angle, 20MP Ultra-Wide angle and the 8MP telephoto camera, this camera system is capable of taking stunning photos in any scenario, ranging from macro to ultra-wide photography. Focused on customer-centric technologies, Huawei has been working on developing 5G networks and devices as early as 2009, hiring over 300 top experts by 2013 with a massive investment of \$600 million into 5G research. As of 2019, Huawei has over 1000s of employees in 5G research and 46 commercial 5G contracts globally.

Ryanair Irish pilots back industrial action as unrest spreads

DUBLIN: Ryanair's directly employed pilots in Ireland on Friday voted in favor of industrial action unless pay demands are met swiftly, with Spanish pilots also threatening to join growing unrest at the airline.

Europe's largest budget airline suffered a number of strikes last year by pilots and cabin crew, forcing it to cancel hundreds of flights and hitting profit after a rocky start to its move to recognize trade unions for the first time. Ryanair managed to quell the disputes by reaching deals with many unions in Europe on pay and allowances, but it has yet to move beyond recognition agreements with others and further angered unions by telling staff 10 days ago that it had 900 more pilots and crew than it needed.

Members of Ryanair's British pilots union voted this week to follow Portuguese cabin crew to the picket line, with two strikes planned from Aug. 22. The action in Ireland was backed by 94 percent of those who cast a ballot among the 180 eligible pilots. About a quarter of Ryanair's 350 pilots in its home market staged a series of one-day strikes a year ago before concerns on transfers and promotions were settled, but the Forsa/IALPA



Europe's largest budget airline Ryanair suffered a number of strikes last year by pilots and cabin crew, forcing it to cancel hundreds of flights and hitting profit after a rocky start to its move to recognize trade unions for the first time. —AFP

trade union said the airline has stalled on talks since pay demands were submitted in late March.

"They (pilots) feel they have been forced into contemplating potentially disruptive industrial action by a company that seems either unwilling or unable to negotiate in a professional and constructive manner," Forsa's assistant general secretary, Ian McDonnell, said in a statement.

Strike notice

"At this stage, only a substantive counter-proposal, which properly addresses all areas of our claim, will be enough to prevent us serving notice of industrial action next week."

points, reflecting investor jitters. Milan's stock exchange, opening for the first time since Salvini's statement late Thursday, plunged more than two percent. "Uncertainty has a price: the spread, and the possible downgrade of Italy by rating agencies," Carlo Alberto Carnevale Maffe, professor at Milan's Bocconi University, told AFP.

Coincidentally, financial assessment agency Fitch is due to review its rating of Italy on Friday. Its Italy rating currently stands at BBB with a negative outlook—two notches above "junk" or non-investment grade. Analysts are divided over how Fitch will rule—it will not have had time to take into account the current political crisis, sparked by Salvini less than 24 hours previously.

In October 2018, rating agency Moody's downgraded Italy's rating to "Baa3", just above "junk", over concerns about the budgetary choices being taken by the populist coalition of Salvini's League and the anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S). The already fragile economy "will pay the conse-

quences of this crisis", Carnevale Maffe said.

How is Italy's economy looking?

The Italian economy is not doing well. After a "technical recession" in the second half of 2018, Italy experienced zero growth in its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the first six months of this year. The European Commission and International Monetary Fund (IMF) expect Italian growth to be only 0.1 percent this year, while the government has forecast it at 0.2 percent. But some experts are even more pessimistic, arguing that Italy is heading back into recession. Italy's economy is being hit by a slowdown affecting the whole of Europe, as well as global economic uncertainty over trade tensions between Beijing and Washington. Its companies are also investing less amid fears over political instability. Unemployment stands at 9.7 percent, hitting 28.1 percent among 15-24 year olds—well above the euro area average of 7.5 percent for the general population and 15.4 percent among the young. —AFP

Economic consequences of Italy's political crisis

MILAN: Italy's political situation is once again in flux after far-right Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini pulled the rug out from under the ruling coalition. With the eurozone's third largest economy facing possible snap elections, here is a look at the potential financial fallout.

How will markets and ratings agencies react?

As soon as the markets opened on Friday, the spread—or difference between yields on 10-year Italian government debt compared to those in Germany—jumped 25 points to 235

UAE grants Gold Card to Adeb Ahamed

ABU DHABI: Adeb Ahamed, MD of LuLu Financial Group and Twenty14 Holdings was awarded the Gold Card by the UAE authorities on Thursday.

The businessman received the coveted "Gold Card" long-term UAE residency visa at the office of Colonel Mohammed Ahmed Al-Hamli, Deputy Director, Federal Authority for Identity & Citizenship in Abu Dhabi. The UAE Cabinet had approved 10-year residency visas for five categories of expatriates including investors, entrepreneurs, chief executives, scientists and outstanding students. The move is in alignment with the government's vision to create an attractive investment environ-

ment in the UAE, which further encourages business development, while at the same time attracts and retains the best talents in UAE.

"It is a great privilege to receive the Gold Card and is further a recognition of our efforts in the financial services and hospitality industry. We are forever grateful to the visionary rulers of the UAE for their wise leadership that has transformed the country into an inspiring global community that presents great opportunity to follow dreams and realize them," said Adeb Ahamed.

Adeb Ahamed is the Managing Director of LuLu Financial Group, which operates more than 185 branches across 10 countries. He also heads Twenty14 Holdings, the leading hospitality investment firm which owns prestigious properties around the world including the Great Scotland Yard in London, Waldorf Astoria Edinburgh in Scotland, Port Muziris - A Tribute Portfolio Hotel in Kochi, India and the Steigenberger Hotel Business Bay in Dubai, UAE.



ABU DHABI: Adeb Ahamed, MD, LuLu Financial Group and Twenty14 Holdings receiving the coveted Gold Card at the office of Colonel Mohammed Ahmed Al-Hamli, Deputy Director, Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship in Abu Dhabi.

Fostering an innovation culture with vision, context

By Mohammed Amin

KUWAIT: Innovation and change - the two factors that are taking control of every aspect of business today. In this unprecedented digital era, a commonly-heard phrase comes to mind: innovate or die. And this phrase is very relevant when we consider the correlation between innovation and its purpose.

With the importance placed on technology as the platform for innovation in an organizational context, a common pitfall is focusing investments on the latest and greatest technology, without a clear vision as to what this is actually going to do for the organization. Closer home, Dell Technologies' recent Digital Transformation Index found that 93 percent of business leaders in UAE and KSA plan to invest in powerful technologies in three years, and yet only 44 percent are already integrating digital goals into all departmental and employee objectives.

In these technology-defined days, it is easy to consider innovation as only related to technology. A common misnomer is that innovation must be undertaken only when there are significant and disruptive trends that affect the success of an organization's ability to stay relevant. Relevant reinventions of processes and effectively anything that improves upon a previously-accepted way of doing something are also sometimes considered as examples of innovation. This approach stems from a lack of three key factors: Vision, Context, and Purpose.

A three-step checklist

Innovation has to tie-in to the vision of the organization. We live in an era of disruption - of sectors, of products, and of ways of life. How an organization chooses to respond to disruption says a lot about how committed they are to achieving their vision. Innovation in response to disruption can severely test this commitment, and this is a responsibility that the leadership shoulders, considering their greater



custodianship of the organization's objectives.

This also helps define the context of this innovation: is it reactive, and if so, is it mission-critical? If it is proactive, is it being driven for innovation's sake, or is it going to positively impact the customer or employee experience? While there may be calls for innovative solutions or practices even at a department-level within organizations, it falls on the leadership to see the bigger picture and draw focus towards innovations that bring stakeholder benefit.

Now we have agreed that this innovation is mission-critical, and the last bridge to cross is the assurance that it is also purposeful. This is where the leadership must look through their long-term plans, to ensure that the innovation is fit-for-purpose for today's requirement, as well as for the foreseeable future. At this stage again, if there appears a clash with either the vision or context, then this is cause for pause.

Lead, innovate, succeed

If you've noticed, the common thread that runs across all stages, is that innovation is very clearly a leadership priority. KPMG estimates that decisions, guidance and behavior of leadership accounts for 70 percent of the impact to culture, while elements such as training and engagement programs account for the rest. Leadership buy-in also fosters a culture of innovation with a longer-term view and prepares the organization to be the disruptor, rather than the disrupted.

Innovation cannot be rushed in response to sector disruption or competitor moves. The forward-looking and future-ready organization is every stakeholder's dream, whether customer, investor, or employee. Innovation is the opposite of complacency and strategic innovation is, in fact, how disruption is delivered. Note: Mohammed Amin, Senior Vice President - Middle East, Russia, Africa, and Turkey, Dell Technologies, explores this and provides a three-step checklist for success.

What's On



LOYAC honors three winning teams at KON Social Entrepreneurship Program

At the closing ceremony of the KON Social Entrepreneurship Program, LOYAC honored the three winning teams who presented their entrepreneurial projects with distinction. For the fourth consecutive year, the LOYAC Foundation, in collaboration with Babson College, the world's leading entrepreneurial college, concluded the "Be Social Entrepreneurship" program on Wednesday evening at the American University of Kuwait Theater, sponsored by Platinum Sponsor Bank of Kuwait, NBK and Golden Sponsor Zain Kuwait and Bronze Sponsor Agility hosted the Continuing Education Center at the American University.

Fareah Al-Saqqaf, Chairman of LOYAC, delivered a speech in which she said: "This program aims at launching the queen of innovation and creativity among young people and enhancing their leadership and initiative skills on the one hand and raising awareness of the importance of community participation and enhancing the sense of responsibility towards themselves and their communities. The program reflects the values we adopt."

"The program was the idea we have been seeking for more than ten years precisely since 2008, but we waited to be presented with the appropriate academic partner to be distinctive and to provide a comprehensive program at the highest level and postponed the project until 2016 until we found that Babson is the best partner Kadimi project and we decided to start in the age group from 12 years to 16 years, a category that begins by asking big questions and begin to look for their role in society. This program started in 2016 with 20 students and then thanks to our partners we were able to double the number of beneficiar-



ies to reach 64 students with an annual growth exceeding 80%."

During the ceremony, Mohammed Al-Othman, General Manager of Personal Banking Group, praised the importance of the program and expressed his pride in cooperating with LOYAC in supporting young people and helping them to enhance their expertise in the labor market. Al-Othman added that NBK's sponsorship of LOYAC's activi-

ties comes from its mission to support youth institutions, especially as young people are one of our priorities at the banking and social levels. We realize that they need all incentives to be effective partners in development and community service.

Haya Al Mana, Sustainability Manager, Zain Kuwait, said: "We were very pleased with the success of the fourth season of the Kan Social Entrepreneurship



Program. Zain's support for the program for two consecutive years has been part of our long-term strategic partnership with LOYAC and under our corporate social responsibility and sustainability strategy. We look forward to supporting more similar programs and initiatives in the near future, particularly those that support innovation, entrepreneurship and the development of Kuwaiti youth."



Abdullah Buwair, researcher in the Al-Sabah biographies recently visited the ward of the anniversary of August 2, 1990 at the Avenues Mall.



Interview with the walking group team

By Mhmod Zakaria

What is the Walking lovers associate is all about?

We are just a group of people who loves and practice walking. The original idea behind our group is that we noticed, walking sport did not have an entity or umbrella to gather all walking lovers under it. As a sport it is frozen in "Kuwait Athletics Association" and it is not part of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, we felt that there is a need to gather walking fans and organize events and activities which promote and help to spread the awareness and practice of walking in our society.

We take this opportunity to remember Dr. Abdul Rahman Al Awadi who supported walking as a sport in Kuwait and had a very positive impact on this sport. When he was Minister of Planning, he decided that every Kuwaiti neighborhood must have a walking track. He supported the walking fans group since the very beginning and he was the first founder along with Captain Mahmood Sabri. Every one of us has very deep respect and admiration to him.

What is the effect of sports in General on our daily life and specially walking?

The vision of our association is "Walking in a way of life". The goals and objectives of the League are to spread the culture of waking in Kuwait society. The message we want to address to the Kuwaiti community is "walk and you will be healthy". It is known that walking is like an antibiotic against everything that is harmful to our health. It is the easiest way to live a happy healthy life.

How can walking improve our mood?

Walking has a positive effect on the person who practices it. Primarily it improves health. Doctors advise everyone to practice this easy and useful sport. It helps fight all modern life diseases such as diabetes, cholesterol and high blood pressure and many other illnesses. It has a very strong and positive effect on human mode and psychology. It even has a refreshing effect. If you practice it regularly it becomes not only a habit but more like an addiction a wonderful and useful addiction, if you miss to practice it one day you will not feel happy.

How do you seek to advertise for your association?

Actually, we rely mainly on networking and social media in addition to the events and the walkathons we are organizing which attract many new people. We are creating a snow ball-like momentum that has its own inertia and we believe once we create a critical mass no additional campaigning may be required. In fact we hope that today will help promote and spread the awareness of this sport.

How does the Public Authority for Sport support your association?

There is continuous corporation between our association and "Public Authority for Sport". All our events and races are done through the Authority who handles all communications with concerned governmental authorities such as Ministry of Interiors or Ministry of Health or the Touristic Enterprises Company. We take this opportunity to thank the Public authority for Sport for their continuous support throughout the last few years. They were partners and more like road companions in all events and activities. This close cooperation will remain strong inshallah.

