

Friday Times

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Local

Violence against women



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Despite media campaigns, whether local or international, the issue of violence against women, especially domestic violence by husbands or family members, is still endless and unresolved. I still receive emails from women, especially expatriates, who were subjected to physical violence at the hands of their expatriate husbands, but they do not know what to do.

This is a difficult situation, because speaking openly and publicly is not easy for them. They feel shamed and guilty. I think societies are not supportive of women in times of crisis, as she might be blamed or punished for raising her voice against being abused.

I received an email recently from an expat woman, who said she is a victim of violence by her expat husband. I quote her words: "Where to report if my husband abuses me physically and mentally? I am suffering from mental abuse and now I am under medication."

I think it is very difficult for any woman to come from a distant country to live with her husband, possibly as a newly-married couple leaving behind family and friends, and then get beaten and insulted by the man she trusted. Such women often keep silent because they are afraid they will suffer more harm by the same person, while some seek divorce or go back to their countries when the opportunity arises. In all cases, the woman loses her health, money and maybe her life.

It is known that many countries in the Arab world have signed agreements to support and protect women, but this does not mean that the subject of violence has ended forever, because I believe violence is linked to the culture and social upbringing of a person that he as a male is the strongest and women are secondary. Some men reject violence against women, but some consider it as normal behavior.

In 2018, Dr Fatima Al-Salem, a faculty member at the media department at Kuwait University, presented a shocking study on the prevalence of violence against women in Kuwait. Salem reported information on the high incidence of violence here.

The most prevalent forms of violence in Kuwaiti society are physical abuse, psychological violence and verbal abuse. I believe we need more of such transparent and bold studies. This is exactly what we need to end the issue of violence.

Personally, I believe agreements cannot end the issue of violence unless society plays an active role in raising awareness and spreading a culture that rejects such ill behaviors. Women may bear insults and curses once or twice, but if this situation continues, she may suffer from disorders and psychological problems, or the beating may lead to permanent disability. The situation becomes worse after divorce or the imprisonment of the husband, and when little kids are involved. This affects the society and not just the woman.

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Panoramic view of Salmiya. — Photo by Abdulaziz Ali/KUNA

Willow trees in Kuwait

By Amna Al-Shammari

Willow trees were planted by Kuwait's society in their homes, public gardens and areas for agriculture in government departments, institutions and roadsides, in which its shade protects from the summer heat.

This ancient historical tree has various shapes and sizes in the world, including the giant lowgrowing creeping shrubs. Willow leaves are green, characterized by a spear shape that bloom during the spring. Recent research indicates that the willow tree is not just picturesque but the leaves carry great benefits for the body, as the leaves and bark contain an active ingredient called Salicin, which helps to relieve lower back pain, while the white bark has a long-term effect on reducing the severity of headaches and migraines.

White willow bark also enhances the activity of complementary ingredients that help in weight loss, which is the reason why many weight loss supplements are mixed with white willow extracts, as well as its leaves contain an anti-inflam-

matory substance that prevents heart attacks.

Dr. Saud Al-Asfour, Professor of History at Kuwait University, said yesterday that the willow tree represents spectacular memories, especially for the previous generation in its foliage and greenery during the summer and winter.

Willows are a fast-growing perennial tree, intertwined with tangled branches and abundant thorns, needless of ample water after growing its roots from the ground, he added. Willows bloom in the spring and consisted of birds, especially small well-known ones that do not leave it at all such as Al-Zarzour and other migratory birds, Al-Asfour mentioned.

He pointed out that the stems, trunks, leaves and bark were used for heating in some wood industries and medical drugs, since aspirin is extracted from the leaves, used as a pain reliever and remedy for headaches, head pain and body pain, treating fever, cancer colon, joint pain, sciatica and hemorrhage. Elders, especially youngsters, avoided climbing the willow tree because of the many thorns and twigs, he said. — Kuna



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CLEANING UP KUWAIT ONE EVENT AT A TIME



By Faten Omar

Putting an environmental spin on viral social media trends is the best use of social media in a good way. The hashtag #Trashtag challenge invites people to post before and after pictures of areas cleared of waste. Plastic and litter are some of the biggest problems faced by the environment. #Trashtag encourages people in Kuwait to clean up, and volunteers have made beaches and parks trash-free while also raising awareness of the quantity of plastic litter produced.

Kuwait Times spoke with Carina Maceira, a 20-year-old American cofounder of Trashtag Kuwait, a non-profit organization dedicated to fighting the negative environmental impacts of marine litter and waste pollution in Kuwait. Some excerpts:

Kuwait Times: Tell us more about yourself.

Carina Maceira: I've been a volunteer and organizer at Trashtag Kuwait since it was initiated by Yousef Al-Shatti, cofounder of Trashtag Kuwait, in April 2019.

KT: What is Trashtag?

Maceira: Trashtag was initially a social media challenge targeted towards helping the environment. It was brought to Kuwait by Reddit user Yousef Al-Shatti, who organized the first cleanup in April at Sulaibikhat beach. Since our first cleanup, Trashtag has morphed into more than a challenge and into a dedicated group of volunteers who started a nonprofit grassroots organization focused

on the rehabilitation of the environment, raising awareness and finding alternative ways to fight pollution and marine litter.

KT: How does the Trashtag challenge work?

Maceira: Since starting out, we've challenged our more than 100 volunteers and more than 1,000 followers to not only counteract plastic pollution by attending our weekly cleanups, but by also doing their part whenever they find themselves surrounded by trash outdoors, be it in parks, beaches, boardwalks, marinas, etc. So far, we've had a few people submit their photos, letting us know how much trash they've gathered.

As part of our campaign, we also educate on how to reduce plastic waste and avidly encourage our followers to share all the ways they reject plastic in their day-to-day lives, whether plastic bags at the supermarket, plastic straws in restaurants or plastic water bottles at gyms. People are stepping up and accepting that there are many ways to tackle the issue of plastic.

KT: How to encourage people to be part of this viral social media challenge?

Maceira: While our events are weekly and always open to the public, we try to focus as much as we can on awareness, so people can understand why the challenge is so important, as well as the plastic-free July challenge (a challenge dedicated to refusing the use of plastic for a whole month and finding alternatives). We have collaborated with other eco-friendly groups, community service





#trashtagkuwait leverages social media for environmental activism

organizations, art groups and musicians as well to help spread the message and reach different communities to relay the importance of tackling waste management and litter in Kuwait.

KT: What are the places you have cleaned so far?

Maceira: So far, Trashtag Kuwait has cleaned several beaches along the coast, including Sulaibikhat beach, Mangaf beach, Mahboula beach, Salmiya beach, Shuwaikh Free Zone beach, Sabah Hospital area beach, Khairan, Abu Hassaniya beach, Marina beach, Blajat beach and a few parks as well. We've had to hit some of these locations a few times to tackle all the accumulated waste. So far we've collected more than 400 bags of waste and recyclable material, several tyres, carpets and other debris.

KT: How many people have participated in the cleanup campaign?

Maceira: The group was founded towards the end of April, where we had around a dozen members for the first cleanup. Since then we've become a group of 125 members and more are joining each weekend after our events.

KT: How have people reacted to Trashtag?

Maceira: I've noticed that whenever people come across our work and are unfamiliar with the challenge, they say Trashtag rather hesitantly and

linger over the word 'trash'. I think they expect us to contradict them with a nicer and more prestigious label, but at the end of the day, we believe by staying as Trashtag, we are tackling the issue in Kuwait head on. It is a taboo, and many people are perplexed by the work we're doing, but many people are also very engaged and dedicated to contributing to the mission.

We believe serious change must be effected on a national and governmental level to counteract the plastic choking Kuwait's oceans and polluting our environment. While receiving support from many groups and individuals has been essential, we will only accomplish saving the environment from plastic with the cooperation and support of government officials who take the conversation seriously and lead Kuwait into a greener, cleaner and safer future.

Want to help out?

Join @trashtagkuwait's clean up meet ups at various local parks and beaches. This Saturday, August 17 at 5:30pm in Salmiya park. Follow on Instagram for more info.



Local

App helps bus riders in Kuwait

By Faten Omar

Riding a bus in Kuwait can be exhausting - waiting under the sun for ages wondering when the bus will arrive or what is the number of the bus that will go to your destination! Taking the wrong bus will make you spend hours and more money to reach the place you want to go. Since my car was totaled in an accident, I began to use taxis, but they cost me a lot of money. I found that some destinations can be reached by bus, so I started to take the bus to work, malls and other places.

Since I like to travel, I use public transportation a lot, using Google Maps to get the bus number and timings. Unfortunately, it is not that easy in Kuwait because there is no bus timetable, no clear stops, and no one to help - even the bus driver does not know the destinations of other buses!

But people of Kuwait will not struggle anymore, because Citybus has created an application on iOS and Android to help people learn about its bus routes, time of arrival and nearest bus station. You can even type where you want to go and it will show you the nearest stop, which bus to take and how long your trip will be.

This seemed too good to be true - since Kuwait is not known for this kind of technology or bus system - so I tried it. Waiting for the bus, the app showed the bus will reach my stop after seven minutes. After six minutes, the bus arrived. The app told me I will reach my destination in 37 minutes - once again it was right. The app is super useful, and although it sometimes freezes and does not show how to reach faraway destinations, it is a great step for Kuwait. Hopefully, one day such apps will help tourists reach places of interest.



Zain organizes social visit to Palliative Care Center

Company's team shared joys of Eid with patients



Zain and Palliative Care Center teams during the visit.

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, organized a social visit to the Palliative Care Center in Al Sabah Medical Area. The company's team shared the joys of Eid Al-Adha with patients and their families in the center's various wings by distributing Eid gifts. Zain organizes visits to hospitals several times a year as part of its corporate sustainability and social responsibility strategy. Such visits aim at sharing the joys of various occasions, such as national celebrations, religious holidays, and the holy month

of Ramadan with patients, their families, and the medical staff who take care of them in Kuwait's biggest hospitals.

Zain's team visited a number of wings at the Palliative Care Center, located in Al Sabah Medical Area. The team shared the joys and spiritual atmosphere of Eid Al Adha with the patients and their families by distributing Eid gifts in a beautiful family atmosphere, which reflected the great values of the Islamic religion as well as the traditions of the Kuwaiti community.

Every year, Zain holds several visits to many of Kuwait's biggest and most prominent hospitals to share the joys of various occasions with children and adult patients alike, including Zain Hospital, Amiri Hospital, Ibn Sina Hospital, Razi Hospital, and more. Zain affirmed that its corporate sustainability and social responsibility strategy includes an extensive array of initiatives and programs that focus on helping less fortunate people as well as celebrating the true spirit of Islamic values and Kuwaiti traditions.

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Local



Indian Ambassador Jeeva Sagar with other embassy officials during the India Independence Day celebrations. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Indian Embassy celebrates 73rd Independence Day

By Sajeev K Peter

Hot and humid weather did little to dampen the enthusiasm of thousands of Indians who gathered yesterday at the Indian Embassy to celebrate India's 73rd Independence Day. The celebrations got off to a solemn start with Indian Ambassador K Jeeva Sagar garlanding the statue of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation. The ambassador then hoisted the national flag at 8 am in the presence of embassy officials and community members, followed by the singing of the national anthem. He also read out Indian President Ram Nath Kovind's address to the nation and briefly addressed the gathering.

The president in his address commended the successful general elections held recently in India, the largest democratic exer-

cise in the world, and called upon the people to stand by the government in order to take advantage of various reforms and development efforts being undertaken by the government.

In his address, the ambassador called upon the Indian diaspora in Kuwait to continue to keep up its good work as a law-abiding community and maintain the trust and confidence of the leadership, the government and the people of the friendly country of Kuwait.

The large crowd during the celebration - numbering around 6,000 people - represented a cross-section of the largest expatriate community in Kuwait, reflecting India's ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity. Cultural programs were held to mark the occasion that included a performance by the Burhani Guards Band and patriotic songs by various Indian cultural associations.



The ambassador addresses the gathering.



The ambassador garlands the statue of Mahatma Gandhi.



The ambassador greets Kuwaiti singer Mubarak Al-Rashid.



The ambassador interacts with the crowd.



Local

Lawmaker warns of 'too large' expat communities

Fadhil: Majority of jobs occupied by expatriates not attractive to citizens

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Ahmad Al-Fadhil yesterday warned against "too large" expatriate communities, saying they could pose a security threat and also highlighted what he called low qualifications of most expatriates in the country. The lawmaker said he has no problem with expatriates coming and working in Kuwait, but there is a certain risk in the large numbers of some communities, adding that Indians, Egyptians, Bangladeshis and Syrians form more than half of the 3.4 million foreigners living in Kuwait.

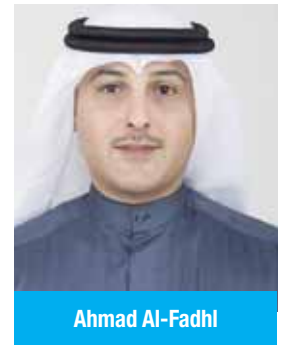
Fadhil said based on latest available figures, Kuwaitis

number just 1.42 million, or about 30 percent of the population, while expats form the remaining 70 percent. He said that the Indian community totals some 900,000, Egyptians 600,000, Bangladeshis around 200,000 and Syrians some 145,000, and together they constitute more than 50 percent of all expatriates, who hail from 120 nationalities. He said the rapid growth in the numbers of individual communities must be checked, because they pose a security danger to the country.

Fadhil also said that Kuwait is not attracting highly-qualified expatriates because these people prefer to go to United Arab Emirates or Qatar or Saudi Arabia, and as a result, the quality of expats in the country is not

competitive. The lawmaker however ruled out claims that expatriates compete against citizens for jobs, saying that a majority of jobs occupied by expatriates are not attractive to citizens.

He said some 120,000 expats work in government jobs and these jobs fail to lure Kuwaitis, and accordingly expatriates in general do not take up jobs that should go to Kuwaitis. He said the government should take measures to bring down the numbers of large communities and also prevent the concentration of large numbers of foreigners in residential areas. He praised the government for reducing the number of expats in Khaitan by some 70 percent over the past four months.



Ahmad Al-Fadhil

MoI undersecretary tours Jaber Causeway

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Acting Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt Gen Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah yesterday toured Jaber Causeway along with other senior officials. Sheikh Faisal checked the mechanism of fixed and mobile patrols and traffic cameras - 576 cameras to monitor traffic flow, 11 speed cameras and 19 mobile cameras.

KU won't lower GPA cutoff

Kuwait University rejected requests to lower the GPA required for admittance in its colleges during the second term and the next few years before it moves to its new campus in Shadadiya, which will result in extra capacity

and an increase in halls, which was the reason it gave for the inability to increase the number of admitted students to more than 7,000 students per year. Sources said the university council will not accept demands by MPs to reduce the GPA for admittance to allow more students to study at KU, because it is a matter of educational quality, apart from only accepting those who deserve admission.

Blasphemous video

The relations and security information department at the interior ministry said authorities took all legal measures over a video clip in which a woman insulted God. It said the woman was identified and will be arrested for questioning.



KUWAIT: Acting Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt Gen Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah tours the Jaber Causeway operations room.

Digital services ease crush at Municipality

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister and State Minister for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shula said his visit to the Ahmadi municipal branch is part of his visits to municipalities in various governorates in order to see firsthand online transactions and services provided, as well as follow work being done for Sabah Al-Ahmad residents following complaints by some of them. He said the most notable drawbacks he witnessed are concentrated in the technical files of real estate, which will be avoided in a new project related to online licensing.

About the new cleaning contracts, Shula said the Municipality is ready and committees were formed to receive the new cleaning companies and make sure



KUWAIT: Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister and State Minister for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shula visits the Ahmadi municipal branch yesterday.

about their readiness, as the contracts on the field will start on Oct 10. About "immoral" ads on streets, he said there was a misunderstanding as some words may be interpreted differently. Shula said he issued a circular to emphasize advertising rules and the national unity law.

Meanwhile, Municipality Director General Ahmad Al-Manfouhi said after the launch of the first stage of the electronic

system that crowds frequenting the municipality have been reduced by 75 percent, and transactions are now processed through electronic and digital systems". He said the Municipality depends on national personnel and Kuwaiti engineers, adding it is committed to the replacement policy, as the Municipality has more than 90 percent Kuwaiti employees. He said the number of Kuwaiti employees is 6,170, with 662 expat workers.

High humidity, slight temperature drop at weekend

KUWAIT: Weather in Kuwait will be high in humidity with a slight temperature drop over the weekend. The weather yesterday was very hot with slight northwesterly winds of between 15 and 50 km per hour with a chance of dust, and high temperatures between 48 and 50 degrees Celsius, Kuwaiti meteorologist Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi told KUNA. He added the sea had waves reaching around three to six feet.

Today's weather will be relatively hot with light wind of between 15 and 38 km per hour and minimum temperature expected between 30 and 32 degrees Celsius, while sea waves will be between two and five feet, he added.

Qarawi pointed out tomorrow's weather will be relatively hot with mild winds, and the lowest temperature might reach 30 to 32 degrees Celsius, while sea waves will be between two to six feet. — KUNA



Pakistan observes 'Black Day' over Kashmir



NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets schoolchildren near the Red Fort to celebrate the country's 73rd Independence Day in New Delhi. — AFP

Modi warns of 'population explosion'

Daredevils, balloons, bangles for Indian Independence Day

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned yesterday of the risks of an "unchecked population explosion" in the nation of 1.3 billion people, the first time he has raised the issue, and called for family planning measures. India is the world's second-most populous country behind China with 1.4 billion, and its population is set to surpass its East Asian neighbor by 2024, according to the United Nations.

"It is time to accept the challenges up front... population explosion. It will bring a lot of challenges for the future generations of this country," Modi said in an Independence Day speech in the capital New Delhi. "We have to think if we can do justice to the aspirations of our children. There is a need to have greater discussion and awareness on population explosion."

The prime minister hailed an "informed section" of Indians who were already having smaller families as "playing a big role in doing good for the country". India introduced forced

sterilizations for men in the 1970s to limit its population growth, but was forced to abandon them due to widespread anger. The government stopped setting official targets for sterilizations in 1996, but rights activists say the practice persists at a local level.

More than 1.9 million people, mostly women, were sterilized across India in 2017 and 2018, according to the government's National Health Mission. Even as India battles stuttering growth and high unemployment, Modi said the "fundamentals of our economy are strong" and he was confident the South Asian giant would become a \$5 trillion economy in five years. "Today, the government in India is stable, policy regime is predictable... the world is eager to explore trade with India. We are working to keep prices under check and increase development," he added.

"It took us 70 years to become a \$2 trillion economy. From 2014 to 2019, we became a \$3

trillion economy. We added \$1 trillion in just five years. Now we are looking forward to making the nation a \$5 trillion economy." He pledged to spend \$1.4 trillion on infrastructure and \$49 billion on a massive project to provide potable water to millions of Indians who lack access. "India doesn't want just incremental progress," the Indian leader added. "A high jump is needed, our thought process has to be expanded. We have to keep in mind global best practices and build good systems."

Daredevils, balloons

India became a sea of saffron, white and green yesterday as the nation of 1.3 billion celebrated Independence Day in characteristically colorful fashion. India became independent from colonial power Britain on August 15, 1947. Towards midnight Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister, had made his famous "tryst with destiny" speech.

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom," Nehru said. August 15 is now a public holiday celebrated every year. This year, as Narendra Modi, the current premier, visited a memorial to independence hero Mahatma Gandhi before hoisting the tricolour in a New Delhi newly drenched by monsoon rains.

He spoke against a backdrop of the imposing Red Fort, commissioned in 1638 by the emperor Shah Jahan and completed a decade later. Flags were also hoisted all over the vast country while in Bangalore, balloons festooned the streets. In Amritsar members of the army's Daredevils Team rode their motorcycles in formation and performed stunts such as jumping through rings of fire. In Secunderabad the Indian Railway Protection Force (RPF) dog squad, in immaculate white gloves, sash and headdress, put their pooches through their paces. — Agencies

International

Thousands of Yemenis rally in support of separatist forces

Aden crisis exposes deep cracks in Saudi-led coalition

ADEN: Tens of thousands of Yemenis rallied in Aden yesterday in support of separatist forces who took over the southern port, the temporary seat of Yemen's Saudi-backed government, in a move that exposed rifts in a Sunni Muslim military coalition. The United Arab Emirates-backed southern separatists seized control of government military bases last weekend, fracturing the Saudi-led alliance battling the Iran-aligned Houthi group and complicating UN peace efforts to end the war. "There is no daylight between the UAE and Saudi Arabia when it comes to Yemen. We are completely aligned," a UAE official said in a statement.

"We remain deeply concerned over the situation in Aden, and the coalition's engagement on-the-ground is evolving with the aim of establishing conditions for stability, security and peace," the official added. Demonstrators demanded recognition of southerners' right to self-rule in Aden, where the government of Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi is based after being ousted from power in the capital Sanaa by the Houthis in late 2014.

Many travelled into Aden from other southern provinces on Wednesday, sleeping overnight in the central parade square. One man held up a battered old identity document from former South Yemen and many waved the South Yemen flag. "We call on the international community and the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE to respect the southern people as a key partner in stemming the Persian tide in the re-

gion and fighting terrorism to achieve...regional and global stability," said a statement to mark the rally.

The separatists are a major component of the Western-backed alliance that intervened in Yemen against the Houthis in March 2015, but have a rival agenda to Hadi's government. The war has revived old strains between north and south Yemen, formerly separate countries that united into a single state in 1990. The rally statement, issued by civil society groups and unions, accused Hadi's government of mismanagement, saying it had become "a guillotine at Yemenis' necks". The Southern Transitional Council (STC) took over Aden after accusing the Islah party allied to Hadi of being complicit in a Houthi missile attack on southern forces earlier this month, a charge the party denies.

Political settlement

A local official told Reuters that separatist forces had moved away from the nearly empty presidential palace and central bank. There was no sign yet they had quit the military camps. Saudi-owned Al Arabiya TV said a Saudi-UAE team arrived in Aden yesterday. An STC spokesman told Reuters on Wednesday they would keep control unless the Islamist Islah, seen by the UAE as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, and northerners were removed from positions of power in the south.

Hadi's government has called the move a "coup". The UAE has echoed a Saudi call for



KHAWR MAKSAR: Yemeni Southern separatists' supporters demonstrate in the Khormaksar district of Yemen's second city of Aden yesterday. — AFP

dialogue to exit the crisis but did not call on southern forces it funds and arms to cede control. The UAE official said Abu Dhabi and Riyadh continue to call on all parties to meet to discuss a political settlement. Riyadh wants to host a summit to resolve matters. Hadi's government said it would not participate until STC forces withdraw and asked Abu Dhabi to stop backing them.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia's main military ally on

the ground for most of the war, has scaled back its presence in Yemen since June amid Western pressure to end the war that has killed tens of thousands and pushed Yemen to the brink of famine. It said it will continue to back some 90,000 Yemeni forces made up of southern separatists and coastal plain fighters. The war is largely seen in the region as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Tehran. The Houthis say their revolution is against a corrupt system. — Reuters

Jihadists down Syria plane, detain pilot

KHAN SHEIKHUN: Jihadists yesterday downed a regime plane flying over northwest Syria as it took part in a deadly campaign that has seen loyalists inch forward against their opponents, a monitor said. An AFP correspondent saw smoke rising in the south of Idlib province above the debris of the plane, with its wing bearing the Syrian flag. After eight years of civil war in Syria, the Idlib region—controlled by Syria's former Al-Qaeda affiliate—is the last major stronghold of opposition to President Bashar Al-Assad's regime.

Regime and Russian air strikes, as well as rocket fire, have pounded Idlib for more than three months, killing hundreds and displacing 400,000 people. Over the past week, pro-Assad fighters have nibbled away at the southern edges of Idlib and on Wednesday they stood just kilometers away from a key jihadist-held town. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Wednesday's downing of the plane was the first such incident since late April.

"The pilot has been taken prisoner" and is in the hands of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) jihadist group running the Idlib region, Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman said. HTS and the correspondent said the Russian-made war plane was downed near the town of Al-Tamanaa. The crash site lies east of the near-deserted town of Khan Sheikhun, which lies on a key highway coveted by the regime. The road in question runs through Idlib, connecting government-held Damascus with the northern city of Aleppo, which was retaken by loyalists from rebels in December 2016.

Rescue worker killed

"Regime forces are now four kilometers from Khan Sheikhun to the west, with nothing between them and it but fields," Abdel Rahman said earlier on Wednesday. To the east, pro-Assad fighters are battling to control a hill just six kilometers from the town, he said. Also on Wednesday, Russian air strikes killed four civilians near the town of Maaret Hurma in the south of Idlib province, according to the Observatory, which relies on sources inside Syria for its information. They included a paramedic, an ambulance driver, and a rescue worker, it said. Four other civilians died in regime strikes on the town of Maaret Al-Numan. Clashes on Wednesday killed 16 regime forces, as well as 24 jihadists and seven allied rebels, the Observatory said.