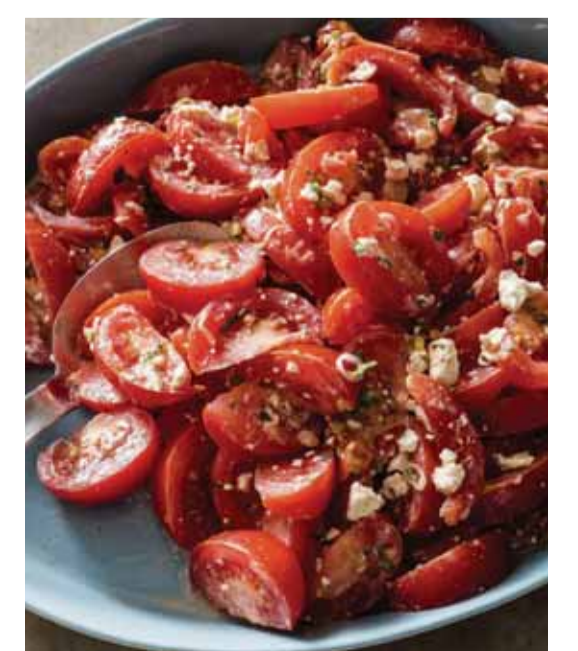
TOMATO SALAD WITH FETA AND CUMIN-YOGURT DRESSING

Ingredients

- Servings: 6
- Start to finish: 30 minutes
- 2 ½ pounds ripe tomatoes, cored and cut into ½-inch-thick wedges
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 scallion, sliced thin
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano
- 3 ounces feta cheese, crumbled (¾ cup)
- Toss tomatoes with ½ teaspoon salt and let drain in colander set over bowl for 15 to 20 minutes.

Preparation

Microwave oil, garlic, and cumin in bowl until fragrant, about 30 seconds; let cool slightly. Transfer 1 tablespoon tomato liquid to large bowl; discard remaining liquid. Whisk in yogurt, lemon juice, scallion, oregano, and oil mixture until combined. Add tomatoes and feta and gently toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.



Indian Embassy to celebrate India's 73rd Independence Day

The 73rd Independence Day of India will be celebrated on the Indian Embassy premises at Daiya Area, Gulf Road on Thursday, 15 August 2019, according to an Indian Embassy press release. The unfurling of the national flag will take place at 8 AM followed by the singing of the national anthem and a presentation of patriotic songs by the members of the India community. All Indian nationals, pravasis and friends of India in Kuwait are cordially invited to attend, the press release added.

Health & Science

Can we eat meat and still help fight global warming?

PARIS: Not everyone needs to become a vegetarian, much less vegan, to keep the planet from overheating, but it would surely make things easier if they did. That's the ambiguous and — for many on either side of this meaty issue — unsatisfying conclusion of the most comprehensive report ever compiled on the link between climate change and how we feed ourselves, released Thursday by the United Nations.

The core findings are crystal clear: climate change is threatening the world's food supply, even as the way we produce food fuels global warming. Rising temperatures in tropical zones are starting to shrink yields, displace staple crops, and sap essential nutrients from food plants. At the same time, the global food system — from farm to food court — accounts for at least a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions. With two billion more mouths to feed by mid-century, it cannot simply be scaled up without pushing Earth's thermometer deep into the red zone, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) "special report". More than a quarter of today's food-related emissions come from cattle and sheep. "Today's IPCC report identifies the enormous impact that our dietary choices have on the environment," commented Alan Dangour, a nutrition and global health expert at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. "It is clear that reducing the demand for meat in diets is an important approach to lowering the environmental impact of the food system."

Double climate threat

The livestock industry is a double climate threat: it replaces CO2-absorbing forests — notably in sub-tropical Brazil — with land for grazing and soy crops for cattle feed. The animals also belch huge amounts of methane, a potent greenhouse gas. On average, beef requires 20 times more land and emits 20 times more greenhouse gases per

unit of edible protein than basic plant proteins, notes the World Resources Institute, a Washington-based policy think tank. For all these reasons, the IPCC concludes, gravitating towards "balanced diets, featuring plant-based foods" would hugely help the climate change cause. This may sound like a ringing endorsement of vegetarianism, but it doesn't necessarily mean the world must, or should, eschew meat altogether, the IPCC said.

Besides "coarse grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds," that "balanced diet" also includes "animal-sourced food produced in resilient, sustainable and low-greenhouse gas emission systems," the report concluded. There are likely several reasons the 100-plus authors stopped short of calling for a ban on carbon-intensive red meat. To begin with, calling for anything is not part of their brief. "The IPCC does not recommend people's diets," co-chair Jim Skea, a professor at Imperial College London's Centre for Environmental Policy, tweeted in reaction to misleading media stories.

'Reference diet'

"What we've pointed out on the basis of scientific evidence is that there are certain diets that have a lower carbon footprint." Observers privy to the week-long meeting, which vets the report summary line-by-line, also note that some scientific findings align better than others with the interests of beef-producing nations. IPCC reports are based entirely on published, peer-reviewed research, and this one included thousands of data points.

But the final step in a years-long process is approval by diplomats who tussle over how key passages are formulated, including what gets left in or out. Another compelling reason not to espouse a purely plant-based diet is that billions of poor people around the world depend on fish, and to a lesser extent meat, for protein and nutrients that may not be readily available elsewhere. "More than 800 million people have insufficient food," noted Harvard University's



LONDON: Protesters bring placards as they gather for a march calling for action to combat climate change organized by the climate campaign group Mothers Rise Up in central London. — AFP

Walter Willett, co-commissioner of a landmark study earlier this year in The Lancet proposing a "reference diet" for optimal health that is long on veggies, legumes and nuts, and short on meat, dairy and sugar.

That diet, The Lancet study found, could feed a world of 10 billion people in 2050 — but only barely. "We are suggesting a more balanced diet that has roughly 100

grams per person per week of red meat — a single serving once a week rather than ever day," co-author Johan Rockstrom, former director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Change Impacts, told AFP. Meat consumption has leveled off in rich nations, where fast food chains — including Burger King, McDonald's, and this week Subway — are rushing to offer faux meat alternatives. — AFP

US won't approve labels that say glyphosate causes cancer

WASHINGTON: The US Environmental Protection Agency has said it will no longer approve warning labels that claim the controversial herbicide glyphosate causes cancer, calling the statement "false and misleading." The ruling, issued Thursday, is a boost to US agriculture giant

Monsanto and its German parent company Bayer, which has been battered by a wave of lawsuits over its flagship weedkiller sold under the trade name Roundup.

California decided in 2017 that the pesticides must carry labeling to reflect the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer finding two years earlier that it was "probably carcinogenic." But in a letter to businesses, the EPA cited its own evaluation from 2017 that it said contained a more extensive dataset. "It is irresponsible to require labels on products that are inaccurate when EPA knows the product does not pose a cancer risk. We will not allow California's flawed program to dictate federal policy," said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler in a statement.

California juries have also handed out blockbuster damages awards in three cases against Monsanto where can-

cer victims successfully argued the herbicide was the probable cause of their illnesses, though each of the amounts were later reduced. Austria became the first European Union member to forbid all glyphosate use in July, with restrictions also in force in the Czech Republic, Italy, and the Netherlands. France is phasing it out by 2023.

Opponents of the Austrian bill consider the ban counter to law in the EU, which at the end of 2017 renewed the license for glyphosate for another five years. But the independence of the European Food Safety Authority was questioned after media reports suggested that pages of its report were copied and pasted from analyses in a 2012 Monsanto study. Writing in the British Medical Journal in April, epidemiologist Manolis Kogevinas said it had become difficult to separate scientific research on glyphosate from politics and economic interests.

"Undisclosed industry involvement has emerged in evaluations by EFSA, the UN's Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues, and the US Environmental Protection Agency," he said. "Although it is difficult to quantify, lobbying probably influenced the outcome of some of these evaluations and media coverage and led US government officials to question supporting the IARC/WHO."

Kogevinas argued that more research was required to address gaps in information, including the relative effects of different product formulations, the timing of exposure, and the mechanism of the substance's action in humans. "But responsible companies marketing products that may pose a risk to human health and the environment should be collaborating internationally to gather evidence of possible harm, rather than attacking authoritative science," he concluded. — AFP

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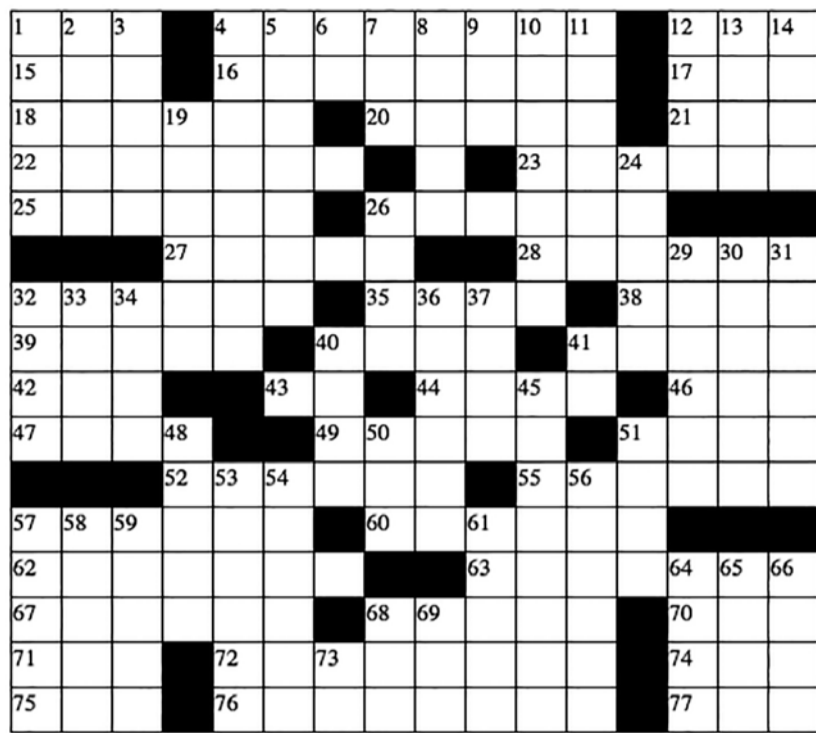
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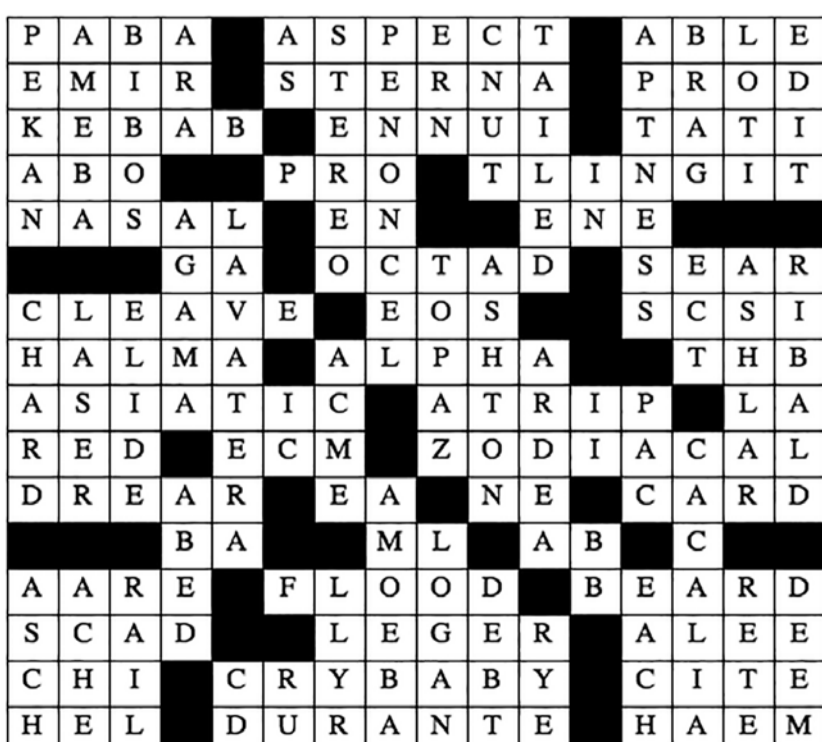
ACROSS

1. A master's degree in business.
4. The act of contributing to the funds of a church or charity.
12. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
15. Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
16. A bin for holding coal.
17. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
18. An athlete who bounds or leaps (as in basketball).
20. Large black-and-white herbivorous mammal of bamboo forests of China and Tibet.
21. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
22. A variable quantity that is random.
23. Chiefly tropical marine fishes with fleshy lips and powerful teeth.
25. The capital and largest city of Greece.
27. A toxic protein extracted from castor beans.
28. Noisy quarrel.
32. A bachelor's degree in architecture.
35. A domed or vaulted recess or projection on a building especially the east end of a church.
38. The back side of the neck.
39. Transient cessation of respiration.
42. A fractional monetary unit of Japan and Indonesia and Cambodia.
43. A person forced to flee from home or country.
44. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
46. A rapid bustling commotion.
47. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
49. Further or added.
52. Any of various spiny trees or shrubs of the genus Acacia.
55. Stout-bodied insect with large membranous wings.
57. Of or relating to abasia (inability to walk).
60. A colorless liquid hydrocarbon extracted from petroleum or coal tar and used in making synthetic resins.
62. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
63. The act of clasping another person in the arms (as in greeting or affection).
67. Involving two dimensions.
70. United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
71. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
72. Free somebody (from an erroneous belief).
74. A run that is the result of the batter's performance.
75. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
76. Compulsively or physiologically dependent on something habit-forming.
77. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).