AFP correspondents have reported seeing dozens of families flee fighting over the past few days, heading north in trucks stacked high with belongings. On the highway not far from the Turkish border on Wednesday, a family was driving north in their pick-up truck. "We left our sheep, we left our homes, and we fled," said Abu Ahmad, 55, behind the wheel on the road near the town of Sarmada. Sitting beside him, his wife Umm Ahmad said they had left farmland full of grapes and figs behind near the town of Maaret al-Noman.

A buffer zone deal brokered by Russia and Turkey last year was supposed to protect the Idlib region's three million inhabitants from an all-out regime offensive, but it was never fully implemented. An alliance led by HTS fighters took full control of the anti-Assad stronghold in May. Regime and Russian air strikes and shelling since late April have killed more than 820 civilians, according to the Observatory. It said more than 1,280 jihadist fighters and 1,140 regime forces have died in the same period. The United Nations says dozens of health centers have been targeted. Humanitarian workers have warned that any fully-blown ground attack on Idlib would cause one of the worst humanitarian disasters of Syria's war. — AFP

Mali children facing a spike in violence

BAMAKO: UN child protection body UNICEF has warned — children in Mali faced rising violence with more than 150 killed in the first half of the year in jihadist and ethnic attacks. "More than 150 children were killed in the first half of 2019 and 75 were injured in violent attacks," a UNICEF statement said.

"Recruitment and use of children in armed groups doubled in comparison to the same period in 2018, and more than 900 schools remain closed due to insecurity," it added. French forces intervened in Mali six years ago to chase out jihadist groups that had taken over much of the country's north, but organizations linked to Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group are still active there. Meanwhile, ethnic conflicts have added to the volatile mix, especially in central Mali.

"We must not accept the suffering of children as the new normal," the UNICEF statement quoted executive director Henrietta Fore as saying. The UN stabilization force in Mali, MINUSMA, published last week the results of an investigation that said 22 children aged between one and 12 years old (11 girls and 11 boys) were among the 35 people killed during an attack on June 9 against the village of Sobane Da, in an ethnic Dogon enclave. Most had been burned to death or suffocated inside homes that had been set ablaze, the report said. "Increasing inter-communal violence and the presence of armed groups has resulted in repeated attacks which have led to the killing and maiming of children, their displacement and separation from their families, and their exposure to sexual violence and psychological trauma," UNICEF said. — AFP

International

Israel weighs barring a visit by US lawmakers Tlaib and Omar

Israeli law allows banning entry of boycott supporters

JERUSALEM: Israel is considering barring a visit by two of its sharpest critics in the US Congress, Democrats Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar, who plan to tour the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, an Israeli official said yesterday. No date has been formally announced for the trip, but sources familiar with the planned visit said it could begin at the weekend.

Tlaib and Omar, the first two Muslim women elected to Congress and a flank of the Democratic party's progressive wing, have voiced support for the pro-Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement. Under Israeli law, backers of the movement can be denied entry to Israel. But Israel's ambassador in the United States, Ron Dermer, said last month they would be let in, out of respect for the US Congress and the US-Israeli relationship.

An Israeli official said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other senior members of his cabinet held consultations on Wednesday on a "final decision" about the visit. Denying entry to elected US officials could further strain relations between Netanyahu, who has highlighted his close ties with US President Donald Trump in his current re-election campaign, and the Democratic leadership in Congress.

"The possibility exists that Israel will not allow the visit in its current form. Professional and legal teams in the government ministries are continuing to examine the material," the official said. Approval of the trip is still pending in the

House of Representatives Ethics Committee, which would examine its itinerary, according to sources involved in planning the visit. A planned tour by the two lawmakers of the holy compound in Jerusalem that houses al-Aqsa mosque, and which is revered by Jews as the site of two biblical Jewish temples, has turned into an issue of contention.

The flashpoint site is in an area of Jerusalem that Israel captured along with the West Bank in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed in a move not recognized internationally. "To make sure there's apparent Israeli sovereignty over the site, they'll demand Israeli police go in with them, and not just the Waqf officials," said one of the sources with knowledge of the planned visit, referring to Muslim religious authorities.

An official in Israel's internal security ministry said any visit by Tlaib and Omar to the complex, revered by Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary and by Jews as the Temple Mount, would require Israeli security protection. Violence erupted there on Sunday between Israeli police and Palestinians amid tensions over visits by Jewish pilgrims on a day when the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha and the Jewish fast day of Tisha B'Av overlapped.

Tlaib, 43, who was born in the United States, draws her roots to the Palestinian village of Beit Ur Al-Fauqa in the West Bank. Her grandmother and extended family live in the village. Ilhan Omar, who immigrated to the United States



BAYT UR AL FAWQA: Muftia Tlaib, the maternal grandmother of US Congresswoman Rashida, walk with her son Bassam outside their home in the village of Beit Ur Al-Fauqa, in the occupied West Bank yesterday. — AFP

from Somalia as a child, represents Minnesota's fifth congressional district. In February, Omar, 37, apologized after Democratic leaders con-

demned remarks she made about the pro-Israel lobby in the United States as using anti-Semitic stereotypes. — Reuters

Tanzania fuel truck explosion kills 85

NAIROBI: The death toll from a fuel truck explosion in Tanzania has climbed to 85, a local governor said Wednesday, after 10 more people died from injuries sustained in the horrific blast. A massive fireball engulfed a crowd thronging to collect petrol from an overturned tanker Saturday near the town of Morogoro, some 200 kilometres (125 miles) west of Dar es Salaam, the financial capital.

The initial explosion killed dozens, with others rushed to hospital with burns and serious injuries in one of the deadliest oil tanker blasts in Africa in recent years. A spokesman for the National Hospital in Dar es Salaam, Aminiel Ali-gaasha, said Wednesday that seven more people had died, taking the overall death toll to 82. Another 32 were being treated, including 17 in intensive care, he added.

"We are continuing to fight as best we can to save those still alive," the hospital spokesman, Aminiel Ali-

gaasha, told reporters Wednesday. But later Wednesday, Morogoro governor Stephen Kebwe told reporters the death toll had risen once again. "Three more deaths occurred during the day," he said, confirming the new toll of 85. The flames swept through a large crowd trying to siphon leaking petrol from a truck that overturned as it swerved to avoid a motorcycle.

Officials said the explosion was triggered when a man tried to retrieve the truck's battery, creating sparks that ignited the fuel. An official inquiry was ordered Sunday into the accident, with a preliminary report expected later this week. It was the latest in a string of such disasters in Africa and at least the third this year. Last month, 45 people were killed and more than 100 injured in central Nigeria when a petrol tanker crashed and then exploded as people tried to take the fuel. In May, a similar incident in Niger killed nearly 80 people. — AFP

Ethiopian migrants abandoned: HRW

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopian migrants who braved death-defying land and sea journeys to find work in Saudi Arabia are being deported en masse with nothing but the clothes on their backs, Human Rights Watch said yesterday. A report based on interviews with deportees in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa documents exploitation, trafficking and violence that begins from the moment the migrants set off across the Red Sea or Gulf of Aden to reach the Arabian Peninsula.

It says officials in Ethiopia, Yemen and Saudi Arabia have done little to protect migrants from abuses at the hands of traffickers and security forces. And it says they have failed to ease the return of hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians caught up in a large-scale Saudi deportation campaign that began in November 2017. "Many Ethiopians who hoped for a better life in Saudi Arabia face unspeakable dangers along the journey, including death at sea, torture, and all manners of abuses," said Felix Horne, senior Africa researcher for Human Rights Watch.

"Saudi Arabia has summarily returned hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians to Addis Ababa who have little to show for their journey except debts and trauma." Ethiopians have long looked to Saudi Arabia as an escape from poor economic prospects and state repression, hoping to find

work despite not having legal status. To get there, they board overcrowded boats that are at constant risk of sinking during sea crossings that can last up to 24 hours.

One survivor told Human Rights Watch that he saw smugglers throw dozens of migrants overboard. "The boat was in trouble and the waves were hitting it. It was overloaded and about to sink so the [middlemen] picked some out and threw them into the sea, around 25," he said. Once in Yemen, the migrants are preyed upon by traffickers who kidnap them to extort ransom payments. The traffickers include Ethiopians who carry out beatings and torture.

Crossing into Saudi Arabia requires evading border guards who frequently open fire, killing many would-be migrants. "At the border there are many bodies rotting, decomposing," said one 26-year-old migrant. "It is like a graveyard." Despite the risks, up to half a million Ethiopians were in Saudi Arabia when officials there launched a crackdown on illegal migration in 2017, according to the International Organization for Migration.

Around 10,000 Ethiopians on average were deported monthly between May 2017 and March 2019, and Human Rights Watch says deportations have continued. While the international community provides Ethiopia with some resources to help migrants sent back from Europe, those returning from Saudi Arabia are mostly on their own. A spokesman for Ethiopia's foreign affairs ministry said yesterday that he was out of the country and could not comment. The Saudi government had also not issued any kind of response as of yesterday. — AFP

Gibraltar decides to free seized Iranian oil tanker

Grace 1 was seized by Gibraltar on July 4

LONDON: Gibraltar decided yesterday to free the Iranian oil tanker Grace 1, detained off the British overseas territory six weeks ago by Royal Marines, paving the way for a possible swap for a British-flagged tanker seized by Iran in the Gulf. The two tankers have become pawns in the standoff between Iran and the West, their fate tangled up in the diplomatic differences between the EU's big powers and the United States. The Grace 1 was seized by commandos in darkness off peninsula on July 4.

Gibraltar Chief Minister Fabian Picardo decided to lift the detention order after formal written assurances from Tehran that the ship will not discharge its 2.1 million barrels of oil in Syria, but added that the ship had not yet been released. "In light of the assurances we have received, there are no longer any reasonable grounds for the continued legal detention of the Grace 1 in order to ensure compliance with the

EU Sanctions Regulation," Picardo said.

It would sail as the United States made a late request to seize the vessel. "That is a matter for our independent Mutual Legal Assistance authorities, who will make an objective, legal determination of that request for separate proceedings," Picardo said. The seizure of the Grace 1 triggered a row with Tehran, which accused Britain of piracy. Two weeks later, on July 19, Iran's Revolutionary Guards seized the British-flagged Stena Impero in the Gulf.

While both Britain and Iran deny planning to swap the vessels, there has been a widespread expectation that the British-flagged ship will not be freed until the Iranian tanker is released. Iran's ambassador to London, Hamid Baedinejad, said the United States was "desperately" trying to block the release but faced a "miserable defeat". He tweeted that the tanker would be leaving Gibraltar soon. — Reuters



US seeks to seize Grace 1



GIBRALTAR: Photo shows supertanker Grace 1 off the coast of Gibraltar. — AFP

Tanker seizures

TEHRAN: A court in Gibraltar is set to decide yesterday the fate of a tanker carrying Iranian oil seized off the British territory in an operation involving Royal Marines. The seizure is one of several in recent weeks that have ratcheted up tensions between Iran and its foe the United States and its allies. Here's what we know about the vessels involved:

Grace 1

Gibraltar police and customs officers aided by British Royal Marines intercepted the Grace 1 supertanker on July 4, as it passed through the strait between the territory on Spain's southern tip and North Africa. Officials in Gibraltar and the United States suspect the 330-metre (1,000 foot) Panama-flagged ship was destined for Syria, in breach of separate sets of EU and US sanctions.

The Indian captain of the vessel, which was carrying 2.1 million barrels of oil, later told the BBC a military helicopter landed on its deck before the Royal Marines boarded. Iran has called the seizure of the tanker "maritime piracy" and warned at the time that it would not let its detention go unanswered. The Islamic republic has not officially disclosed the tanker's destination but it has repeatedly denied it was headed for Syria. Gibraltar's supreme court announced on July 19 that it was extending the tanker's detention for 30 days.

MT Riah

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said its forces detained a "foreign tanker" in Gulf waters on July 14 for allegedly smuggling contraband fuel. The tanker was seized south of the Iranian island of Larak in the strategic Strait of Hormuz, the Guards' official website said. "With a capacity of two million liters and 12 foreign crew on board, the

vessel was en route to deliver contraband fuel received from Iranian boats to foreign ships," it said. TankerTrackers reported at the time that the Panamanian-flagged MT Riah, used in the strait for fuelling other vessels, had crossed into Iranian waters, and at that point its automatic identification system stopped sending signals.

Stena Impero

Revolutionary Guards surrounded the British-flagged Stena Impero with attack boats before rappelling onto the deck of the oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz on July 19. The 183-metre ship is impounded at the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas for breaking "international maritime rules" - by allegedly failing to respond to distress calls and turning off its transponder after hitting a fishing boat.

Eighteen of the Swedish-owned tanker's 23 crew are Indian, and the rest are from the Philippines, Latvia, and Russia. The seizure came hours after a Gibraltar court said it would extend the detention of the Grace 1. Britain quickly called on Iran to release the Stena Impero, saying it was seized illegally in an "utterly unacceptable" gambit. But Tehran said the seizure was a legal measure and further investigations were required, denying it was a tit-for-tat move as London suggested. Iran and Britain have both so far ruled out the possibility of an oil tanker swap deal.

Unknown vessel

Iran seized another ship on July 31 with seven foreign crew onboard, claiming it was smuggling around 700,000 liters of fuel. The Guards said the ship was transferred to Bushehr province and handed over to authorities, noting the vessel was en route to deliver fuel to Gulf Arab states. The vessel's identity and the nationality of its crew were not revealed at the time of its seizure. — AFP

Taleban, US pact in Afghanistan could boost IS

KABUL: A deal between the Taleban and the United States for US forces to withdraw from their longest-ever war in Afghanistan could drive some diehard Taleban fighters into the arms of the Islamic State militant group, Afghan officials and militants say. Such a deal is expected to see the United States agree to withdraw its forces in exchange for a Taleban promise they will not let Afghanistan be used to plot international militant attacks.

As part of the pact, the Taleban are expected to make a commitment to power-sharing talks with the US-backed government and work out a ceasefire. The Afghan affiliate of Islamic State, known as Islamic State Khorasan (ISIS-K), after an old name for the region, first appeared in eastern Afghanistan in 2014, and has since made inroads into other areas, particularly the north.

The US military estimates their strength at 2,000 fighters. Some Afghan officials estimated the number is higher, and could be about to get a boost. "It's a big opportunity for Daesh to recruit fighters from the Taleban, and, no doubt, many Taleban fighters will happily join," said Sohrab Qaderi, a member of the provincial council in Nangarhar province on the border with Pakistan, referring to IS.

IS militants, who battle government forces

and the Taleban, and have carried out some of the deadliest attacks in urban centers, will not be part of the deal between the United States and the Taleban. For some Taleban, IS will offer an opportunity to continue jihad against those they see as infidels and their supporters. For others, who fear retribution if they try to reintegrate into society, it could be a refuge. "They've killed and been killed, they have feuds," Qaderi said of the Taleban. "Many fighters won't feel safe returning to normal life."

A spokesman for President Ashraf Ghani said there was a major concern about the growing strength of IS and their attraction for some Taleban. "Most Daesh are ex-Taleban, and there could be a possibility of some Taleban joining," said the spokesman, Sediq Sediqqi. "The Afghan government and the US have shared goals combating terrorism. We need the support of our international partners." The government has a reintegration program for insurgents who surrender but critics say it can take too long for people to be vetted and the care they get is inadequate.

From white to black

But a Taleban commander and some members of the group dismissed the possibility of fighters breaking ranks to join IS. "The Taleban leadership has enough control over their fighters to give them orders, and they obey them," Mawlawi Jamal, a Taleban commander in the western province of Farah, told Reuters by telephone. But a Taleban fighter in eastern Kunar province said he had no choice but to join IS, and he thought others would too. "During the fighting local people got killed, many people have enemies," said the fighter, who declined to be identified. He said had killed one of his father's cousins who opposed the Taleban and could not return to his village. — Reuters

International

UK opposition parties launch rival campaigns to topple PM

Rival plans to stop no-deal Brexit clash, limiting their chances

LONDON: Opposition parties launched rival campaigns to topple Prime Minister Boris Johnson and stop him taking Britain out of the European Union without a deal, illustrating fractures in the anti-Brexit movement that make neither scheme likely to succeed. Johnson has promised to push through Brexit by Oct. 31, with or without a deal, setting the scene for a showdown in parliament where a majority of lawmakers are opposed to an EU divorce without a transition agreement.

With parliament the main obstacle to Johnson's "do or die" pledge, lawmakers are urgently seeking a way to remove him or change the law to delay Brexit. Jeremy Corbyn, the veteran socialist leader of the Labour Party, said lawmakers should support a vote of no confidence and back him to lead a "strictly time-limited temporary government" that would postpone Brexit and hold an election.

"This government has no mandate for No Deal, and the 2016 EU referendum provided no mandate for No Deal," Corbyn said. "I therefore intend to table a vote of no confidence at the earliest opportunity when we can be confident of success." A handful of lawmakers from Johnson's own Conservative Party said they would listen to Corbyn's proposals. However, his chances of success were crippled by the leader of the anti-Brexit Liberal Democrat party, Jo Swinson, who said Corbyn was not the right figurehead for an emergency government. "We are facing a national crisis. We may need an emergency government to resolve it but if Jeremy Corbyn truly wants that to succeed, surely even he can see, he

cannot lead it," she said. Swinson's rival idea for a senior parliamentarian to lead a national unity government is unlikely to be accepted by Corbyn. Britain's electoral law lets another party try to form government within 14 days of a successful no-confidence vote, but only if they have a majority in the 650-seat parliament. Johnson has a working majority in parliament of just one seat, including several lawmakers who have said they could vote to bring down the government. However, without the Liberal Democrats' 14 votes, Corbyn's plan is unlikely to succeed. And without the support of Corbyn and his sizeable circle of committed supporters, any other plan also has little chance.

Battle looms

A spokeswoman for Johnson's office said the Labour leader was showing contempt for the 2016 referendum. "Jeremy Corbyn believes that the people are the servants and politicians can cancel public votes they don't like," she said. Lawmakers return from their summer break on Sept 3 for a battle over Brexit that will determine the fortunes of the world's fifth-largest economy. Labour's business spokeswoman said a challenge in parliament could come days later.

Johnson, who led the 2016 campaign to leave the EU, has staked his premiership on getting Britain out by Oct. 31 and accused some lawmakers of "collaborating" with Brussels. Opponents of a sudden departure without a deal say it would be a disaster for what was one of the West's most stable democracies, shattering supply chains, damaging global growth, and weakening Britain's



LONDON: New Liberal Democrat Sarah Wollaston (center), a former Conservative, sits next to Liberal Democrat MP Chuka Umunna (right), a former Labor MP, at an event where party leader Jo Swinson gave a keynote speech on Brexit yesterday. —AFP

standing in the world. Brexit supporters say while there may be short-term disruption, it would provide a clean break from the struggling bloc and eventually allow the economy to thrive.

The pound, which tumbled in recent weeks on the prospect of a turbulent exit, was largely unmoved by Corbyn's and Swinson's proposals. Corbyn, a low-key Remain campaigner during the 2016 referendum, has been under pressure within his party to step up efforts to prevent it from happening. He said he hoped his proposal to lead a caretaker government could "halt the serious threat of No Deal, end the uncertainty

and disarray, and allow the public to decide the best way ahead".

But he is a divisive figure and even his own party, which has faced accusations of anti-Semitism under his leadership, would struggle to form a majority of his own. While the political turmoil has led to an unprecedented level of cross-party cooperation, many in Johnson's Conservative Party and others would still find it difficult to vote for a Corbyn-led administration. Conservative lawmaker Alistair Burt, a former foreign office minister who is opposed to a no-deal Brexit, said he could not support the Labor leader. —Reuters

Republican lawmaker questions if humans would have survived without rape, incest

WASHINGTON: Controversial Republican congressman Steve King set off yet another firestorm on Wednesday when he questioned whether the world's human population would exist if rape and incest did not occur throughout history. King, a fierce conservative who is an avid supporter of President Donald Trump, was defending his opposition to abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, during an address to the Westside Conservative Club in his home state of Iowa. "What if we went back through all the family trees and just pulled those people out that were products of rape or incest? Would there be any population of the world left if we did that?" King said in a video of his comments posted by the Des Moines Register. "Considering all the wars and all the rape and pillage that's taken place... I know I can't certify that I'm not part of a product of that," he added. "I'd like to think that every one of the lives of us are as precious as any other life."

King is a polarizing figure in Congress, with a history of making racist statements - last year he questioned why the language of white supremacy was offensive. The latest remarks triggered a bipartisan backlash. Randy Feenstra, a Republican Iowa state lawmaker who is challenging King in next year's party primary, said the congressman is merely serving as the Democrats' "best hope" of keeping control of the US House. "Trump needs defenders in Congress, not distractions," Feenstra said on Twitter. —AFP

Child sex abuse victims sue accusers under new US law

NEW YORK: Hundreds of alleged child sex abuse victims filed civil cases in New York State Wednesday under a new law that allows them to seek damages for crimes going back decades. The Child Victims Act extends the statute of limitations for victims of childhood sexual abuse. It was approved by Governor Andrew Cuomo in February but opposed by the Catholic Church.

The law allows alleged victims until the age of 55 to file civil cases and 28 for criminal suits, compared to a limit of 23 under the old rule. It also establishes a one-year litigation window for any victim, regardless of age, to take civil action. It is not known how many lawsuits were filed across the multiple courts in New York State, which is home to 30 million people including seven million Catholics.

But lawyer Jeff Anderson said his firm was filing cases for more than 200 victims of abuse by clergy

plus other cases against scout leaders, doctors and teachers. "This is a momentous time for courageous survivors who have waited so long for justice in New York," Anderson told a press conference. "They now have an opportunity to take back power stolen from them when they were kids and start to heal," he added.

Jeanne Marron, one of Anderson's clients who says she was sexually abused at a Catholic school for five years, said she didn't believe the cases would ever come to fruition. "I never thought I'd be here today," she said. New York state courts designated 45 judges, including 12 in New York city, to prepare for an expected influx of lawsuits. "(They) are critically important cases, raising numerous challenging legal issues, that must be adjudicated as consistently and expeditiously as possible across the state," Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence Marks said in a statement Tuesday.

Although many of the accused will be dead, the law allows victims to sue institutions. A woman who says disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein raped her when she was 15 filed a case against his estate, as well as his former girlfriend Ghislaine Maxwell and three other unidentified accomplices. Since last August's publication of a grand jury report detailing decades of sexual abuse in Pennsylvania, many states have opened investigations to uncover abuses in the Catholic Church. —AFP

International

Kremlin lauds 'hero' pilots after emergency landing

Plane hits flock of birds during take-off

MOSCOW: The Kremlin lauded two Russian pilots as heroes and said they would be handed state awards after they landed an airliner carrying 233 people in a cornfield outside Moscow after striking a flock of birds during take-off. Russians have said it was a miracle that no one was killed when the Ural Airlines Airbus 321 came down in a field southeast of Moscow with its landing gear up after hitting a passing flock of gulls, disrupting the plane's engines. Up to 55 people, including 17 children, were treated for injuries, six of whom have been hospitalized, Russian news agencies quoted the emergencies ministry as saying.

State television said the incident was being dubbed the "miracle over Ramensk", the name of the district near Moscow where the plane came down around one kilometer from Zhukovsky International Airport. The Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid praised pilot Damir Yusupov as a "hero," saying he had saved 233 lives, "having masterfully landed a plane without its landing gear with a failing engine right in a corn field."

Some drew comparisons with US Airways Flight 1549 which performed a landing on the Hudson River in New York in 2009 after striking a flock of geese. "We congratulate the hero pilots who saved people's lives," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, adding that the Kremlin would see that the men were quickly given state honors. "There's no doubt about this. They will be given awards."

Belly-flop landing

The plane's engines were turned off when it executed the emergency landing and it also had its landing gear up, according to Elena Mikheyeva, a spokeswoman for Russia's civil aviation authority. Footage shot by passengers showed the flight lasted less than two minutes and that the engines had experienced difficulties almost immediately after take-off.

Vitya Babin, 11, who was on the plane with his mother and sister, said passengers had not been warned there was going to be an emergency landing. There was silence in the cabin and then screams began when it touched down, footage showed. "We were not warned," said Babin. An unnamed passenger interviewed by state television said the plane had started to shake moments after it took off.

"Five seconds later, the lights on the right side of the plane started flashing and there was a smell of burning. Then we landed and everyone ran away," he said. Passengers were evacuated via escape slides and were told to distance themselves from the plane. "One of the stewardesses said there was smoke coming from the plane and we immediately panicked. We ran after one of the men. He said follow me," Babin said. A local resident quoted by radio station Govorit Moskva said the gulls that struck the plane had probably come from an illegal rubbish dump near Zhukovsky airport.