DOWN

1. Herbs and subshrubs.
2. The sound of sheep or goats (or any sound resembling this) v. l.
3. The fourth month of the Hindu calendar.
4. A large group of islands in the south Pacific including Melanesia and Micronesia and Polynesia (and sometimes Australasia and the Malay Archipelago).
5. A Russian soup usually containing beet juice as a foundation.
6. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
7. Any high mountain.
8. A feudal lord or baron in Scotland.
9. An electrically charged particle.
10. Tropical Atlantic fish.
11. (comparative of "near") Being the one of two that is less distant in space.
12. South African term for "boss".
13. By bad luck.
14. A challenge to do something dangerous or foolhardy.
19. Capital of the state of South Dakota.
24. (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
26. An unforeseen obstacle.
29. A nation in northern North America.
30. (of snakes and eels) Naturally footless.
31. A Spanish title of respect for a married woman.
33. A detailed description of design criteria for a piece of work.
34. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
36. Any of several trees of the genus Platanus having thin pale bark that scales off in small plates and lobed leaves and ball-shaped heads of fruits.
37. (used especially of vegetation) Having lost all moisture.
40. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
41. A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
45. (botany) Having stalked flowers along an elongated stem that continue to open in succession from below as the stem continues to grow.
48. A bowl-shaped vessel.
50. Denoting a quantity consisting of 12 items or units.
51. Type genus of the Aceraceae.
53. Stout-bodied insect with large membranous wings.
54. Very small free-living arachnid that is parasitic on animals or plants.
56. Produced by inbreeding.
58. Be in contradiction with.
59. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
61. The act of beginning something new.
64. A city in northern India.
65. Open-heart surgery in which the rib cage is opened and a section of a blood vessel is grafted from the aorta to the coronary artery to bypass the blocked section of the coronary artery and improve the blood supply to the heart.
66. English essayist (1775-1834).
68. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
69. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
73. A state in north central United States.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Today finds you sympathetic and understanding of the feeling of those close to you. You seem to have thrown your more judgmental attitude out of the window. You have learned you thrive when you surround yourself with those who are positive and uplifting. You are becoming the friend to others that you wish them to be for you. This is a great step in the right direction. Your life and all things in it seem to be full of happiness. You are on a very positive path. Hard work and dedication will lead you to great reward.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find your tendency to be indecisive may cause conflict with someone you care about. Consider all the options diplomatically, then make a choice. Recognize that ignoring this situation is not the right choice. Consider consequences, then choose, and act. Someone may find your actions offensive. Pay no attention to anyone who doesn't seem supportive. They will get over it.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Today may find you a bit unsatisfied with your surroundings. It may be someone or the physical place you are in that is just not sitting right with you. You may feel as if someone or something is holding you back or may just feel frustrated by your life in general. This may be a great time for an evening out and about. Change your surroundings. Clear your head but choose your company wisely to avoid any conflict as this is a time you need to have fun. You have to find a comfortable balance between work life, family, and social life. Gemini, remember it is good for you to get out and enjoy yourself from time to time.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The company you keep says a lot about you. Make time for your loved ones. Don't wait for a holiday or a special event. What is a little thing to you can make a big difference in the life of someone you care about. You are creative enough to turn a small act into a big memory. Take the time. Make the effort. The reward will be great.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You have a tendency to be indecisive at times. This could cause conflict with someone special to you. Consider all the options and put much thought into your decisions today. Make a choice. This is not the time to procrastinate. Someone may be offended by or not agree with the choice you make. Remember you can not please everyone all of the time. Do what is best for you and yours.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You can stop looking for perfect relationships. Since every person is flawed, a relationship between two of those persons can't be perfect. You just have to decide how much imperfection you can tolerate. Limit your relationships to the people who don't have the flaws you can't live with. Surround yourself with people who are aware of your imperfections and love you anyway. Peace is conceived when love and tolerance are united.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Why do today what you can put off until tomorrow? This seems to be your attitude today and you may be creating a stressful situation that can be avoided. Get in gear. Snap out of your dreamy state and take care of business. You may find others becoming frustrated with your lack of ambition today. Take a walk and a few deep breaths. Refresh and restart. There is no time like the present to get your focus back and get things done. Great reward will come from your hard work today.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

This is your time to shine. You are full of pride and proud of your accomplishments. You are being noticed in the workplace and have been excelling at your job. You are very observant of the feelings of those around you and are able to make them feel good about themselves. You feel much support from your peers and family. Everything in your world is beginning to feel healthy and come natural. You begin to feel as if something doesn't come from the heart it is irrelevant in your world. You surround yourself with people you feel are real and true friends. This is a great time for you and others begin to admire you not only for your accomplishments that the way you make them feel about themselves.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

The whole, big picture of life becomes clear when you stop focusing on the smaller parts; this is a time of planning, repairing and healing for forward motion. Seeing everything, and not just the parts, equips you to deal with issues and bumps in the road on a grander scale. Legal matters could cause you to wonder, but this is taken care of after some work; this could involve a mortgage, lease or will. Family matters are prominent and could cause changes in plans or decisions. When you make up your mind, there's no turning back which is fine with you; someone else may not be satisfied with this.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself getting mixed signals from someone close to you. You feel as if you don't know up from down. The harder you try to please this person, the more you seem to do wrong. You could find yourself in the company of someone whose values are opposite of yours. You do not like what they represent. You have a strong sense of values and morals and are very picky about the company you keep. It is important to remain kind and try to be understanding. This is why they make chocolate and vanilla, not everyone has the same taste.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

This is a time you feel more inward. You may be in the mood to only spend time with those closest to you. A nice evening at home will bring the most peace into your world today. This is a great time to do some soul searching. You have questions about what all happened in your world that led you to the place you are in today. You may be able to appreciate the hardships you have experienced and the lessons they taught you. This is a point you start to appreciate the wisdom you have gained through your life. You have learned to look for the positive in all life brings your way. This alone will make you a better person who others want in their lives.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your relationships have taken priority in your life. You value the love you have for others and the love you feel from them. Your emotional needs are being deeply satisfied. There is a vast difference between independence and loneliness. At this time, you seem to be becoming more of a homebody. You find more at ease staying in surrounded only by your loved ones or close friends. This is where you belong as your feelings are finding you more reflective rather than expressive. You crave new beginnings, perhaps this would be a great time for a new experience or a new hobby. Pisces, take the time to reflect and learn from your past and make plans for your future.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Candy

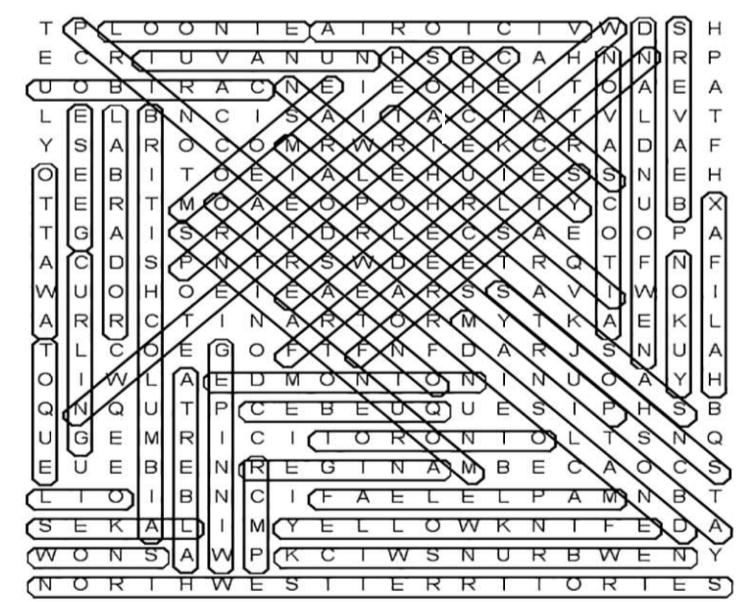
Find and circle all of the Candy treats that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.



- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| ALMOND JOY | CRACKER JACK | LIFESAVERS | RED HOTS |
| BABY RUTH | DUBBLE BUBBLE | LOLLIPOPS | SEN-SEN |
| BAZOOKA GUM | GOOBERS | MILK DUDS | SLO-POKES |
| BOTTLECAPS | GUMMI BEARS | MILKY WAY | SMARTIES |
| BUBBLE YUM | HERSHEY KISSES | MOUNDS | SOUR BALLS |
| BUTTERFINGERS | HUBBA BUBBA GUM | NECCO WAFERS | SPEARMINT LEAVES |
| CANDY NECKLACE | JAW BREAKERS | OH HENRY | SWEETARTS |
| CHICLETS | JUJBES | PEPPERMINT PATTY | TOOTSIE ROLLS |
| CHUCKLES | KIT KAT | PEZ | TWIX |
| CLARK BAR | LEMON DROPS | POP ROCKS | TWIZZLERS |
| COFFEE CRISP | LICORICE PIPE | PUMPKIN SEEDS | WAX LIPS |

Friday's Solution

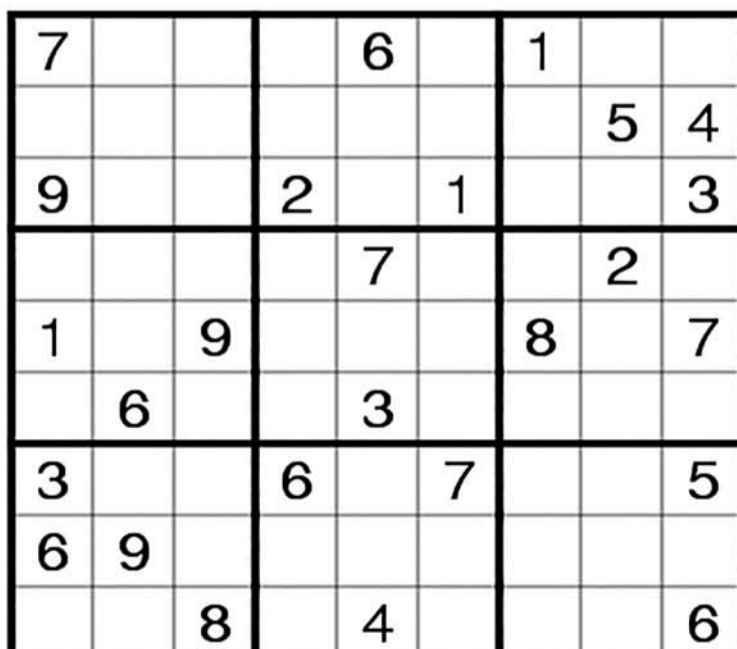
Canada



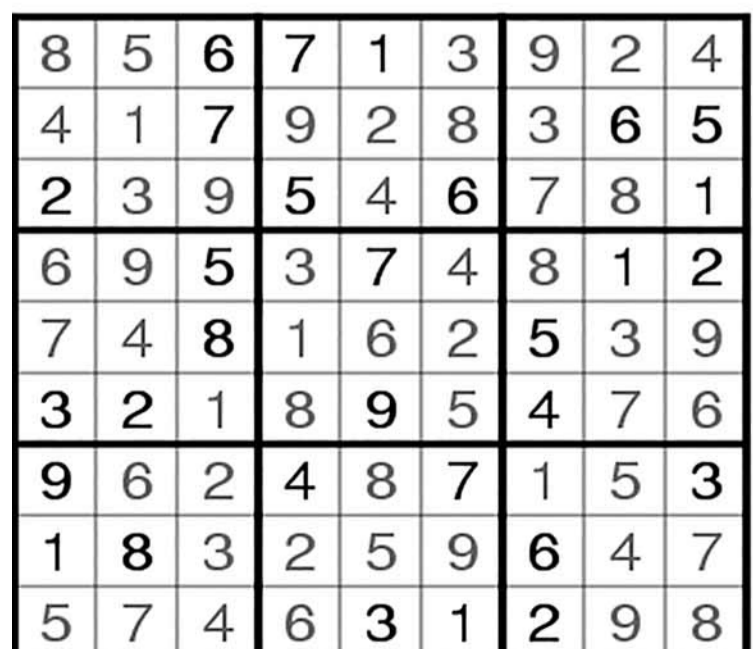
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|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| ALBERTA | HOCKEY | NEWFOUNDLAND | REGINA |
| BEARS | IQUALUIT | NORTHWEST TERRITORIES | SASKATCHEWAN |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA | LABRADOR | NOVA SCOTIA | SNOW |
| CARIBOU | LAKES | NUNAVUT | ST. JOHN'S |
| CHARLOTTETOWN | LOONIE | ONTARIO | TOQUE |
| CURLING | MANITOBA | OTTAWA | TORONTO |
| EDMONTON | MARLE LEAF | PRAIRIES | VICTORIA |
| FORESTS | MAPLE SYRUP | PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND | WHITEHORSE |
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The hidden message is: THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC IS QUEBEC CITY

Daily Sudoku



Friday's Solution



Lifestyle

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2019



Porcelain dolls are on display in a Turkish coffee house in Ankara Castle in Ankara Turkey. The cafe welcomes visitors with a unique collection of 7,500 porcelain dolls from 81 countries as the owner collects the dolls for more than 20 years. — AFP

Iraqi transforms *Kalashnikov* into musical instrument

It may sound as if Baghdad resident Majed Abdennour is playing the lute, but on closer inspection the Iraqi musician is clutching a repurposed Kalashnikov. Wearing a blue blazer and dark tie, Abdennour strummed the strings of his unusual instrument which has an ammunition case as a sound box. The Iraqi teacher in his fifties had the assault rifle at home to "protect" himself and his family during the worst years of sectarian violence in the Iraqi capital. From 2006 to 2008 militants and extremist Islamists ruled Baghdad, while Sunnis and Shiites hid behind closed doors in their respective communities. "All of a sudden, it was as if all the ties that had connected us didn't matter anymore, Iraq became a huge battleground, war was everywhere," said Abdennour.