MOSCOW: This handout picture shows the Ural Airlines A321 plane after a hard landing on a corn field near Moscow's Zhukovsky airport. —AFP

Moscow region officials, however, rejected that assertion and said the nearest rubbish dump to the airport was 14 kilometers away, TASS news agency reported. The plane was due to fly to Simferopol in Crimea, the peninsula annexed by Russia from

Ukraine in 2014. Safety concerns have plagued Russia's airline industry since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, though standards are widely recognized to have sharply risen on international routes in particular in recent years. —Reuters

Istanbul ill-prepared for Big One, 20 years after deadly quake

ISTANBUL: Twenty years after a devastating earthquake ravaged the northwest of Turkey, Istanbulites live with the knowledge that another "Big One" is unavoidable, and that their city of 16 million is not prepared. On Saturday, Turkey will mark the anniversary of the 7.4-magnitude quake that hit Izmit - around 100 kilometers east of Istanbul - on August 17, 1999, killing at least 17,400 people, including 1,000 within the economic capital of the country.

The question for seismologists is not if another earthquake will hit Istanbul, which lies along the volatile North Anatolian tectonic plate. The only question is when. Sukru Ersoy, a specialist at the city's Yildiz Technical University, estimates it could come within the next decade. "In the worst case, the quake could reach a magnitude of 7.7," he said. "Is Istanbul ready for that? Sadly not." According to him, such a quake would destroy thousands of buildings, leaving a "terrifying" number of dead and paralyzing Turkey's economic and tourist hub.

The former capital of the Ottoman empire has suffered many earthquakes through its long history. In 1509, the city was shaken so badly that the Ottoman authorities referred to the incident as "the little apocalypse". Since then, a rapid-response unit - the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority - has been created, quake-proof hospitals have been built, and systems to cut gas lines installed. But experts say the main problem is that Istanbul has tens of thousands of poorly-built buildings, thrown up during

the construction boom of recent decades with little regulatory oversight.

Fatalism

The 1999 quake showed how many buildings had been built using dodgy cement made from unsuitable sand dredged from the sea. "There was a moment of reflection just after the 1999 earthquake," said Nusret Suna, head of the Chamber of Building Engineers for Istanbul. "But with time, fatalism took over again. People said 'It's destiny' and people moved on to other things."

Although regulations have become stricter in the past 20 years, the collapse of a residential building in Istanbul this February, in which 20 people were killed, renewed fears about the solidity of the city's infrastructure. There have been efforts to rebuild "at-risk" buildings in sturdier fashion, but Suna said a much bigger mobilization is needed to reach basic levels of earthquake-proofing.

The new mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem Imamoglu, has vowed to fast-track a plan, including efforts to provide more green spaces - notoriously lacking in the city - that can be used to gather survivors. In theory, each neighborhood is supposed to have an assembly point for this purpose, but many have been lost under new parkings and shopping centers. Without rapid changes, Istanbul risks being plunged into "real chaos" by a serious quake, warned Recep Salci, head of the non-government Search and Rescue Association, which was a key first-responder in 1999.

"We cannot prevent an earthquake, but we can enormously reduce its consequences," he said, citing the examples of Japan and Chile, which are similarly vulnerable but have taken radical measures to brace themselves. Suna, at the chamber of engineers, said it would take 15 to 20 years to fully prepare Istanbul. "Since 1999, 20 years have been lost. But we must not be discouraged from the task." —AFP

In Canada, woman takes on stereotypes as a drag king

MONTREAL: Melodie Rousseau is an actress by day, but at night, the 33-year-old Canadian makes herself up as a man - and takes the stage at Montreal's cabaret halls as a drag king. Performing in drag is not only a means of artistic expression - it's a political statement by Rousseau and others looking to step out of the formidable shadow of the better-known drag queens. Rousseau, who performs as Rock Biere, needs two and a half hours for her transformation. On her slender face, she uses a make-up brush to draw the eyebrows and contours that define her alter ego.

"It's about erasing the woman to create this virile male," she says with a laugh. Little by little, Rock Biere's more masculine jawline emerges. Rousseau straps down her breasts and creates defined abs. She sticks fake hair on her chest and chin. While drag queens have entered the mainstream thanks to shows like "RuPaul's Drag Race," drag kings are still under the radar. In Quebec province, they can be counted on one hand, according to veteran Canadian drag king Charli Deville.

Deville says only four drag kings are featured on a regular basis at Montreal's bars, as opposed to about 80 drag queens. Rousseau was running a cafe and working as an actress in her own theater company when Rock Biere became part of her life last year. At first, she was not interested in performing, but her girlfriend "forced" her, she says with a smile. "There is of course a political side to it all, for a woman to take on a male persona," the actress says. "It's a bit dangerous for a woman to dare to adopt the physique of the dominant sex." —AFP

International

Uganda's cash-strapped cops spend \$126 million on CCTV

Police hope it will help cut spiraling violent crime

KAMPALA: A forest of slender white poles topped with dark, unblinking eyes is quietly sprouting on the rubbish-strewn, potholed street corners of the Ugandan capital. Police say the new \$126 million closed-circuit television camera (CCTV) system, supplied by Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei Technologies Co Ltd, will slash spiraling violent crime.

Opposition leaders say law enforcement agencies are too corrupt and overburdened to use the footage to identify criminals. They worry police may use the cameras, which have facial recognition technology, to target demonstrators in violent clampdowns as an election approaches in 2021. "The CCTV project is just a tool to track us, hunt us and persecute us," said Ingrid Turinawe, a leader in the Forum for Democratic Change, Uganda's largest opposition party.

Facial recognition technology has become increasingly pervasive around the world, raising concerns about potential abuses. Officials in San Francisco voted in May to ban its use by city personnel. Huawei technicians have already helped intelligence officials in Uganda and at least one other African country spy on their political opponents, according to an investigation published by the Wall Street Journal on Wednesday.

In Uganda, they helped crack the encrypted communications of popular musician turned politician Bobi Wine; police swarmed a concert that would have featured surprise opposition speakers and arrested him and dozens of supporters, the paper said. In Zambia, Huawei employees helped

the government access the phones and Facebook pages of bloggers critical of the president so they could be tracked and arrested, the paper reported.

Huawei rejected the Journal's "unfounded and inaccurate allegations", telling Reuters in an email: "Huawei's code of business conduct prohibits any employees from undertaking any activities that would compromise the data or privacy of our customers or end users, or that would breach any laws." Uganda's cameras are part of Huawei's Safe City initiative, which has been rolled out in more than 200 cities worldwide, including in China, Pakistan and Russia.

In Africa, Huawei has sold CCTV systems to countries such as Kenya, Egypt and Zambia where activists have raised similar concerns over privacy and effectiveness. In Europe, France, Germany and Serbia have small projects with Huawei's initiative. The US government has restricted trade with Huawei and four other Chinese firms, accusing them of espionage and stealing intellectual property. It is also lobbying to persuade US allies to keep Huawei out of next-generation 5G telecommunications infrastructure, citing concerns the company could spy on customers. Huawei has repeatedly denied it is controlled by the Chinese government, military or intelligence services.



Opposition fear it could be used to target dissidents

Surging crime

Surging crime in Uganda is fuelling public anger towards President Yoweri Museveni, 74, who has been in power since 1986 and will likely seek another five-year term. Police in the oil-rich East African nation recorded 4,497 homicides last year, nearly double the number of five years ago. Kidnappings for ransom, once rare, rose to 202 cases in 2018, an eightfold jump from 2017. In one notorious case, the 28-year-old daughter of a wealthy businessman was kidnapped and killed despite her family paying kidnapers \$200,000.

Police investigations currently rely heavily on witness interviews, Charles Twine, a spokesman for the police Criminal Intelligence and Investigations Department said. It's a notoriously slow and unreliable way to build a case. There are not enough detectives and no forensic specialists. Twine declined to give statistics but said police manpower was "critically wanting." The police website said in 2015 the force was 45,000-strong. That's about half the United Nations-recommended ratio of one policeman per 500 citizens.

A 2015 budget paper for the ministry of internal affairs said there were about 5,500 detectives. Twine said police must turn to civilian experts if they need DNA analysts, toxicologists or fibre experts.

He hopes CCTV footage will be the answer, letting investigators "know who has committed the crime, how did he commit it, which route did he take, and which tools did he have." About 2,500 out of a planned 3,200 cameras covering metropolitan Kampala have been installed. Huawei will eventually extend the system to all major towns in the country.

Crumbling justice

But some current and former law enforcement officials are sceptical that high-tech aids such as CCTV or new forensic tools such as planned DNA and fingerprint databases will have an impact on crime. Uganda's police are poorly paid and have little investigative training, said Herbert Karugaba, a Ugandan police investigator for 17 years before he joined the UN to probe genocide and war crimes in Rwanda and Cambodia. "It's money down the drain," said Karugaba. "It is the quality of the man and woman in uniform... that matters."

Uganda's Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum, an advocacy group, had its own CCTV running in May 2016 when robbers killed a guard and stole computers. The group gave the video to police. Nothing happened. "After months of investigations they eventually told us our case file is lost. There's no record anywhere of our case," said Adrian Jjuuko, the group's head. "If there's no political will to investigate or prosecute crime, nothing will change. It's all nonsense, CCTV or no CCTV. Police start on a monthly salary of about \$150. Most prosecutors earn about \$270. Lawmakers take home around \$6,500. —Reuters

Six police wounded in Philadelphia shooting

WASHINGTON: Six police officers were shot and wounded in the US city of Philadelphia on Wednesday during an hours-long incident that began when police tried to execute a narcotics warrant, the Philadelphia Police Department said. All of the officers were later released from hospital, but police Commissioner Richard Ross Jr said that in 30 years he had never seen so many officers shot over such a long period of time.

The incident comes after two mass shootings in the US earlier this month—one in Dayton, Ohio and the other in El Paso, Texas—left a total of 31 people dead. Two other officers who had been trapped in a house with the suspected shooter—who had been firing out of the window—were finally freed later in the evening, Ross said during a press conference. The suspect was later taken into custody and SWAT personnel were clearing the house, department spokesman Eric Gripp said on Twitter.

Gripp had first tweeted about the incident hours earlier, around 4:40 pm local time (2040 GMT), and continued to advise the public to stay away from the area throughout the evening. "It is nothing short of astounding that in such a confined space that we didn't have more of a tragedy than we did," Ross said. The episode began as an attempt to execute a narcotics warrant "that went awry almost immediately," he explained. Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney praised his city's police department but called out federal and state politicians for their response to gun violence. —AFP

Starvation killed Franco-Irish teen in Malaysia

SEREMBAN: A Franco-Irish teen who disappeared from a Malaysian resort likely starved and died of internal bleeding after about a week in the jungle, with no immediate sign of foul play, police said yesterday. There was no indication that 15-year-old Nora Quoirin, who had learning difficulties, was abducted or sexually assaulted, they said, announcing the results of an autopsy.

But the lawyer of her family, who believe she may have been abducted, said it was too early to rule out a criminal element in the case. Her unclothed body was discovered Tuesday in a ravine in dense jungle following a 10-day hunt involving hundreds of people, helicopters and sniffer dogs. She went missing from the Dusun Resort, not far from Kuala Lumpur, on August 4, a day after checking in for a holiday with her London-based family.

Speaking after the post-mortem examination, Negeri Sembilan state police chief Mohamad Mat Yusop told reporters the teen suffered "bleeding in her intestines due to not eating" as well as "extreme stress". The schoolgirl is believed to have died two to three days before her body was found, he said. "For the time being, there is no suspicion of foul play," he said.

There were "some scratches on her body" after days in the rainforest, but nothing suspicious, he said. "The parents can claim her body." Police had classified her disappearance as a missing persons case. But the family's French lawyer, Charles



SEREMBAN: Members of a rescue team take part in an ongoing search effort to locate missing 15-year-old Franco-Irish teenager Nora Quoirin in Seremban. —AFP

Morel, told AFP that "at this stage for the family, it is premature to rule out a criminal element. "We need to wait to find out all the results from the autopsy to know more."

'Unbearable' loss

Her body was airlifted by helicopter out of the ravine - about 2.5 kilometers from the resort - and transported to hospital in Seremban town where her relatives identified it. Medics conducted a long autopsy Wednesday, starting in the morning and only finishing late at night, as a media pack waited outside the hospital for news. In a statement released Wednesday by The Lucie Blackman Trust, a charity that supports relatives of British people missing overseas, her relatives said she was the "heart" of the family. —AFP

India celebrates Independence Day; Modi hails Kashmir move

Pakistan observes 'Black Day' over Kashmir

MUMBAI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered an Independence Day speech yesterday that spotlighted a decision to remove the special rights of the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir among the bold moves of the first 10 weeks of his second term. Modi talked about his aim to turn India into a \$5-trillion economy within five years, by spurring wealth creation, boosting exports and tourism, and spending 100 trillion rupees (\$1.4 trillion) on infrastructure.