According to the Iraq Body Count database, more than 100,000 civilians were killed in the country between the 2003 US-led invasion and the withdrawal of American troops in 2011. "I ask myself: why war? Why the violence? I'll transform all that into music," said Abdennour, who lost a number of cousins and friends in attacks.

When he took his Kalashnikov and its ammunition case to a metalworker, he was quizzed about what he wanted to do with the weapon. "I told him: don't ask questions, do it!" "And I was sure that he thought I was mad," said Abdennour, before continuing to strum a song. — AFP



Iraqi musician Majed Abdennour plays a custom-built lute made from a Kalashnikov assault rifle and an ammunition box, at his home in the capital Baghdad's southwestern al-Bayaa neighborhood. — AFP photos



A custom-built lute made from a Kalashnikov assault rifle and an ammunition box on display on the floor at the home of Iraqi musician Majed Abdennour.



Iraqi musician Majed Abdennour sits on an armchair behind a custom-built lute made from a rifle and an ammunition box.

'Emoji' house in LA beach town infuriates feuding neighbors

A house painted bright pink and adorned with two giant "emoji" faces is the latest salvo in a bitter feud between neighbors of a wealthy Los Angeles area beach town. In a bid to preserve its distinctive "small-town feel," Manhattan Beach banned short-term rentals lasting fewer than 30 days a few years ago. Despite this, the owner of a house on 39th Street, a stone's throw from the beach, listed her property on the Airbnb lettings website. Kathryn Kidd was reported to local authorities by a group of neighbors and fined \$4,000 in May.

A few weeks later, the contentious house was repainted a garish pink and was decorated with the two large yellow emoji faces sporting fake eyelashes. One has his mouth zipped shut, while the other is depicted with his tongue hanging out and his eyes rolled in a delirious fashion. Neighbors believe the emojis are designed to poke fun at them. Susan Wieland, one of the resi-

dents who reported Kidd, told local media she had been wearing fake lashes when she spoke to Kidd.

However, Kidd insists her home's makeover was simply intended to add a little color and character to the street. "Instead of everybody being so gloomy, always so depressed, always in other people's business, I just wanted to send a message to be happy, be colorful, be positive, and enjoy," she told the EasyReaderNews website. She denied that the emojis were intended to depict her neighbor Wieland. Angry residents this week called on the city council to order the home be repainted in more sober tones. Authorities are studying planning rules to determine whether this is possible. Manhattan Beach is located to the southwest of the city of Los Angeles, and is one of the most expensive zip codes in the United States. — AFP



View of the pink emoji house that has become embroiled in a feud between neighbors in Manhattan Beach, California. — AFP



Halsey's new album

Halsey can only write about herself. Although the 24-year-old singer had planned to write more about the world around her on her new album, she admitted that it didn't work and she is more comfortable writing about the world through the lens of her own experiences. Halsey explained: "I sat down to write this album and I was like, 'Alright, time to stop talking about yourself and start looking at the world around you!' And then I got two songs in and I was like, 'Uh, I only know how to talk about myself.' Because I don't know anything as well as I know me, so I can't write anything as true to Halsey than when I'm writing about myself." The star also called new single 'Nightmare' an "angry anthem", explaining: "Female rage is a very tight subject for me right now." And she revealed that she has finally stopped

seeing other women as competition. Halsey told author Lizzie Goodman at the Capitol Congress conference in Hollywood: "I spent my whole life being the person who's like 'I f**king hate girls, I only want to hang out with boys; girls are so annoying'. 'And now I'm in my 20s and I'm like 'I love women! They're awesome!' I'm surrounded by amazing women and I love how strong and beautiful and incredible they all are in their own ways. It's cool to be in my 20s and to have like grown out of that internalized misogyny. I've grown comfortable in my own space and in my own skin, so it eliminates that factor of competition for sure."

Foo Fighters want fans to choose Reading and Leeds songs



Foo Fighters want fans to make requests for their Reading & Leeds festival setlist. The 'Best of You' hitmakers will headline both events - which take place over the same weekend on August 23-25 - later this month and they have called out for their passionate audience to have their say when it comes to what songs the rockers will play. Taking to Twitter, the band simply said: "So what songs do you wanna hear? #RandL19" Foo Fighters - made up of Dave Grohl, Taylor Hawkins, Chris Schiflett, Nate Mendel, Pat Smear and Rami Jaffe - top a stacked main stage lineup at the event, with A Day To Remember, Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes, Enter Shikari, Mayday Parade and The Distillers amongst the big names confirmed for the same day. The 1975, Post Malone and Twenty One Pilots will also headline the iconic event, with the likes of Royal Blood, Charli XCX and Bastille playing over the weekend. Meanwhile, guitarist Chris recently opened about the band's enduring success, and he thinks frontman Dave is a huge part of their appeal. He said: "I don't know that it's any specific one thing, but I think you have to credit a lot of it to Dave and his personality. People love that dude. I think he represents something to a lot of people out there. He has that gift that means he can make 80,000 people feel like they're his best friend. 'He has that kind of magic, that x-factor thing. I don't know how you define that, or explain that."



Portman would feel 'weird' playing a parent in a film

Natalie Portman would feel "weird" playing a parent in a movie. The 38-year-old star - who has Aleph, eight, and two-year-old Amalia with husband Benjamin Millepied - has deliberately taken on roles such as a singer in 'Vox Lux' and an astronaut in 'Lucy in the Sky' because they are so far removed from her everyday life. In an interview with Harper's Bazaar, she said: "I just feel weird if I'm at work pretending to be a mom to some kid who's not my kid. 'So I've been trying out wild experiences like being an astronaut or a pop star.' The Oscar-winning actress is keen to direct again and has also been writing a script when her children have gone to bed. She said: "I've been working a little bit, you know, I get the kids to bed, do the dishes, do the laundry, and then write for an hour, which has been... fun!" Natalie has been a vocal advocate of the Time's Up movement but still thinks she could "do more". She said: "I've been so inspired by the most women I've met through Time's Up - like Reese Witherspoon, America Ferrera and Kerry Washington - who are doing such impressive creative work, producing, acting, directing and taking such good care of their families. 'They are inspiring activists and also great friends. Whenever I think I have too much to handle, I see what they're doing and know I can do more.' Last year, the 'Black Swan' actress spoke about the "sexual terrorism" she'd experienced when she was starting her career at the age of 13 but she insists there are others who have experienced worse. She said: "Listen, unfortunately, there are girls who experience so much worse; girls experience actual violence."

Slipknot want Knotfest in the UK

Slipknot want to bring Knotfest to the UK. The 'Psychosocial' metal icons are currently touring their festival across the US in support of their new album 'We Are Not Your Kind', and percussionist Shawn 'Clown' Crahan revealed while the band are keen they don't want to rush and "mess things up". He told NME: "Yeah, absolutely. Right time, right place. It definitely will happen but it has to be the right thing. 'Right now we do a lot of festivals with a lot of great people and you've got to find a time and a zone and it's got to be right. We don't like to go and mess things up; it's not about that.' Shawn explained while the band is still playing a lot in Europe, it doesn't make sense to tour the festival just yet. However, he promised it will happen one day, once they can work with their team to figure out the details. He added: "It's about being righteous and

pure and it being what it is. Like, now, we do a lot of things in Europe, so it's got to be the right time and the right promoter but it's all in the works and it's going to happen. It'll all happen." 'We Are Not Your Kind' - the group's sixth record and their first LP since '5: The Gray Chapter' in 2014 - was released on Friday and frontman Corey Taylor previously said it contains the "darkest writing" he has done in six years. He explained: "It's very dark. It's some of the darkest writing I've done in years. 'In the Slipknot index, this album would sit somewhere between [2001 second album] 'Iowa' and [2004 third album] 'Vol. 3: (The Subliminal Verses)'. 'Lyrically, it has the force of 'Iowa', but musically it has the heaviness but the experimentation as well. It was very important for us to go somewhere crazy and make something insane."



Cage takes credit for prosthetic nose in Never on Tuesday

Nicolas Cage has taken full credit for his character's prosthetic nose in the 1989 film 'Never on Tuesday'. The 55-year-old actor has opened up about playing the cameo role of a "sleazy guy" driving a Ferrari in the 80's American comedy, and revealed it was his idea to wear the "physical deformity" because the movie's director, Adam Rifkin, gave him full creative control. He said: "The whole thing [was my idea], yeah. The character was just some sleazy guy who wanted to pick up a girl in a Ferrari,

and that wasn't so interesting to me. So I came up with a concept: This character had a physical deformity. He looked like a freak; long nose, bullied as a kid, called 'Pinocchio' in the schoolyard. 'His father felt bad for him, bought him a nice red Ferrari to make him feel good. He's lonely, and so when he sees these people on the side of the road, he wants to help them and see if they're hurt. I started screaming, 'Pinocchio! Pinocchio!' [in the scene], but they cut that out. And I just got back in my car and drove right away. 'That's the whole character, all in 16 seconds. That, to me, is interesting! I wasn't gonna be some guy in a swanky jacket with gold medallions, 'Hey baby, get in my car.' How many times have we seen that?' And Cage insisted it is every actor's dream to hear the words "go for it" on set if they're starring in a cameo role. He told Vulture: "If I'm in a cameo and I'm not getting paid, just let me do whatever I want and make some of my experimental visions come true. 'They said 'go for it', the three most beautiful words any actor can hear on a set. And I'd do it again, by the way. I'd do it again, if someone offered me a cameo and gave me free rein to explore. I'd do it again in a second.' — Bang Showbiz



Billy Ray Cyrus didn't know what a Fendi sports bra was

Billy Ray Cyrus didn't know what a Fendi sports bra was before 'Old Town Road'. The 57-year-old singer offered to work on a remix of the track with rapper Lil Nas X after Billboard ruled it ineligible for the Hot Country Songs chart for not fitting the genre and songwriter Jozzy - who worked on the remix with Billy - has revealed that the star had no idea what some of the lyrics meant. Jozzy told Variety: "Well it was one of those things where I didn't want him to talk about anything country. It was like, 'Bro, no moonshine, no cigarettes, no red cup in hand... since Lil Nas X is stepping into your world, step into his world'. So Fendi sports bras, Maserati sports cars, 'hat down cross town living like a rockstar'. 'Billy was lit, I'm telling you. His wife, Tish, was such a supporter. She was, like, 'Bae, you gotta say that'. He didn't know what a Fendi sports bra was. Then I said, 'Your wife has one' She's, like, 'Yeah I got one! I was, like, 'Bro, just say it'. However, Jozzy

has admitted that she only knew Billy from 'Hannah Montana' before working on the song together. Jozzy said: "Hannah Montana", of course. My momma used to think he was hot as **k. She loved him, that's all I really knew. ... That's why I was more open to do it, because it was, like, 'This is for my momma.' The song has gone on to huge success and Billy recently called it a "movement". Explaining how he got involved, he told the New York Post: When I saw [the song got disqualified], I wrote to Lil Nas on Twitter, and I said, 'Waylon Jennings told me, What is the definition of an outlaw? One who has been outlawed. Welcome to the club'. But music fans were smart enough to see through that, and they said, 'We don't need nobody to tell us what we like'. Like Lil Nas says, 'Can't nobody tell me nothin'. This song became the power of the people. It feels more like a movement."



BAYWATCH DOCUMENTARY IN THE WORKS

A feature film documentary about 'Baywatch' is in the works. Filmmakers Matthew Felker and Brian Corso are working with former cast members of the iconic show to create 'Baywatch: The Documentary', which will tell the inside story of the TV hit. Felker said: "We want to show the audience how it culturally shaped an entire decade. The look and feel and tone of 'Baywatch' bled into everything '90s. 'Baywatch' is about as synonymous with a decade as the Kardashians are to today's current pop culture." David Hasselhoff, Nicole Eggert, David Chokachi, Alexandra Paul, Erika Eleniak, Gena Lee Nolin Hulse, Jason Simmons and Jeremy Jackson have all been confirmed to take part, while producers are also hoping to get access to Pamela Anderson, Carmen Electra and Michael Bergi. Eggert will produce the documentary, along with Felker, Corso, Ari Shofet and Drew Arnold. Speaking about the show, Hasselhoff - who played series lead Mitch Buchannon - told The Hollywood Reporter: "What a phenome-

nal experience it was to be part of the 'Baywatch' journey from the shows first season being cancelled to lasting over 10 years to being rebooted some 30 years later. I am honored and proud of the work our cast and crew did together. 'Baywatch' is truly a spectacular worldwide hit and has affected millions of people and saved a lot of lives. 'Baywatch' forever!" Eggert, who played Summer Quinn, added: "The most amazing part of being involved with 'Baywatch' for me is that not only was it one of the most fun jobs on Earth, but people responded and loved what we were doing almost as much as we loved doing it. Having your work appreciated like that is extremely rewarding. It also brought opportunities to help people understand water safety and what to do in an emergency. Not sure how you could top doing what you love, having people all over the world loving what you're doing and actually educating people all at the same time. An experience of a lifetime."