But he did not touch on sagging demand that has hit parts of the economy in recent months, especially the auto sector. Modi said special constitutional status for the state of Jammu and Kashmir had encouraged corruption and nepotism, while creating injustice for women, children and minority communities in India's only majority-Muslim region. "Today every Indian can proudly say 'One Nation, One Constitution'," Modi, speaking from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort in New Delhi, said of the decision.

Critics of the policy say it will bring a backlash from Kashmiri Muslims, who had valued the previous ban on non-residents buying property in the state, part of which is claimed by Pakistan, and benefited from the reservation of state government jobs for residents. In a clampdown in the region since the Aug 5 decision, authorities have cut internet and phone links, restricted movement with police roadblocks, and detained more than 500 leaders and activists.

In flood-prone south India, doctors tend mental scars of disasters

IDUKKI: P Divakaran, 65, stood beside the road where his sister and three other family members were killed when a landslide caused by heavy rains demolished their house almost a year ago. "Even after 11 months, the mortal remains of my sister have not yet been recovered. Still I am afraid to hear the sound of rain," he said in Upputhodu village, in southern India's Idukki district.

This month, Idukki, in Kerala state, has again been battered by torrential monsoon rains and landslides that killed at least five people and forced about 1,400 to evacuate to shelters, known locally as relief camps. This year's danger hit an area, alongside other parts of the ecologically fragile Western Ghats mountains, where local people had yet to recover from the trauma and stress they experienced from the disaster in August 2018.

That was the worst recorded in local history, with 51 deaths and destruction estimated at 2.1 billion rupees (almost \$30 million). But the damage was also reflected in a jump in the number of people suffering mental health problems. In the year to July 2019, the Idukki District Mental Health

Key new military post

Wearing a flowing bright saffron-colored turban, Modi, who won a landslide election victory in May, also highlighted his government's ban on some Muslim communities' practice of allowing a husband to instantly divorce his wife. Perhaps his most controversial announcement was the creation of a new post of chief of defense staff to ensure better coordination of India's army, navy and air force, along the lines of Western military forces.

Defense experts have long called for such a post, recommended by a government panel in 1999, after India came close to war with Pakistan over Kashmir. "To further sharpen coordination between the forces, I want to announce a major decision ... India will have a chief of defense staff," Modi said.

However, he did not address the weakening economy and calls from industry for swift government measures to spur demand. India's growth rate has fallen to 5.8% for the three months ended March 2019, its lowest in 17 quarters, while research group CMIE estimates the jobless rate rose to 7.51 percent in July from 5.66 percent a year earlier. Modi said he would invest 3.6 trillion rupees to improve water infrastructure and pipe clean water to every home.

'Black Day' over Kashmir

Standing below a fluttering Indian flag, Modi urged a halt to use of single-use plastics,

Program saw 4,678 patients, up about 25% on the previous year. "It has been found that the flood has caused various mental ailments. Depression and anxiety were mostly prevalent. This is the reason for the rise in the number of patients," said Amal Abraham, a doctor with the program. The tiny, picturesque mountain village of Upputhodu has again been lashed by severe rains this month, in a place where many still bear the mental scars of the flash flood a year ago.

Divakaran was diagnosed as suffering from "adjustment disorder", a condition that causes feelings of sadness and hopelessness after unexpected disasters. He has now improved after receiving medication and counseling, said Joe Sunny, a mental health doctor at Thiruvananthapuram Medical College. Thaghachan, 60, also underwent treatment for psychological problems after the 2018 disaster. "I am afraid to hear even the noise of an aeroplane flying over our village," he said. "It brings back horrible memories of last year's disastrous landslide."

Flight to safety

Nine in 10 villagers in Upputhodu who spoke to the Thomson Reuters Foundation over two days in late July appeared to be still haunted by the after-effects of what they experienced. P Geetha, a state-employed social health activist who has been keeping in regular touch with families in Upputhodu, said 42 out of 250 homes in the village were vacant. "They all migrated due to relentless stress," she said. Many have gone to neighboring districts where they feel safer, she added. —Reuters



SRINAGAR: Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personnel stand in a formation during a ceremony to celebrate India's 73rd Independence Day, which marks the end of British colonial rule. —AFP

suggesting a phase-out date of Oct 2, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, regarded as the father of the nation. During the last five years, Modi's government has made it much easier to do business in India, he added, vowing to further streamline government procedure. More small vendors should accept digital payments, Modi said, returning to a theme first spotlighted in 2016, when his government ordered an overnight ban of high-value banknotes.

Meanwhile, Pakistan observed a 'Black Day' yesterday to coincide with India's Independence Day celebrations, as one of the main militant groups fighting Indian rule in Kashmir led a protest through Pakistan's part of the disputed region. India's decision this month to revoke special status for its portion of Kashmir, along with a communications blackout and curbs on movement, caused fury in Pakistan, which cut trade and transport links and expelled India's envoy in retaliation. —Agencies

In Kashmir's main city, few celebrate Independence Day

SRINAGAR: India tightened security yesterday in disputed Kashmir, sealing off many roads with barbed wire in the main city of Srinagar, as government officials and security forces held an Independence Day parade attended by only a few local people. Streets were empty outside the Sher-i-Kashmir cricket stadium, where the event was held, with most residents of the city keeping indoors as a travel and communications blockade in Indian-controlled Kashmir entered its 11th day.

India's crackdown followed a decision to strip the mainly Muslim state of Jammu and Kashmir of the right to set some of its own laws, a move that has prompted sporadic protests in the past week. A dance troupe of about 50 young men and women in colorful traditional attire was called into Srinagar from the state's other main city of Jammu, said Archana Sharma, the group's leader, adding that she was a television anchor. "We will perform the cultural dances of Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir," said Sharma. "We will return to Jammu this evening, because communication is a big problem here."

The city of Jammu is largely Hindu.

Surrounded by television cameras, Sharma's group performed to patriotic songs with lyrics about making India a stronger nation. Similar performances were also held by the cultural units of the police and border security forces. During yesterday's parade, there were fewer than 500 spectators in the stadium, most of them from the security forces or government officials. The stadium was sealed at least a week in advance for security reasons. It has a capacity of at least 2,000, a local police official said. Surveillance helicopters and drones with cameras hovered overhead.

Pellet wounds

While a crowd of journalists from New Delhi attended, there were only a few from Kashmir, as most of Srinagar's more than 150 newspapers have been unable to publish, hit by the travel curbs and telecoms blackout. "Long Live Mother India," chanted a group of about two dozen men from outside Kashmir, carrying large Indian flags made of cloth, as they clustered in one corner of the stadium.

Satya Pal Malik, appointed governor by New Delhi to run Jammu and Kashmir, praised India's decision to revoke the state's special status and hive off the Buddhist enclave of Ladakh as a separately administered area. —Reuters

International

S Korea urges dialogue in a WWII anniversary message

Japan's emperor expresses 'deep remorse' for WWII

SEOUL: On the anniversary of Japan's World War Two surrender, South Korea's president yesterday urged Japan to contemplate its wartime past and offered to engage in talks to repair strained ties, while Japan pledged to never repeat the horrors of war. Relations between Japan and South Korea are arguably at their lowest ebb since they normalized ties in 1965, strained over the issue of South Korean forced labor during World War Two and a bitter trade row.

In a speech marking Korea's independence from Japanese rule, Moon dialed down his recent harsh rhetoric towards Japan. "We hope that Japan will play a leading role together in facilitating peace and prosperity in East Asia while it contemplates a past that brought misfortune to its neighboring countries," said Moon.

"Better late than never: if Japan chooses the path of dialogue and cooperation, we will gladly join hands." Moon's emphasis on talks was a departure from the stringent tone in which he said South Korea "will never be defeated again by Japan". Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe yesterday sent a ritual monetary offering to the controversial Yasukuni shrine for war dead in Tokyo. He did not visit in person, an act which would have sparked a heated reaction from Seoul.

Seoul's foreign ministry expressed "deep concerns" over Abe sending the offering to a shrine that "beautifies Japan's colonial pillage and aggressive war". Bitter memories of Japan's

1910-45 colonization of Korea have long haunted ties. At a ceremony honoring war dead, Abe said Japan had engraved the "lessons of history deep in our hearts", and pledged never to repeat its devastation. "To create a peaceful new era full of hope, we will spare no effort in working with the international community."

Diplomacy back on track?

Relations deteriorated after South Korea's Supreme Court last year ordered Japanese companies to compensate some wartime forced laborers. Tokyo says the matter was settled by a 1965 treaty normalizing ties. The chill deepened when Japan ended South Korea's fast-track trade status this month, prompting Seoul to follow suit. Tokyo has cited security concerns for its tightening of export controls, which South Korea called retaliation over the forced labor feud. Strained ties between the two key US allies have worried Washington, which fears weakened security cooperation in the face of North Korea's threat and China's rise.

Japanese and South Korean vice foreign ministers reportedly plan to meet this week in Guam to discuss the issue. Leif-Eric Easley, who teaches international relations at Ewha University in Seoul, said Moon's speech was meant to "leave the door open for diplomacy". "Recent escalation demonstrated a lack of appreciation for the economic interests at stake, for the other side's domestic politics, and for the severe re-



SEOUL: South Korean protesters march with signs reading 'No Japan, No Abe' during an anti-Japanese rally marking the anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule, in central Seoul yesterday. — AFP

gional security situation," he said.

'Bitter and furious'

In downtown Seoul, thousands of South Koreans in raincoats, including some victims of forced labor, staged a massive rally, marching toward the Japanese embassy and chanting "Fight!" and "Compensate!" Holding a banner

saying "No Abe, No Mitsubishi," Yang Geum-deuk, 90, said she was given barely any food and often beaten by Japanese authorities for not quickly using the bathroom while at Mitsubishi. "We Koreans were treated as animals," Yang said. "But we're strong now ... and my wish is to hear a word of apology from Abe, as the world knows how we suffered in Japan." — Reuters

Myanmar insurgents attack elite military college; 15 killed

YANGON: Myanmar insurgents killed at least 15 people yesterday, most of them members of the security forces, in attacks on an elite military college and other government targets in the country's north, an army spokesman said. The Northern Alliance, a collection of armed groups in the region, claimed responsibility for the unprecedented attack on the Defense Services Technological Academy in Pyin Oo Lwin in western Shan state, where army engineers are trained, and attacks at four other locations.

Army spokesman Tun Tun Nyi said soldiers were fighting insurgents in Naung Cho township near the Gokteik viaduct, a towering railway bridge built under British colonial rule and a tourist hot-spot. Another bridge across the Goktwin valley had been destroyed by insurgents who also burned down the township's narcotics police office, he said.

Fighting was reported at a toll gate on the highway to Lashio, the largest town in Shan state. "They killed seven military men in Goktwin, two at the toll gate, and policemen and civilians too," Tun Tun Nyi told Reuters by phone, saying one civilian staff member at the military academy was killed. Photos published by local media showed damaged buildings and burnt cars riddled with bullet holes. — Reuters

When school not safe: Afghan war takes toll on kids

KABUL: Sixteen-year-old Madina still has nightmares about the day two huge blasts tore through her school in Kabul, showering shards of broken window glass on her and other students. She survived, with lacerations to her arms and legs. The physical wounds are slowly healing, but she remains haunted by the stress of the attack. Madina, like many of her generation in Afghanistan, has never known peace and experts warn the psychological impact of living in a country where schools are often on the front line, and counseling is in short supply, can be overwhelming.

"It was a scary day. I still have nightmares, I cannot focus, it was very hard to prepare for exams," Madina recalled. She had to take her maths exam in the corridor at her shattered school as many classrooms have been left unusable. The US and Taliban claim progress in ongoing peace talks, but little has changed for Afghans, and recent attacks underscore how children remain as vulnerable as ever in the grinding conflict. A UN tally found last year was the deadliest on record, with at least 3,804 civilian deaths caused by the war-including 927 children. And in the first six months of 2019, children accounted for nearly one-third of civilian casualties. "In the first few days after the attack, you could see the trauma on students' faces, they would cry every minute," Madina's school director Niamatullah Hamdard said.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the number of attacks against Afghan schools tripled last year compared to 2017. By the end of 2018, more than 1,000 Afghan

schools had been shut due to conflict, denying about 500,000 Afghan kids access to education. In the arid Deh Bala district of Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan, the Papen high school has been reduced to rubble amid fighting between government forces and the Islamic State group.