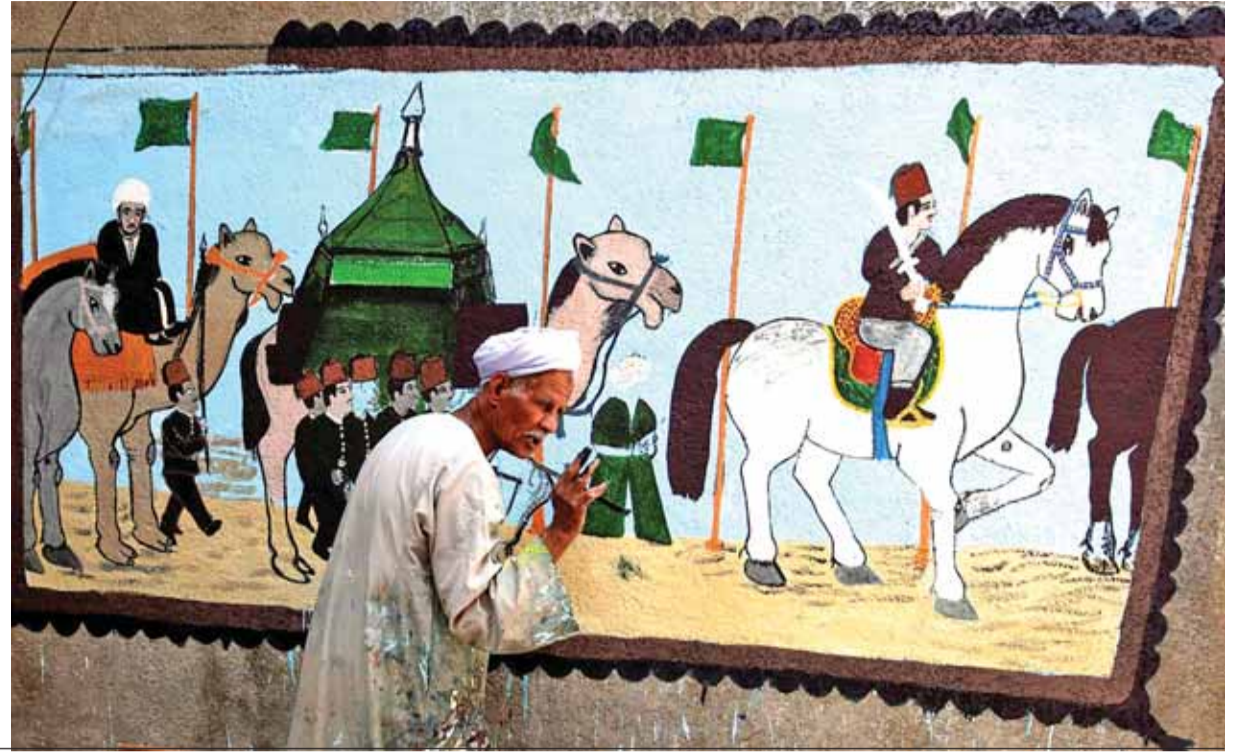
Lifestyle | Features

Egyptian artist paints murals on houses to celebrate hajj

Eid Al Salwaawi, 69, paints murals of the rituals of the hajj pilgrimage on the walls of a house in Cairo's Sayeda Zainab neighborhood. Sometimes he volunteers to paint scenes that celebrate the hajj and religious stories and lessons, other times he is paid. Every year, Muslims travel from around the world to the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia to complete the hajj, one of the five pillars of their faith. This year's hajj will conclude on Sunday. Salwaawi said the hajj scenes he saw on the walls of houses in his home village as a child in northern Aswan captured his imagination. "So I draw camel caravans and soldiers wearing traditional hats guarding them," he said. He uses simple tools like a handmade palm frond brush and a mixture of paint, vinegar, rosewater, gum

Arabic and glue. One mural depicts women as they embark on the pilgrimage, dressed in bright colors, another shows a caravan carrying the tapestry that covers the Kaaba, the holiest site in Islam. He adorns his works with prayers and Koranic verses. Each mural takes him between two and three hours. — Reuters

The artist Eid Al-Salwaawi paints murals about the holy Kaaba and the rituals of the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, in Cairo, Egypt, on July 17, 2019. — Reuters



Artist perform during a concert organized in solidarity with Lebanese indie band Mashrou' Leila (unseen) in Lebanon's capital Beirut on Friday. — AFP photos



A dancer performs during a concert organized in solidarity with Lebanese indie band Mashrou' Leila (unseen).



Lebanese attend a concert organized in solidarity with Lebanese indie band Mashrou' Leila (unseen) in Lebanon's capital Beirut.

Hundreds attend Lebanon protest concert after band cancellation

Hundreds of Lebanese gathered Friday in Beirut for a protest concert in solidarity with a homegrown band being cancelled from a top music festival over alleged blasphemy. Mashrou' Leila, whose lead singer is gay and whose Arabic lyrics tackle a range of taboo topics, were supposed to play in the seaside town of Byblos on Friday. But festival organizers cancelled them over security concerns after clerics complained some of their lyrics insulted Christians, and critics threatened to attack the concert. In protest, social and political activists as well as academics came together on Friday night to hold a replacement concert titled, "Music is Always Louder". Under the watchful eye of several members of the security forces, dozens of fans danced in the front row to the band's music before an all-night line-up of musicians. Mashrou' Leila did not attend, but an organizer read out a statement from them to a full hall of more than 1,500 people, as hundreds waited their turn to enter outside. This evening was supposed to be about the band's 10th anniversary, but instead it became about "our freedom to say what we think", Mashrou's Leila said. It's "about a future that allows us at least the most basic of freedoms, a future in which censorship and self-censorship don't continue to forbid us from expressing ourselves," they said. Fans were then treated to a premiere screening of the animated music video for their latest song "Radio Romance". Audience members said they came for a night out, but also to take a stand. "I reject this kind of oppression," said 28-year-old humanitarian worker Hasan Mortada of the events that sparked the Byblos cancellation. Abdulhalim Jabr, 57, an architecture professor at the American University of Beirut where the band studied, said he had come to support "a battle for freedoms". "If we lose them, what will be left in this country?" he said, pointing to a struggling economy and mounting hazards to the environment. Back stage, oud musician Ziyad Sahhab said he was playing to protest "religious authorities interfering in our choices as musicians". "I don't go to mass and tell (them) what to say," he said, before grabbing his instrument and rushing out on stage. Religiously diverse Lebanon is one of the Middle East's more liberal countries, but its myriad of recognized sects still wield major influence over social and cultural affairs. Mashrou' Leila has often played in Lebanon, but it has created waves in the religiously conservative Middle East. After a Mashrou' Leila concert in Egypt in 2017, at which members of the audience waved a rainbow flag, Egyptian authorities launched a crackdown on the country's LGBT community. Its concerts in Jordan were cancelled in 2016 and 2017. — AFP

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Greek sculptor Takis

Renowned Greek sculptor Takis dies at 93

World-renowned Greek sculptor Takis has died aged 93, his foundation said Friday, just as London's Tate Modern museum holds a major show of his work. The poised stalk, coloured lights and moving balls of Takis's creations made him a noted figure of the 20th-century "kinetic" art movement along with the US artist Alexander Calder. The Takis Foundation that promotes his work announced his death in a tribute to him on Facebook, without giving any details. It called him "a true pioneer, innovator and legend... A prolific and visionary mind, whose ingenuity, passion and imagination was endless". "Takis explored many artistic and scientific horizons, as well as music and theatre, and redefined the boundaries in art," it said. Takis was born Panagiotis Vassilakis in a suburb of Athens in 1925. In the 1940s he served in the Greek resistance to the Nazi occupation and lived through the difficult years of civil war that followed the war. Inspired as a young artist by Picasso and Giacometti as well as by classical Greek sculpture, he moved to Paris in the 1950s. He also spent time working in Britain and the United States, according to the foundation's biography of the artist. — AFP

Italy's top female chef mixes it up with flavors from a tiny island

Award-winning young Italian chef Martina Caruso's love of food is in her blood-and she has the tattoos to prove it. At just 29, Caruso has become a hit in the world of haute cuisine by using the sunshine flavors of her tiny volcanic island of Salina and giving a modern twist to traditional recipes. Earlier this year, she was named Italy's female chef of 2019 — just three years after she became the youngest Italian to win a Michelin star at the family-run Signum restaurant and hotel on Salina. The flavors from the idyllic island infuse Caruso's dishes and her favorite ingredients are even tattooed on her arm: garlic, oil, hot pepper, octopus and the sea. From a young age she watched her father Michele, who as Signum's chef was devoted to traditional recipes. "At first, my father did not give me any room, he did not want me to become a chef, a tiring job," Caruso says. But she flew the nest for three years to train at a cookery school near Sicily's capital Palermo. Caruso later took her place as a chef in the family restaurant, where she showed off her technical and creative ways of cooking. "I convinced my father by showing him what I knew how to do."



In this file photo Martina Caruso, "Signum" restaurant chef, poses outdoor her restaurant in Salina, one of the Eolian sicilian islands. — AFP

Her mantra is "simplicity", says Caruso, who was awarded the female chef of the year title by the Italian Michelin guide and Veuve Clicquot in March. "But simple doesn't mean it's easy," she laughs. In one of her appetizers, Caruso takes "bagna cauda"—a typical dish from Piedmont in northern Italy, which consists of garlic and anchovies, but gives it a Sicilian kick by using sea urchins. Salina is known for its capers, which she makes into ice cream, something to be savored in small quantities due to the potent flavor of the tiny green berries. Her menu also includes char-grilled moray eel, which she cooks on embers in her garden. The delicate white fish is scarcely eaten on the island today but she is keen to continue using the traditional ingredient.

Boils down to 'home cooking'

Another local specialty is her "mezzi paccheri", short tube-shaped pasta with an intense squid sauce, based on a recipe made by fishermen's families. "French cuisine is very much based on technique, the marriage of flavours. To think up a dish, Italian chefs may be more traditional, and that's what I do by listening to the country's elders," Caruso says. However, Caruso's mother, Clara, the mayor of the small town of Malfa, has never even cooked an egg. Instead of the kitchen, Clara turned her attention over the course of 30 years to transforming a number of old pastel-coloured properties into what has become a boutique hotel in Salina, an island of just 26 square kilometers (10 square miles). She has also tried to increase tourism on the island by inviting artists into a former palace that has been turned into a cultural center. — AFP

French actor Alain Delon recovers in Switzerland after stroke

Legendary French actor Alain Delon, 83, suffered a stroke a few weeks ago and is currently "resting" in Switzerland, his eldest son Anthony Delon told AFP on Thursday. In a text, his son said the actor's vital functions were "perfect and his condition stabilized, according to doctors". The actor known for his roles in films such as "The Swimming Pool" and "Purple Noon", received an honorary Palme d'Or award at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival in May. His son said Delon was operated on at a hospital in Paris, where he stayed three weeks in intensive care. "The whole family took turns at his bedside, my brother, my sister and my mother Nathalie," Anthony Delon said.

He added that his father "went back to Switzerland and is resting quietly in a clinic". "My sister who now resides in Switzerland, is following his recovery closely and keeps us informed of his daily progress," the text said. In recent weeks, several celebrity magazines, including Closer, had claimed that the actor had suffered a stroke. In mid-June, Alain Delon's professional team told AFP that the actor had been admitted to a hospital in Paris "for vertigo and minor headaches". "Symptoms likely due to a cardiac arrhythmia suffered by the actor," the same source said. The veteran French actor has spent over 60 years working in European cinema. — AFP



This file photo shows French actor Alain Delon posing as he arrives to be awarded with an Honorary Palme d'Or at the 72nd edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Cuba Gooding Jr to face trial in groping case

Oscar-winning actor Cuba Gooding Jr will go on trial over accusations he groped a woman in New York after a court dismissed his plea to have the case thrown out. Gooding, 51, is accused of grabbing the woman's breast without her consent in a Manhattan bar on a night out in June. The "Jerry Maguire" actor is charged with forcible touching and could face up to a year in prison if convicted. Gooding denies the charges and his lawyers applied to have them dismissed, stating that footage from the bar's security cameras showed that their client was innocent.

But on Wednesday New York State criminal court judge Phyllis Chu rejected their plea, saying that conflicting accounts of what happened could only be resolved at trial. "The court finds the defendant has failed to meet his burden of setting forth compelling reasons to warrant dismissal," Chu said in a written decision seen by AFP. The ruling was first reported on Thursday. Gooding turned himself in to police on June 13 and was released later that day without bail. The trial is scheduled to start on September 3. Gooding won an Academy Award in 1997 for his performance as a football player in "Jerry Maguire." He recently played OJ Simpson in "The People vs OJ Simpson: American Crime Story." — AFP



Cuba Gooding Jr



Job Kibii, head of the National Museums of Kenya's paleontology department, shows different crocodile fossils at the Nairobi National Museum, in Nairobi. — AFP photos



Job Kibii holds a piece of the 23-million-year-old bones of the newly-discovered giant 'simbakubwa kutokaafrika' (big lion from Africa).



Museum staffer Blasto Onyango prepares a fossil for storage at the paleontology department of the Nairobi National Museum.

Hidden mysteries lie in wait inside Kenya's fossil treasury

The only hint that something extraordinary lay inside the plain wooden drawer in an unassuming office behind Nairobi National Museum was a handwritten note stuck to the front: "Pull Carefully". Inside, a monstrous jawbone with colossal fangs grinned from a bed of tattered foam—the only known remains of a prehistoric mega-carnivore, larger than a polar bear, that researchers only this year declared a new species. "This is one-of-a-kind," said Kenyan paleontologist Job Kibii, holding up the 23-million-year-old bones of the newly-discovered giant, *Simbakubwa kutokaafrika*, whose unveiling made headlines around the world.



Collection manager Justus Erung labels a fossil before storing at the paleontology department of the Nairobi National Museum.

is still used to find a specific fossil among the trove, the entries written by hand. But the collection has grown exponentially, faster than Kibii and his team can keep up. "We've run out of space," said Kibii, pausing between dusty archival shelves crammed floor to ceiling with finds, dating back more than half a century. "In this section alone, we have more than a million specimens." Gigantic skulls of ancient crocodiles compete for space with a bygone species of horned giraffe. Nearby, the behemoth tusks of an early African elephant take up valuable real estate.

Even the windowsills are littered with the petrified remains of all manner of weird and wonderful creatures. Between 7,000 and 10,000 new fossils arrive at the lab every year, Kibii says, overwhelming his 15 staff who must painstakingly clean and log each specimen. By law, fossils uncovered in Kenya must go to the museum for "accessioning"—the process of labeling, recording and storing for future generations. The backlog is enormous.

Chipping away

In a dark room, a lone staffer in a protective mask blasts away rock from fossil using an air-powered brush, as Kenyan pop tunes crackle through an old radio. Outside the door, metal chests sent from dig sites filled to the brim await his magic touch—literally years of work stretching before him.

If a specific expert is not on hand to identify a specimen, things can get wrongly categorized or waylaid. In some cases, they're sent to the dreaded "waiting area", where faded cardboard boxes, sagging with unknown and abandoned fossils, gather dust. "We have fossils from the 1980s that have not been accessioned," said collections manager Francis Muchemi, chipping away at a giant elephant molar.

'Cradle of humanity'

Simbakubwa met a similar fate. Thought to be a type of hyena, it was filed away in a backroom and unstudied for decades, until stumbled upon by American researchers. Specific finds unearthed at one of Kenya's many digs by researchers writing academic papers are given priority and fast-tracked for assessment by the museum. Even today though, the museum lacks specialists and resources.

Kibii is one of just seven paleontologists in Kenya. He trained in South Africa because there was no course available at home. "It's important because Kenya is the cradle of human evolution," said Muchemi, who learned his skills on the job. "We have very few Kenyans doing this job. Ninety-nine percent of the people who work here are foreign." Kibii said paleontology was considered a lower priority than conserving Africa's endangered wildlife.



Job Kibii shows different crocodile fossils.

But the remarkable fossils were not unearthed this year, or even this decade. They weren't even found this century. For nearly 40 years, the specimens—proof of the existence of Africa's largest-ever predator, a 1,500 kilogram (3,300-pound) meat eater that dwarfed later hunters like lions—lived in a nondescript drawer in downtown Nairobi. Museum staff knew the bones were something special—they just didn't know what exactly. A source of intrigue, dusted off on occasion for guests, *Simbakubwa* lay in wait, largely forgotten.

How did these fossils, first excavated on a dig in western Kenya in the early 1980s, go unrecognized for so long? Kibii—who presides over the National Museums of Kenya's paleontology department, a collection unrivaled in East Africa and one of the world's great fossil treasuries—has a pretty good idea. "We have tons and tons of specimens... that haven't been analyzed," he told AFP. "Definitely there are things waiting to be discovered."

Out of space

The main wing has changed little since legendary paleoanthropologist Louis Leakey first started stockpiling his finds there in the early 1960s. A card-based filing system



Fossils of different species displayed at the paleontology department of the Nairobi National Museum.

"This one has been in the ground for millions of years. What are you saving it from?" he said, of the prevailing attitude to the science. He hopes to acquire collapsable shelves to create space in the collection. Even better, a micro-CT scanner—a powerful tool driving breakthroughs in the world of paleontology—would allow a fresh look at the museum's most-forgotten corners. "I always wonder what lies in there on some of these shelves," Kibii said. "*Simbakubwa* is telling a new story. What if, among these thousands, we have 10, 20, new stories that are lying, waiting to be told? That's always the mystery." — AFP

Winnie rules the world

This little numismatist has over 1,500 coins from of all the continents

The saying "The crop is visible in the sprout" very well suits Winnie, a 5th grade student. Her interest is very different. When her relatives ask for the gift she needs, in no time Winnie replies "bring the coin of small value of the country you are coming from". Whether it be a Kuwaiti Dinar, Turkish Lira, Malaysian Ringgit, Qatari Riyal, Bangladeshi Taka, Ugandan Shilling, Korean Won, Cambodian Riel, UAE Dirham, Australian Dollar, Philippines Peso, Seychelles Rupee, Jordanian Dinar, Thailand Baht, British Pound, Indonesian Rupiah, Chinese Yuan, Egyptian Pound, France Euro, Bhutanese Ngultrum, Vietnamese Dong, Kenyan Shilling, etc. she has a stock of the currency, around 1,500, of all the continents. She has been invited to exhibit her talent at various places, and proves to be a growing center for numismatics.

Talking to Winnie, "I have started collecting coins of various countries due to the encouragement given by my parents, teachers and relatives from the age of five, and this hobby takes me to the long way". It gives a special

knowledge on the names of countries and coins, and it brings me close historically and culturally.

Besides the international coins, Winnie has a stock of Indian coins from the early 1900s. The rare coins released in 1917, 1920, etc.

Interested in studying history, Winnie has taken good efforts in collecting coins released in the remembrance of great personalities like Louis Braille, Sr. Alphonsa and organizations such as UNO, ILO, etc.

Winnie aims to become an Administrative Service officer and likes to see the happy smiles of the poor and the depressed as and when the light is burning low.

Appreciations from higher officials in Administration, Police and Social Service Organizations like Lions Club forces me to do better, says Winnie. This little girl Winnie who makes the land feel proud deserves a suitable honor from the higher authorities.





A Kashmiri man sells food and vegetables on a boat on Dal Lake during a lockdown in Srinagar yesterday. — AFP

One hurt in Norway mosque shooting, suspect arrested

OSLO: A gunman armed with multiple weapons went on a shooting spree in a mosque in a suburb of the Norwegian capital Oslo yesterday, injuring one worshipper before being arrested, police and witnesses said. The head of the mosque described the assailant as

white and said he was wearing a helmet and a uniform. "One person is shot. The severity of that person's injuries is unknown. One suspect is arrested. The police are working at the location," Oslo police said on Twitter.

The shooting occurred at the Al-Noor Islamic centre in the town of Baerum, an Oslo suburb. Police said there was no indication that more people were involved. They said they had no information about the suspect, other than he was described as "white". "One of our members has been shot by a white man with a helmet and uniform," Irfan Mushtaq, head of the mosque, told local newspaper Budstikka.

He later told broadcaster TV2 that the man had car-

ried multiple weapons. "An ethnically Norwegian man with a shotgun and pistols entered the mosque and broke glass windows. He started shooting around him," Mushtaq said.

'Suspect subdued'

Public broadcaster NRK reported that police had found multiple weapons inside the mosque, and that someone in the building had managed to subdue the suspect before police arrived on the scene. The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) said it was monitoring the situation. "We're following the events and are continually evaluating. It's too early to draw

any conclusions," Martin Bernsen, information director at PST, told NRK.

There has been recent spate of white nationalist attacks in the West, including in the United States and in New Zealand where 51 Muslim worshippers were killed in March in shootings at two mosques in the city of Christchurch. The suspect in the Christchurch killings wrote a hate-filled manifesto in which he said he was influenced by far-right ideologues including Norwegian mass murderer Anders Behring Breivik. Breivik, who said he was motivated by his hatred of multiculturalism, killed 77 people in gun and bomb attacks in Norway in July 2011, many of them teenagers. — AFP

India monsoon floods kill 100...

Continued from Page 1

Storm accidents killed eight people in the key Gujarat cities of Ahmedabad and Nadiad. The worst fears are for Kerala where the police spokesman said about 120,000 people have moved into emergency relief camps.

"There are around 80 places where flood and rains have triggered mudslides, which we cannot reach," Kumar added. "About 200 people are stranded at one place. We are trying to use air force helicopters to drop food to them." Kerala's main airport at Kochi has been closed

since Friday. Kuwait Airways announced on Friday that it had suspended all flights from and to Kochi owing to bad weather conditions. Kuwait's national carrier said in a statement that it would resume flights to the flood-hit city once weather conditions improve. About 500 people died in floods in the state last year which were the worst in nearly a century.

More than 600 relief camps in Karnataka are now filled with 161,000 people, a state disaster management authority official told AFP. "The rains have eased in the region and we think the water will soon start to recede. There are parts of northern Karnataka, coastal regions and the Western Ghats which are badly hit," the official added. While the monsoon rains are crucial to replenishing water supplies, they kill hundreds of people every year. — Agencies

mosques in March. After sunset prayers, pilgrims made their way down Mount Arafat to Muzdalifah, another holy site where they will sleep under the stars to prepare for the final stage of hajj, a ritual "stoning of the devil". That marks the beginning of Eid Al-Adha, the festival of sacrifice, marked today. Sheep are traditionally slaughtered for the three-day event, a tribute to Prophet Abraham's (PBUH) sacrifice of a lamb after God spared Ismael (PBUH), his son. Pilgrims then return to the Grand Mosque to perform a final "tawaf" or walk around the Kaaba.

The scale of the pilgrimage presents vast security and logistical challenges, with tens of thousands of safety officers deployed. Riyadh faced strong criticism in 2015 when some 2,300 worshippers were killed in the deadliest stampede in the gathering's history. This year's hajj takes place to a backdrop of Gulf tensions following a series of attacks on tankers, the downing of drones and the seizure of ships. Riyadh blames regional foe Tehran for the attacks on commercial shipping, accusations Iran vehemently denies.

Despite the absence of diplomatic ties between the two countries, some 88,550 Iranian pilgrims were due to take part in the hajj this year according to Iran's Tasnim news agency. As in previous years, Saudi authorities have been at pains to stress that the hajj is a religious event and have sought to prevent its politicization.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday condemned a US blueprint to end the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and called on haj pilgrims to oppose it. The message was read at a rally held by Iranian pilgrims inside their compound, according to Iran's state television which showed hundreds of pilgrims gathered in a tent chanting slogans including "America is Allah's enemy" in Arabic, and holding signs that read "Death to Israel" and "Death to America".

Pilgrimage is also the backbone of a Saudi plan to expand tourism under a drive to diversify the kingdom's economy away from oil. The haj and year-round umrah generate billions of dollars in revenue from worshippers' lodging, transport, fees and gifts. Officials aim to increase the number of umrah and haj pilgrims to 15 million and 5 million respectively by 2020 and the umrah number to 30 million by 2030. — Agencies

Southern Yemen separatists seize...

Continued from Page 1

humanitarian crisis gripping the rest of the country. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has urged the parties to end hostilities and engage in "inclusive dialogue".

The clashes began on Wednesday after the separatists accused an Islamist party allied to Hadi of complicity in a missile attack on a military parade in Aden, one of three separate attacks that targeted southern forces. The Houthis claimed responsibility for the parade attack that killed a senior southern commander. Despite their alliance, the separatists and Hadi's government have rival agendas for Yemen's future.

Analysts say the Houthis may have used the parade

attack to test dynamics on the ground after the UAE in June scaled down its military presence in Yemen under pressure from Western allies to end the war and concerns about rising tensions with Iran in the Gulf. The United Nations is trying to implement a stalled peace deal in the main port city of Hodeida, further to the north, to pave the way for wider political negotiations to end the war. The deal was reached in peace talks between the Houthis and Hadi's government in Sweden in December, the first talks in more than two years.

The Houthis have also stepped up cross-border missile and drone strikes on Saudi Arabia. Yesterday, the group said it launched a drone on the Saudi civilian Abha airport. Saudi-owned al-Arabiya TV said air traffic at the airport was normal. The Houthis control Sanaa, Hodeida and other major urban centres while Hadi's government holds Aden and a string of western coastal towns. The Yemen conflict is widely seen in the region as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Houthis deny being puppets of Tehran and say their revolution is against corruption. — Reuters

US sex trafficker Epstein commits...

Continued from Page 1

officials as saying Epstein had hanged himself. The city medical examiner's office confirmed Epstein's death but said nothing about what caused it. It said a medical investigation has been opened.

Epstein's death comes a day after a tranche of sealed legal documents were released for the first time providing new details about what prosecutors allege was Epstein's sex-trafficking operation. It also comes just over two weeks after the 66-year-old was found unconscious in his cell with marks on his neck after an apparent suicide attempt. Epstein did not appear to be showing any visible signs of injuries when he appeared in court on July 31 following that incident, to be told that his trial wouldn't begin before June next year.

The hedge fund manager had been charged with one count of sex trafficking of minors and one count of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of minors. He was denied bail last month in a New York court because he was deemed a flight risk. Epstein denied the charges and had faced up to 45 years in prison - effectively the rest of his life - if convicted.

The Metropolitan Correction Center, a federal facility in Manhattan that is often used to house suspects awaiting or during trial, is considered one of the most secure penal establishments in the US. The infamous Mexican drug trafficker Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman spent more than two years there before being convicted and transferred to a federal prison in Colorado.

Epstein's death quickly raised questions about how he

could take his own life despite reportedly being put on suicide watch after his first failed attempt. "We need answers. Lots of them," tweeted New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. On Friday, two thousand pages of documents focusing on testimony by a victim who claimed she was a "sex slave" of Epstein were released by a New York court. In them, Virginia Giuffre, now an adult, claims that she was forced to have sex with some well-known American political and business personalities. They have all strenuously denied the allegations.