Kids sit on a rug outside for a class, frowning as a reporter approaches. Some of them have witnessed IS fighters beheading locals. "When the students go to sleep at night, they dream about Daesh and they are haunted by these atrocities," school director Muhamad Wali said, using the local name for IS.

"They scream in their sleep, and when they come here they are so stressed out." Omar Ghorzang, a school district official, said the stress takes a huge toll. "When the teachers are talking to them, the kids talk among themselves and do bizarre things. They cannot pay attention", Ghorzang said. Amir Gul, aged about 15, said he and his Papen classmates are constantly anxious. "We are always afraid a bomb might go off. Everyone is scared and no one can study," he said.

Psychotherapist Bethan McEvoy, who works as an education advisor for the Norwegian Refugee Council in Kabul, said it can be tough to assess the prevalence of mental illness and emotional trauma resulting from school attacks. That's because symptoms of psychological trauma often manifest only after the shock has subsided-and in Afghanistan, people can spend years living through one stressful event after another.

"When we experience a high-stress event, there's a natural response in our body that turns into a survival response," she said. "When people are in a state of constant fear ... then it's very difficult to turn that response off." How people are impacted in the long term depends on many factors including their background, family relations and support networks. "If a school has something in place to provide that kind of support to the child then it can actually be very helpful," McEvoy said, noting that more can be done to provide services in Afghanistan. — AFP



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Pink flamingoes feed in the mud flats at the Ras Al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary in Dubai. — AFP

Rats a cheap street snack in Cambodia

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Nigeria's divisive tradition of facial markings fades

When six-year-old Naziru Abdulwahab was abducted from northern Nigeria, his kidnapper transported him across the country and tried to sell him—but the potential buyer backed out. What saved the boy from the child-smuggling rings, police said, was the traditional facial scarrings on his cheeks that he had been marked with at birth. Fearing they would make him too recognizable, the would-be purchaser refused to buy him. After suspicions were then raised by local residents, the trafficker was arrested and the child rescued.

The incident in June shone a spotlight on the practice of tribal markings that has been fading since the 1980s in the fast-changing country of nearly 200 million people. Traditional practitioners, known locally as oloola, said it showed the benefits of the practice that critics have long argued is unsafe and child abuse. “Our taste for foreign things has robbed us of our customs,” Mashopa Adekunle, an oloola in the southwestern city of Ibadan, told AFP. “Nobody wants to put tribal marks on his child anymore. People see the practice as archaic, fetish and unhygienic.”

On the battlefield

The incisions have traditionally been performed in an array of styles by different ethnic groups in Nigeria. The scarring is done—both to boys and girls—by burning or cutting of the skin during childhood. From the Yoruba in the southwest, to Igbo in the east and Hausa in the north, the marks serve different purposes: identification, healing, spiritual protection, beautification. Prominent figures, including ex-president Olusegun Obasanjo, have tribal marks on their cheeks. “In the days of inter-communal

wars, tribal marks helped to identify fighters. You would know who were your friends and enemies in the battlefield,” said Adekunle.

He agreed that the traditional practitioners needed to move with the times if they wanted to remain relevant—pointing to the growing numbers of Nigerian youths embracing western-style tattoos. “The oloola have to do more to convince their critics that their tools are safe for use,” he said.

‘Facial mutilation’

Opponents have pushed for a country-wide ban on facial markings. In 2017, the Nigerian Senate debated a bill for the “prohibition of facial mutilation” that would have introduced punishments for those who perform it and protection for those at risk. Proponents of the move argued that the “barbaric” practice left people disfigured for life and put them at risk of contracting HIV. The proposed legislation is currently bogged down in parliamentary procedure.

The practice of facial markings has been waning for around 40 years, said the Oloola Descendant Association in Ibadan, whose members barely carry out one case a month now, compared to about 10 in the 1980s. Sefiu Yusuf, the association’s head, insisted that there was still a role for traditional methods, as he showed AFP his metal instruments wrapped in white handkerchiefs at his dark clinic.

He inherited his position from his father and said his family had long been known for performing circumcisions. “Only yesterday, a boy was brought here because our patrons believe in our ability,” Yusuf told AFP, at his dilapidated home in the center of the city. “Even doctors and nurses seek our help when they have complicated cases.”

He dismissed criticism that his practices were unsafe. “It’s a smear campaign by NGOs and people in government to... put us out of business,” he said. For another Ibadan-based oloola, Babatunde Hamzat, the dying out of the tradition has had serious consequences for Nigerian society. He said its loss had contributed to the high levels of crime in the country.—AFP

Film claims group plotted to infect black Africans with HIV

A plot by white mercenaries to spread HIV through black South Africa via a phony vaccination program: it sounds like the stuff of pulp spy novels, but documentary-maker Mads Brügger is clear that this is one sensational conspiracy that actually happened. The Danish director set out to investigate the mysterious 1961 plane crash that killed the head of the UN in modern-day Zambia for his latest film—but says he ended up uncovering something vastly more sinister.

In “Cold Case: Hammarskjöld,” Brügger meets Alexander Jones, a former member of a clandestine paramilitary organization with alleged ties to South Africa’s apartheid government. Jones tells the filmmaker that the group undertook nefarious HIV research in the 1980s and 1990s as part of a white supremacist plot to devastate black communities with the virus. “We were at war,” Jones tells Brügger in the film. “Black people in South Africa were the enemy.”

There is no evidence of the plot to spread HIV being successfully put into action. But Brügger and his team tracked down medical clinics run by the group’s now-dead leader Keith Maxwell in South Africa. Maxwell claimed to be seeking a cure for HIV but had no medical training, and spoke openly of his fascination with biological weapons, according to the filmmakers. They met with a witness who says he saw Maxwell personally injecting black patients with supposed vaccines.

“What easier way to get a guinea pig than (when) you live in an apartheid system?” Jones says in the film. “Black people have got no rights, they need medical treatment. There’s a white ‘philanthropist’ coming in and saying, ‘You know, I’ll open up these clinics and I’ll treat you.’”

“And meantime (he was) actually the wolf in sheep’s clothing,” Brügger told AFP that “strategy papers” belonging to Maxwell fit “hand in glove” with Jones’s claims about the plot. “What Maxwell was writing about, planning for... in itself constitutes a crime,” Brügger said.

‘Outrageous’

The allegations were denounced as irresponsible and medically dubious by some critics after the film’s January premiere at the Sundance Film Festival, where Brügger won a top directing prize for the documentary. Touring the global festival circuit since, Brügger has defended his work ahead of its release by Magnolia Pictures from August 16 in a few dozen US theaters and online platforms including Amazon and iTunes.

In the film, he initially set out to investigate theories that UN Secretary-

General Dag Hammarskjöld’s plane was deliberately brought down in a crash that killed 16 people. Documents found in South African government archives containing details of plans to detonate a bomb on Hammarskjöld’s aircraft bear the name of Maxwell’s group—the shadowy South African Institute for Maritime Research (SAIMR). This prompted Brügger and his team to examine the group more closely.

They tracked down Jones, who claimed SAIMR had brought down the plane. Brügger has since arranged a meeting between Jones and UN investigators compiling an inquiry report into the crash, a UN spokesman confirmed to AFP—something the director says demonstrates his witness’s reliability. “I do know that what (Jones) says is outrageous and sensational,” Brügger said. “So far, what he has told us, what we were capable of corroborating, has checked out.”

‘Fed information’

But there are major issues with Brügger’s account. Many doubt SAIMR even existed on any substantial scale outside the warped mind of its “leader” Maxwell, a noted fantasist who dressed like an 18th-century British naval admiral. A New York Times report suggested Jones initially denied any HIV research project existed, and only professed knowledge of it on camera after being fed information by filmmakers.

Brügger admitted to AFP that there “could have been examples of cross-contamination” because his team spent so much time with Jones. “But I know for sure that the essential part of what he tells us is not something we fed him,” Brügger said, adding that it is typical for whistleblowers to “open up and tell you more as time progresses.” And then there is the issue of whether it would have even been possible to deliberately spread HIV.

Medical experts say the technology was beyond the scope of all but a handful of government laboratories at the time. Conspiracy theories about Western plots to weaponize AIDS in Africa were encouraged by the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and can cause serious harm by turning people off medical treatment. South Africa has extremely high HIV infection rates and a history of dangerous misinformation about its spread. Brügger told AFP he “thought hard and long” about the damage the vaccine claims could do, but insisted that “what Alexander Jones tells us needs to be published.” “If the response to this is that we are invigorating or revitalizing conspiracy theories, I think that is in some sense absurd,” he said.—AFP



A man bearing tribal marks on his cheeks speaks in Ibadan, southwest Nigeria.



A man bearing tribal marks on his cheeks poses in Ibadan, southwest Nigeria. — AFP photos



A woman bearing tribal marks on her cheeks poses in Ibadan, southwest Nigeria.



A man holds native instruments for tribal markings at the family compound of the Oloola Descendant Association, traditional practitioners of tribal markings in Ibadan, southwest Nigeria.

Lifestyle | Features



A young man skateboarding next to the Shanghai Long Museum in Shanghai. — AFP photos



Young people skateboarding next to the Shanghai Long Museum in Shanghai.



A boy practicing on a skateboard near the Shanghai Long Museum in Shanghai.



A young man skateboarding next to the Shanghai Long Museum in Shanghai.

ever, state media in May hit out at a group of young skateboarders practising their moves on one of Shanghai's busiest shopping streets. They were accused of "lack of self-discipline" and duly told to clear off. The Xinmin Evening News said there were plenty of dedicated skateboard areas in the city of 24 million people, including the battleground riverside park.

Kong Jianhao, founder of skater group BASE, said that summed up the opposition he and his friends often face. Many of the young skateboarders sport tattoos, adding to the impression that they are a fringe group in a society where conformity is strongly encouraged. "In foreign countries skateboarding can be as popular as cycling and roller-skating," said the 26-year-old.

"However, in China, skateboarding is a 'special' sport because Chinese may think it dangerous and niche. "The majority of older people may think skateboarders are not good kids and skateboarding is not a good sport." Kong, who has a tattoo on one bicep, founded BASE nine years ago. It now has at least 2,000 members, many of them teenagers or students, and he says skateboarding is increasing in popularity. The local sports authority has begun organizing competitions, he said, and old-fashioned attitudes are slowly changing.

'They drive us away'

But while perceptions are softening, skateboarders say they face a squeeze on where they can go. There are paid-for facilities in Shanghai, but these tend to be expensive and inconvenient to reach, say many skateboarders. They would be happy to practice on the streets or in other public spaces, but sometimes they are fined or chased away by the black-shirted security guards that are omnipresent in Chinese cities. For the past year Chen Xiafei, a university student, has travelled more than one hour to visit a specially built public facility in a western suburb.

But when AFP recently visited Linkong skate park it was unclear whether it was still open. The 19-year-old Chen, whose tattoos include a US dollar on one arm, said: "If we want to go inside, we need to climb over (the fence). "To clear us out of here, security guards even sprayed water on the ground before. "From Monday to Friday, they will not care too much about you, but on weekends they are strict and drive us away." — AFP

Luxury brands apologize over China T-shirt blunders

Luxury fashion brands Versace, Coach, and Givenchy have apologized for making perceived affronts to China's national sovereignty with T-shirts listing Hong Kong and Taiwan as separate countries. Versace was criticized on Sunday for a T-shirt that implied Hong Kong and Macau—both semi-autonomous cities in China—were independent. Hong Kong has become a particularly sensitive subject in mainland China as the Asian financial hub has been plunged into months of pro-democracy protests.

On Monday, images of a 2018 Coach T-shirt that said Taiwan—a self-ruled democratic island Beijing regards as its territory—and Hong Kong were not part of China again provoked anger online. Givenchy too was outed for a similar offence: a black T-shirt that listed Taiwan and Hong Kong separately from cities in mainland China. All three companies have tried to minimize the damage over the mistakes that cost them their high-profile Chinese brand ambassadors.

Coach said in a statement Monday that the clothes with the "serious inaccuracy" had been pulled, adding it was "fully aware of the severity of this error and deeply regret it". The brand corrected its website as well, after Chinese users shared screenshots online showing Hong Kong in a "find by country" drop-down list. Versace has also apologized. "We love China and resolutely respect China's territorial national sovereignty," the Italian brand wrote on its Twitter-like Weibo account on Sunday.

The controversial T-shirts were removed from its official sales channels and "destroyed" on July 24, the company explained. Givenchy's Weibo apology also reiterated its respect for China's sovereignty, and said the brand "resolutely upholds the One China Principle."