Prosecutors said Epstein sexually exploited dozens of underage teenagers, some as young as 14, at his homes in Manhattan and Palm Beach, Florida, between 2002 and 2005. They claim that Epstein was "well aware that many of the victims were minors." The girls were paid hundreds of dollars in cash to massage him, perform sexual acts and to recruit other girls, prosecutors allege.

They say Epstein had an army of recruiters, often not much older than their targets, who would approach vulnerable teens. Epstein is also accused of paying off possible co-conspirators to "influence" them. US media have reported. Epstein, whose friends have included President Donald Trump, former president Bill Clinton and Britain's Prince Andrew, was convicted previously of paying young girls for sexual massages at his Palm Beach mansion. They have all denied knowing anything about his alleged crimes.

Epstein avoided federal prosecution under a plea deal that required him to admit to a single Florida state charge of soliciting prostitution from a minor and register as a sex offender. He served 13 months in a county jail before being released in 2009. Last month, Alex Acosta resigned as US labor secretary amid a backlash over the deal that he negotiated with Epstein in that case while he was a federal prosecutor in Florida. — AFP

Pilgrims travelling from abroad account for 1.86 million of the 2.48 million taking part in this year's hajj, according to official figures. Among them are 200 survivors and relatives of victims of the attacks on two New Zealand

Sports

Uzbekistan bags 10 gold, India and Kazakhstan win two gold medals

Kuwait's Abdelaziz Al-Sarheed takes bronze in Asian Schoolboy Boxing Championship



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Uzbekistan had the lion's share of the Asian Schoolboy Boxing Championship 2019-Kuwait (ASBC), which concluded late Thursday under the patronage of Kuwait Olympic Committee President Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Winners of the 14 weights categories were awarded their medals during the closing ceremony as Kuwait was among those awarded with one bronze medal won by Abdelaziz Al-Sarheed in the 67 kg weight category.

Uzbekistan boxers won 10 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze medals to deservedly take first place meanwhile India was second with two gold, 5 silver and a bronze, Kazakhstan was third with two gold, one silver and 8 bronze, meanwhile Arab boxers were satisfied with bronze.

Chairman of Kuwait Boxing Federation Mohammad Mansi thanked all participating delegations, while expressing his pleasure towards the major success of the event, due to everyone's effort.

Mansi lauded the major role of the Public Authority for Sports (PAS) and its Director General Dr Humoud Fulaiteh, and this Deputy Dr Saqer Al-Mulla and support the authority gave to bring out the event as it did. He also thanked chairman of Kuwait Sports Club Khalid Al-Ghanim for hosting the matches.

Mansi commended Kuwait's boxer Al-Sarheed who won the bronze medal despite the strong competition by Asian champions. He also spoke about the role of the technical and administrative departments in preparing boxers so they present their best during the championship.

He said the championship added many things to Kuwait boxers and its boxing sport, as it laid down the infrastructure and the strategy of the local federation in preparing boxers for future competitions. Meanwhile member of the executive committees at the International and Asian Boxing Associations, and the Technical Supervisor of (ASBC) from Indonesia lauded the excellent organization of the championship and thanked Kuwait Federation for their role.

She said "the ring was of top level, and we did not receive any complaint which is something comforting, and makes our confidence in Kuwait and its Federation at its highest. She added that the future of Asia's boxers is bright following the final matches adding "those who won are considered the base and promising for our continent."

The Indian Technical Director of the Indian team Saghar Mal Dayal said he was satisfied with what his team achieved despite the short notice. He said for 8 Indian boxers to reach the semi finals is a good number, then having six reaching the finals and winning two gold, five silver and two bronze, is something satisfactory also.



Final Table Tally			
Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Uzbekistan	10	2	2
India	2	5	1
Kazakhstan	2	1	8
Kyrgyzstan	0	3	2
Turkmenistan	0	2	2
Philippines	0	1	1
Tajikistan	0	0	2
Afghanistan	0	0	2
Iran	0	0	2
Kuwait	0	0	1
UAE	0	0	1
Palestine	0	0	1
Jordan	0	0	1
Iraq	0	0	1
Thailand	0	0	1

Results of the final day of competition:
In the (33-35 kg) Weight Category:
1. Uzbek Abdurasulov Khumoyunmirzo defeated Kyrgyz Bekat Ergeshov

In the (37 kg) Weight Category:
2. Uzbek Mahmudov Hojjakbar defeated Indian Aryan

In the (40 kg) Weight Category:
3. Uzbek Farrukh Tulaganov defeated Turk Alisher Orazbayev



In the (43 kg) Weigh Category:
4. Uzbek Umidillo Abdurasulov defeated Turk Dovlet Nurmuralov

In the (46 kg) Weight Category:
5. Uzbek Boburbek Bohojonov defeated Filipino Lofranco Reynond

In the (49 kg) Weight Category:
6. Uzbek Lazizbek Tulkonov defeated Indian Vishwakarma Vinay

In the (52 kg) Weight Category:
7. Uzbek Dalerjon Bozorov defeated Kyrgyz Amangeldi Maksutov

In the (55 kg) Weight Category:
8. Uzbek Jakhongir Narziev defeated Indian Malik Preet

In the (58 kg) Weight Category:
9. Indian Yashwardhan Singh defeated Uzbek Abdulaziz Abdurakhmonov

In the (61 kg) Weight Category:
10. Uzbek Mirzob Nekboev defeated Kazakh Viktor Litvinov

In the (64 kg) Weight Category:
11. Uzbek Shavkatjon Boltayer defeated Indian Saini Gaurav

In the (67 kg) Weight Category:
12. Kazakh Batyrkhan Seilenov defeated Uzbek Shakhboz Khamidullaev

In the (70 kg) Weight Category:
13. Indian Joon Bharat defeated Kyrgyz Atai Asanbekov

In the (+70 kg) Weight Category:
Kazakh Yerdos Sharipbek defeated Indian Randeep



S Arabia to host world heavyweight title rematch

LONDON: Saudi Arabia will host the world heavyweight title rematch between Anthony Joshua and champion Andy Ruiz Jr in December, a controversial choice which immediately sparked accusations of the Gulf kingdom attempting to "sportswash" its tarnished human rights image.

The high-profile December 7 duel, dubbed 'Clash on the Dunes', will see Britain's Joshua trying to win back the IBF, WBA and WBO titles he sensationally lost to American fighter Ruiz in New York in June.

The bout will take place in Diriyah, which incorporates the UNESCO World Heritage site of Al-Turaif, on the outskirts of Riyadh — a dramatic contrast to the iconic Madison Square Garden which hosted the first fight.

Promoters Matchroom Boxing said the fight details will be officially revealed at a news conference in London tomorrow.

The rematch had been widely touted but Cardiff's Principality Stadium was tipped as favourite to stage the event.

In February this year, the Saudis hosted a first European Tour golf event which was won by former world number one Dustin Johnson while the world's most gruelling motor sports race, the Dakar Rally, will be raced in the country in 2020.

In July, British boxer Amir Khan won the WBC international welterweight title with a fourth-round stoppage of Australian Billy Dib in Jeddah.

Khan was reportedly paid £7 million to headline the event. The former unified world welterweight champion is a Muslim and has embarked on pilgrimages to Saudi Arabia on a number of occasions, offering him his own perspective on the country.

"When I was there last, it had all changed. I started seeing women not wearing head scarves. Women were out driving," Khan said. "They had a huge concert where everyone was dancing and enjoying themselves. I'd never seen that side of Saudi Arabia before. "Maybe now they are changing to make it that new place where people can enjoy themselves and it's fair for women. I think they're trying to change now." — AFP

Marquez quickest again in Austrian MotoGP practice

SPIELBERG: Marc Marquez continued his domination of practice for the Austrian MotoGP with the quickest time in third session yesterday morning. The Spaniard finished the session with a best time of just over 1 minute 23 seconds, 0.340sec ahead of Yamaha's Maverick Vinales, and the signs are encouraging that the world champion can prevent Ducati winning the race for a fourth consecutive time on his Honda.

The Ducati, ridden by Marquez's closest challenger, Andrea Dovizioso, was third quickest. The

other two Ducatis ridden by Danilo Petrucci and Jack Miller came in fourth and seventh respectively. The fourth and final practice session is followed Saturday by qualifying from 1210 GMT for Sunday's race, the 11th leg of the 19-race season with Marquez enjoying a 63-point lead over Dovizioso as he hunts down his sixth MotoGP title. He is seeking his 51st career race win on Sunday but none of those have come in Austria.

Austrian third practice session:

1. Marc Marquez (ESP/Honda): 1:23.251, 2. Maverick Vinales (ESP/Yamaha) at 0.340, 3. Andrea Dovizioso (ITA/Ducati) 0.342, 4. Danilo Petrucci (ITA/Ducati) 0.342, 5. Fabio Quartararo (FRA/Yamaha-SRT) 0.386, 6. Valentino Rossi (ITA/Yamaha) 0.451, 7. Jack Miller (AUS/Ducati) 0.498, 8. Takaaki Nakagami (Honda-LCR) 0.513, 9. Alex Rins (ESP/Yamaha) 0.723, 10. Pol Espargaro (ESP/KTM) 0.765. — AFP

Sports

Nadal rallies to beat Fabio Fognini in Montreal Masters

Serena powers past number one-bound Osaka, Halep retires hurt

MONTREAL: Rafael Nadal needed a set to get adjusted before unloading on Fabio Fognini for a 2-6, 6-1, 6-2 victory and a place in the ATP Montreal Masters semi-finals.

Nadal, who won his fourth title in Canada a year ago, needed almost two hours on Friday to overcome the Italian veteran who shocked him on clay at Monte Carlo in April.

"It was an up-and-down match, but a positive match for me because I played better and better as it went on," Nadal said.

"I lost the first set feeling that I was not playing badly. Things were just going too fast.

"Things happen quickly here because the court is fast. Sometimes in the first set, the player who is taking advantage has the adrenaline very high.

"It's difficult to quickly stop that momentum."

World number two Nadal was the only major seed to survive a quarter-final cull after defeats for Dominic Thiem and Alexander Zverev.

Steady rain began as Monfils and Bautista took the court and they were unable to complete a game before play was

suspended for the night.

Austrian second seed Thiem, coming off an emotional home victory in Kitzbuehel last week, hit the wall in a 6-3, 6-1 thrashing at the hands of Russia's eighth-seeded Daniil Medvedev.

Number three Zverev was unable to make an impression on Russian sixth seed Karen Khachanov, losing 6-3, 6-3 in 74 minutes.

Zverev suffered the first blemish on what had been a perfect 7-0 record in Montreal after winning the 2017 edition in his maiden visit to the city, which alternates with Toronto as host venue each year.

Meanwhile, Serena Williams won the rematch Friday, dominating Naomi Osaka 6-3, 6-4 to ensure the Japanese star won't leave Toronto with a title to go with her number one world ranking. Williams fired 12 aces and didn't face a break point as she beat Osaka for the first time in three meetings-avenging her shock loss in last year's controversial US Open final in which the American star was docked a point and a game after losing her temper when warned about coaching.

In the semi-finals Williams will face Czech qualifier Marie Bouzkova, who advanced when Wimbledon champion

Simona Halep retired with Achilles tendon trouble after dropping their first set 6-4.

"I've always wanted to play Serena," said Bouzkova, a 21-year-old ranked 91st in the world. "It's always my dream to play against her." Bouzkova notched her third straight win over a Grand Slam champion, having beaten former US Open winner Sloane Stephens and former French Open champ Jelena Ostapenko.

But Halep marked her first win over a top-five player. The Romanian, who roared back from 0-4 down to level the set at 4-4 only to lose the last two games, said she had been bothered by her Achilles tendon from the start of the tournament.

"And today I felt it more, so that's why I decided to retire," said Halep, no doubt exercising extra caution with the final Grand Slam of the year due to start on August 26.

Despite the defeat, Osaka is assured of a return to world number one next week after the second-round exit of top-ranked Australian Ashleigh Barty and a quarter-final defeat for third-ranked Czech Karolina Pliskova.

Canadian teen Bianca Andreescu ousted Pliskova 6-0, 2-6, 6-4 after one hour and 49 minutes to doom the Czech's bid



TORONTO: Serena Williams of the United States hits a shot against Naomi Osaka of Japan during a quarterfinal match on Day 7 of the Rogers Cup at Aviva Centre in Toronto, Canada. —AFP

to regain the top spot for the first time since 2017.

Andreescu advanced to a semi-final clash with American Sofia Kenin, who defeated Ukraine sixth seed Elina Svitolina 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. —AFP

Alisson injury mars Liverpool's strong start

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool could be without inspirational goalkeeper Alisson Becker for a number of weeks after the Brazilian suffered a calf injury in Friday's 4-1 thrashing of Norwich to kick-off the Premier League season in style.

The European champions are aiming to end a 30-year wait to win the Premier League after missing out by only one point to Manchester City last season and laid down an early marker in the title race by racing into a 4-0 lead before half-time.

Norwich captain Grant Hanley's hapless own goal just seven minutes in set the tone for what could be a long season for the Canaries before Mohamed Salah, Virgil van Dijk and Divock Origi netted as Liverpool shot out of the blocks.

However, the Reds' joy was curtailed when Alisson pulled up after kicking the ball clear from a routine goal kick and needed support to limp off the field. "Nothing bad to say about the game apart from Ali's injury," said Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp, who confirmed his number one will miss Wednesday's UEFA Super Cup clash with Chelsea in Istanbul.

"We have to see how serious it is and deal with it." Alisson kept 20 clean sheets in his first Premier League season and was also instrumental in Liverpool's Champions League triumph. Spanish goalkeeper Adrian only joined Liverpool this week on a free transfer after Simon Mignolet departed to join Club Brugge. But the former West Ham stopper could now have a huge role to play in the coming weeks to ensure Klopp's men cede no early ground in the title race to City with tricky matches against Southampton and Arsenal to come.

Friday's game was already won before Alisson departed as from Origi's low cross, Hanley's wild hack at a clearance flashed beyond Tim Krul in the Norwich goal. A Golden Boot winner in each of the past two seasons, Salah then opened his account for the season with a calm finish from Roberto Firmino's pass on 19 minutes.



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Egyptian midfielder Mohamed Salah (L) vies with Norwich City's German midfielder Moritz Leitner during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Norwich City at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England. —AFP

Despite a comfortable lead, Klopp was soon ranting at his players for letting their guard down as only a brilliant save from Alisson prevented Marco Stiepermann from halving Norwich's deficit. Seconds later and it was 3-0 as Norwich's dreadful defending was exposed again to leave Van Dijk free to head home from a Salah corner.

Origi was also left carelessly unmarked to make it 4-0 with a simple header from Trent Alexander-Arnold's cross. Liverpool could have piled on more pain for the visitors at the start of the second half as Jordan Henderson hit the bar, Firmino fluffed a glorious chance at the back post and Salah curled just wide.

However, it was promoted Norwich's adventure that

was rewarded as moments after Moritz Leitner crashed a shot against the bar, Teemu Pukki pounced to drill low past Adrian. "We wanted to start with some points but unbelievably happy with the character of my team," said Norwich manager Daniel Farke, who insisted he will not curb his side's attacking intent despite the step up in quality.

"We have to stick to our beliefs. Of course we have to defend a bit more solid but my injured players are coming back and this was a lesson for some of my players because small details can make a big difference.

"This squad is made for playing this football. We have to stick to our principles, if we park the bus we have no chance in this league." —AFP

Lyon beat Monaco in Ligue 1 opener as Fabregas sees red

MONACO: Lyon hammered Monaco 3-0 on Friday in the first game of the Ligue 1 season as former Brazil defender Sylvinho started his coaching reign in perfect style and Cesc Fabregas was shown a red card.

Moussa Dembele and Memphis Depay scored either side of Fabregas' dismissal in the first half. Midfielder Lucas Tousart added a third with 10 minutes remaining against an inexperienced home side who were without former captain Radamel Falcao who is expected to leave the Principality before the end of the transfer window on September 2.

"I said in the week all of three or four opening games will be difficult and Monaco were a difficult opposition. I'm happy with the result," Lyon boss Sylvinho told French broadcasters Canal+.

"I hoped my team would play like this, there's always improvements to be made but I am happy," the former Champions League winner added. His side showed minimal rustiness despite seeing influential trio in former skipper Nabil Fekir, left-back Ferland Mendy and midfielder Tanguy Ndombele leave during the off-season.

They claimed an early lead with six minutes on the clock with a powerful Dembele header. The former Celtic forward beat defenders Kamil Glik and Brazilian Jemerson in the air and his effort fizzed past Monaco's Benjamin Lecomte, making his debut for the club.

The home side's best chance of the first half fell to 22-year-old Benjamin Henrichs quarter of an hour later. He received the ball from winger Gelson Martins, but his low shot failed to trouble Lyon goalkeeper Anthony Lopes.



MONACO: Lyon's French midfielder Lucas Tousart (L) celebrates after scoring the 0-3 goal during the French L1 football match between AS Monaco (ASM) and Olympique Lyonnais (OL) at the Stade Louis II stadium in Monaco. —AFP

Things turned from bad to worse for the hosts when experienced playmaker Fabregas was shown a red card for stamping on the back of Leo Dubois' leg on the half hour mark. In his attempts to chase Dubois down, who was shielding a loose cross out for a goal kick, the Spain midfielder took a stood heavily onto the right-back's calf.

Referee Ruddy Buquet referred the incident to VAR who chose to send Fabregas for an early show-er. Sylvinho's outfit doubled their advantage with

nine minutes of the first 45 to play. Netherlands attacker Depay lined up from outside the box catching Monaco's Lecomte off-guard to nutmeg him for a 2-0 lead.

The referee was the subject of whistles as the teams walked off at the break with the unhappy Stade Louis II crowd voicing their discontent at Fabregas' dismissal. Despite being a man down, Leonardo Jardim's side looked the most likely to score early into the second-half. —AFP

Neymar out of PSG opener, exit talks 'more advanced than before': Club

SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE: Paris Saint-Germain revealed yesterday that Neymar transfer talks are "more advanced than before" after the Brazilian was dropped for the French champions' opening Ligue 1 match.

Sporting director Leonardo confirmed to reporters that the Brazilian was near the exit door but that PSG were "not yet ready to give their approval (to the transfer)" ahead of Sunday's match at the Parc des Princes.

Real Madrid or a return to Barcelona are the most likely destinations for the world's most expensive footballer, with Spanish media on Friday saying that Zinedine Zidane's side will battle Barca for the 27-year-old's signature.

Sports newspaper AS claimed Neymar has been offered to Madrid by PSG, who are open to selling if they can either recoup the 222 million euros (\$249 million) they spent on him in 2017 or receive half that amount with players included in the deal.

Barcelona-based Mundo Deportivo says that he would prefer a move back to Catalonia to play alongside former teammates Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez. Neymar started the new season by angering the Qatari-backed club when he turned up one week late for training.

The player's camp maintained he had a prior agreement to stay away but that didn't wash with his employers who threatened to take "appropriate action". Off the pitch, Neymar was informed by a Brazilian judge on Friday that the rape case which has been hanging over the footballer for months had been dismissed due to insufficient evidence.

Neymar had vehemently denied allegations he raped a Brazilian woman in a Paris hotel in May. The forward, whose time in France has been marked by injuries and controversies, has made a series of remarks that strained his relationship further with the club and sparked outrage on social media.

Asked by an online sports channel about his best memory in football, he cited Barcelona's incredible 2017 Champions League victory over PSG when he was part of the team that overturned a 4-0 first-leg deficit by winning 6-1 in the second leg of their last-16 tie. —AFP

Live		Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE			
Newcastle United FC v Arsenal FC	16:00	beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Leicester City v Wolverhampton Wanderers FC	16:00	beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Manchester United v Chelsea FC	18:30	beIN SPORTS HD 2	
FRENCH LEAGUE			
LOSC Lille v FC Nantes	16:00	beIN SPORTS HD 6	
RC Strasbourg v FC Metz	18:00	beIN SPORTS HD 6	
Paris Saint-Germain v Nimes Olympique	2:00	beIN SPORTS HD 6	

25 Uzbekistan bags 10 gold, India and Kazakhstan win two gold medals



26 Conforto leads Mets to comeback win over Washington Nationals



27 Nadal rallies to beat Fabio Fognini in Montreal Masters



LONDON: Manchester City's Ukrainian midfielder Oleksandr Zinchenko (CR) tackles West Ham United's Argentinian midfielder Manuel Lanzini (CL) during the English Premier League football match between West Ham United and Manchester City at The London Stadium, in east London yesterday. — AFP

Sterling fires City to West Ham rout

City denied as first Premier League goal ruled out by VAR

LONDON: Manchester City made a flying start to their Premier League title defence as Raheem Sterling's hat-trick inspired a 5-0 demolition of West Ham yesterday. Pep Guardiola's side are bidding to become just the second club in the Premier League era to win three successive titles.

And after Liverpool laid down an early marker with a 4-1 win against Norwich in the season's opening game on Friday, the champions responded with a swaggering display of their own at the London Stadium.

Brazil forward Gabriel Jesus opened the scoring to repay Guardiola's faith after the City manager picked him instead of the club's record goalscorer Sergio Aguero. Then Sterling took over, replicating his dynamic form of last season with a two-classy finishes.

Substitute Aguero bagged City's fourth with a penalty after his first effort from the spot was saved, only for VAR to call for a retake after Lukasz Fabianski came off his line too soon. Sterling wrapped

up his treble in the final moments as City showed they have no intention of conceding any early ground to European champions Liverpool, who finished just one point behind them last term.

Guardiola had admitted before kick-off that City might have to do even better than last season to fend off Liverpool. This was the perfect start as City made it nine successive opening-day wins. City had won all four of their previous visits to the London Stadium by an aggregate score of 17-1, netting at least four goals in each match, and once again they ran riot at West Ham's expense.

Guardiola handed a first Premier League start to club-record signing Rodri and the Spain midfielder showed signs of nerves when he allowed Manuel Lanzini to rob him in his own penalty area. But it was a rare stumble from City's impressive new boy and the champions were soon into their stride.

Riyad Mahrez, surprisingly selected ahead of Bernardo Silva, produced City's first menacing

moment when the Algeria winger cut in from the right flank for a long-range strike that Fabianski pushed away.

When City's opening goal came in the 25th minute, it was the kind of incisive raid that has left so many opponents helpless over the last two years.

Mahrez slipped a perfectly-weighted pass to Kyle Walker and the right-back accelerated away from Aaron Cresswell. Walker whipped over a cross that deflected off West Ham defender Issa Diop into the path of Jesus and he instinctively turned the ball past Fabianski from close range.

Jesus should have doubled City's lead but he shot straight at Fabianski on the stroke of half-time. There was no need for City to rue that miss as they struck six minutes after the interval. Kevin De Bruyne was the catalyst, the Belgian midfielder showing what City missed during his long injury lay-offs last season as he left several West Ham players trailing in his wake before making a precise pass that set up Sterling's

clinical finish.

City were denied a third goal when Jesus's tap-in from Sterling's cross became the first goal to be disallowed by VAR in the Premier League for an extremely marginal offside against the England winger.

A brilliant double save from Ederson denied Javier Hernandez and Manuel Lanzini before Sterling put the result beyond doubt in the 75th minute. Mahrez clipped a pass to Sterling and he turned to loft a delicate chip over Fabianski, with City this time able to celebrate after another VAR review for offside.

VAR is being used in the Premier League for the first time this season and its constant interruptions aided City in the 86th minute. Mahrez won a penalty after being fouled by Diop, but Aguero's initial shot was saved by Fabianski before VAR called for a retake that the Argentine stroked home. Sterling sealed City's five-star display in stoppage-time with a composed finish from Mahrez's pass. — AFP

Barnes strikes twice as Clarets sink Saints

LONDON: Ashley Barnes struck twice as Burnley beat Southampton 3-0 in a meeting of two of last season's Premier League strugglers at a wet and windswept Turf Moor yesterday. New Southampton striker Che Adams went close early, sliding in at the back post to meet a dangerous cross from Yan Valery but the 15 million pound (\$18.05 million) signing from Birmingham City couldn't find the target.

Burnley, who left their own close season signing Jay Rodriguez on the bench against his former club, had the ball in the net through Chris Wood in the 16th minute but provider Barnes was flagged offside and a Video Assistant Referee review backed the decision.

It was a scrappy affair in wild winds and driving rain but the breakthrough came in the 63rd minute when Saints defender Jannik Vestergaard misjudged a hopeful long ball forward from Erik Pieters and

Barnes latched on to it and fired home.

The pair combined again for the Clarets' second, seven minutes later with Dutch debutant Pieter's cross from deep met superbly on the volley by Barnes. Icelandic winger Johann Berg Gudmundsson made it 3-0 in the 75th, winning a challenge with Ryan Bertrand and bursting goal ward before beating goalkeeper Angus Gunn with a precise finish.

Everton missed a string of chances to start their Premier League campaign on a winning note after they were held 0-0 at Crystal Palace yesterday.

The visitors dominated possession and were denied by some desperate Palace defending, with goalkeeper Vicente Guaita pulling off a series of good saves in the first half. Everton missed their best opportunity in the 14th minute, when Richarlison's shot was cleared off the line by the home side's towering striker Christian Benteke.

Palace sprung to life after the break and came close twice inside a minute when Everton keeper Jordan Pickford kept out a Jordan Ayew sitter and then produced a fine reflex save with his foot to deny Max Meyer. Palace lacked bite up front after manager Roy Hodgson left want-away forward Wilfried Zaha, who was denied a move

to Everton during the summer transfer window, on the bench.

Zaha made little impact after coming on as a second-half substitute and Richarlison came close for the visitors again before they had Morgan Schneiderlin sent off in the 76th minute for a reckless tackle on Luka Milivojevic.

Talismanic Sheffield United striker Billy Sharp came off the bench to give his side a share of the spoils in their first Premier League games since 2007 as they earned a 1-1 draw at Bournemouth yesterday.

With the visitors showing no sign of nerves despite their lack of Premier League experience, the game was played at a blistering pace, with David McGoldrick fluffing a chance to put Sheffield United ahead in the opening minute.

After finishing 14th last season, Bournemouth made their Premier League experience tell with a well-worked free kick in the second half, defender Chris Mepham firing home as the Blades defence failed to clear.

With eight minutes left to play coach Chris Wilder summoned Sharp from the bench and the striker, who was United's top scorer in the Championship last season with 23 goals, stabbed home the equaliser in the 88th minute. — Reuters



BURNLEY: Burnley's English midfielder Ashley Westwood (CL) and Burnley's English striker Ashley Barnes (CR) go for an overhead effort but fail to connect during the English Premier League football match between Burnley and Southampton at Turf Moor in Burnley, yesterday. — AFP