'Sacred and inviolable!'

Chinese users online, however, were not mollified. "There should be no missing part of China—Versace get out of China!" wrote one angry Weibo user Monday. Versace's representative in China, actress Yang Mi, said she would stop collaborating with the fashion house over the T-shirt incident, saying the brand was "suspected of damaging our country's national sovereignty."

Similarly Coach's ambassador, Chinese model Liu Wen, said she was terminating her work with the brand over its T-shirt blunder. "At all times, China's national sovereignty and territorial integrity are sacred and inviolable!" she posted on her official Weibo account. "I love my motherland, and resolutely defend China's national sovereignty!" she wrote. And Jackson Yee, a hugely popular singer in boyband TFBoys, also pulled the plug on collaborating with Givenchy.—AFP



In this file photo Donatella Versace waves as she takes part in the NYC Pride March as part of World Pride commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising in New York City. — AFP

'Lack of discipline'

The Shanghai city government declined comment to AFP. How-

Lifestyle | Feature



Grilled rats displayed for sale at a stall in Battambang province. — AFP photos



A rat hunter showing raw rats at a shop in Battambang province.

One for the rodent: Rats a cheap street snack in Cambodia

As he tears off a leg of a charcoal-grilled rat at a roadside stall in western Cambodia, Yit Sarin hails the simple joy of rodent and rice washed down with beer. “It’s delicious,” he says of the snack. Barbecued field rats are not everybody’s idea of a tasty treat, but in Cambodia’s rural Battambang province they are popular as a quick-and cheap-snack, with small skewered ones going for \$0.25 each while larger rodents can cost \$1.25. Rats were commonly eaten in the 1970s, under the ultra-Maoist Khmer Rouge, when frogs, tarantulas and other small creatures were considered fair game as a means to survive.

Now they are simply an inexpensive lunch for workers and farmers—though there is disagreement over what its meat tastes like. Sarin tells AFP that rat is like “chicken or beef”, whereas others say it’s more like pork. He is one of many customers and Cambodian tourists stopping at a stall outside of Battambang town, where rows of grilled field rats are displayed over burning coals and served with dipping

sauces made from lime juice, black peppers or chillies.

Vendor Ma Lis says the snack has grown in popularity since she launched her stall more than a decade ago and sold just a few kilograms a day. Today, she can net daily sales of around 20 kilograms, making brisk business from van-loads of travelling Cambodians and the occasional curious foreigner. The holiday season also spells bad news for the field rodents—Ma Lis can sell up to 180 large rats a day on the Cambodian New Year or water festival.

Dismissing any health concerns one might have about eating her unconventional treat, Ma Lis says her rodents are caught from rice fields and are good for you. “These rats are healthier than pork and chicken... they eat lotus roots and rice grains,” she says, as she flips the barbecued bodies on the grill. Despite the snack’s enduring appeal, many people remain squeamish. “They feel it is disgusting,” she says, smiling. — AFP



A man eating a grilled rat at a stall in Battambang province.



Customers eating grilled rats at a stall in Battambang province.

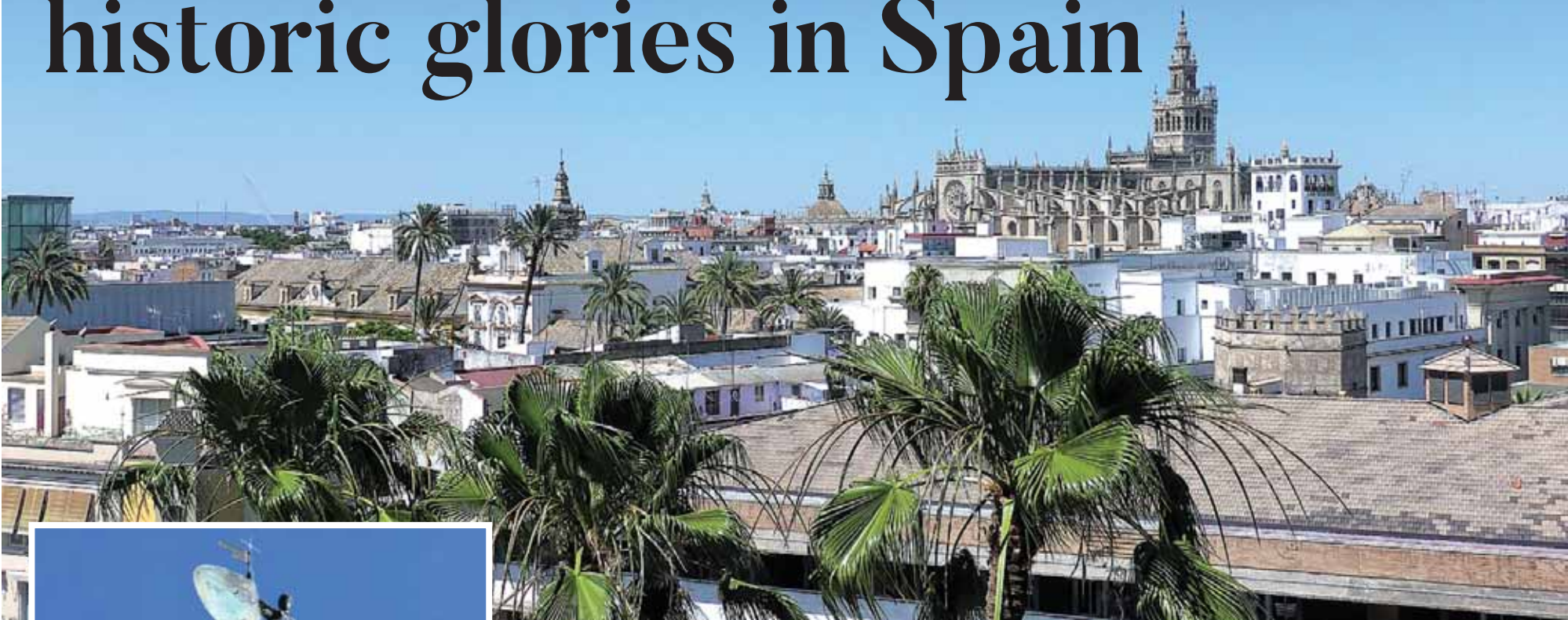


A customer choosing grilled rats at a stall in Battambang province.



A man grilling rats at a stall in Battambang province.

The Giralda recalls Muslim historic glories in Spain



The Giralda bell tower in the city of Seville, built in the 12th Century as the minaret for the city's Great Mosque during the Muslim Spain era, also known as Al-Andalus, remains one of the most significant landmarks in the Andalusian city and a symbol of its historic architectural monuments.

The Giralda was registered in 1987 as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The tower is 104 meters in height and remains one of the most important symbols of the city, as it has been since the Middle Ages. — KUNA



'Smart' clothing can boost wearable tech - Singapore researchers

Researchers in Singapore have invented 'smart' clothing they say can boost signals and save battery life on wireless devices such as headphones and smart watches. The invention called "metamaterial" allows radio waves like Bluetooth and Wi-Fi to glide across clothing between wearable devices instead of radiating outwards in all directions. This means sensors and wearable technology such as Apple Watches and AirPods can establish stronger connections faster and save en-

ergy, the scientists at National University of Singapore said. "This T-shirt increases the wireless connectivity of devices around my body by 1,000 times," said assistant professor John Ho, donning a sports shirt laced with comb-shaped strips of the metamaterial textile.

Ho, who oversaw a 10-member team that developed the technology over a year, said it could be used for measuring the vital signs of athletes or hospital patients. It could also keep signals

more secure by transmitting sensitive information close to the body and away from potential eavesdroppers on the radio waves, the scientists said. The Singapore team have obtained a provisional patent on the design of the textile, which can be washed, dried and ironed like normal clothing and costs just a few dollars per metre to produce. — Reuters

Lifestyle | Feature



Syrian taylor Khaldoun Al-Hussain poses at the workshop of the small Berlin-based company "Mimycri", where the material, from rubber dinghies initially abandoned by migrants on beaches of Greek islands, finds a second life. — AFP photos



A grey fabric on a table at the workshop of the small Berlin-based company "Mimycri" in Berlin.



Vera Guenther, co-founder of the small Berlin-based company "Mimycri", looks at plastic pieces at Mimycri's workshop in Berlin.

Refugee boats given new life as bags in Berlin

Khaldoun Alhussain concentrates as he stitches a piece of grey rubber, leaning over his sewing machine in the workshop of the small Berlin-based registered non-profit association called mimycri. A border of yellow thread takes shape on the material that he works with an expert hand. The grey material from rubber dinghies, abandoned by migrants on the beaches of Greek islands, is finding a second life in Berlin. It is transformed by refugees into different sorts of bags, then sold on the internet. Alhussain, a 34-year-old Syrian, is familiar with the robust and weather-resistant rubber that he now works with after being recovered in Greece.

Four years ago, he climbed into a makeshift boat made of the very same material to reach the Aegean island of Chios from the Turkish coast. "There were many of us and the crossing was very, very dangerous," says the tailor, who learnt his trade in garment factories in Damascus before he left to seek asylum in Germany.



Vera Guenther, co-founder of the small Berlin-based company "Mimycri", poses at Mimycri's workshop in Berlin.

Rafts to bags

Mimycri recovers inflatable rafts, abandoned on the shores of Chios and the nearby island of Lesbos, which both bore witness to the 2015 migration crisis when hundreds of thousands of refugees landed on Europe's beaches. At the peak of the crisis, Greece recorded up to 7,000 arrivals a day. While the number of crossings has slowed considerably since an agreement between the European Union and Turkey in 2016, it still averages around 100 people per day. On the spot, non-profit organizations recover the boats that litter the coast, along with discarded life jackets and clothing.

"We recover 90 percent of the boats stranded on the coast," says Toula Kitromilidi, Greek coordinator of the NGO Chios Eastern Shore Response Team. "The rest are used by the locals," he adds, indicating how for example farmers convert the boats' rubber panels into tarpaulin covers. Cut into large strips, the

panels are sent to Berlin, cleaned and transformed into useful bags. Customers "buy these bags because they tell a story, because they are more than just something you own," says Vera Guenther, one of mimycri's two founders, in her bright workshop.

Unique pieces with a story

Heavy sewing machines hum in the background under shelves filled with rolls of rubber. Each segment is unique, sometimes with stripes or marks that often tell their own tragic stories. Mimycri's customers, who snapped up some 120,000 euros (\$132,578) worth of its wares last year, can indirectly learn "what is happening in Syria... and how many people have died or are still dying there", adds Alhussain. His goal is to bring his mother to Berlin from Syria where she is sick and alone.

As for the inhabitants of the Greek islands, "they are very happy (with our work) because they do not want their beaches to be covered with plastic waste," says Guenther. She gave up her job in the environmental sector to run mimycri, which sells 11 products, with three percent of sales donated to NGOs in Greece. Its latest creation is a toiletry bag, which, like all the products it sells on the internet, is also sold in some shops in Berlin and Munich.

Helping hand

Guenther, 32, was among the Germans who came to offer their help to refugees as they arrived in droves at the country's train stations in the summer of 2015. "I wanted to be part of this new Germany that welcomes people who have lost their belongings, their homes and sometimes also their families," she said. During winter 2015-16, she left for Chios to help frightened migrants landing on the beaches after often harrowing journeys. With a German passport, she could make the crossing from the Turkish coastal city, Izmir, to the Greek island in 30 minutes for 14 euros "while drinking a beer and taking a little nap". She was profoundly aware that Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans were risking their lives on makeshift rafts by paying at least 1,000 dollars to human traffickers.

With her partner, Nora Azzaoui, she spent several months on the island and returned to Berlin with a section of rubber in her luggage. It was transformed into a bag and the idea to make the practical fashionable items was born. The two young women managed to raise 43,000 euros in a crowdfunding scheme to bring their dream to life. Now, mimycri employs five people, including a Syrian and a Pakistani. "We want to change the way we look at refugees," says Guenther. "These are people... who want to have a job, a house, just like all of us." — AFP



Vera Guenther, co-founder of the small Berlin-based company "Mimycri", poses at Mimycri's workshop in Berlin.

Lifestyle | Feature



A TPS-L2 Walkman audio player, the first Walkman to go on sale in Japan, at an exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the iconic device in Tokyo.



A WM-24 Sony Walkman audio player is displayed at an exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the iconic device, in Tokyo.

In this picture various models of Sony Walkman audio players are displayed at an exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the iconic device, in Tokyo. — AFP photos

Hit rewind: Sony Walkman triggers nostalgia on 40th birthday

Must-have 80s gadget and one-time icon of Japan electronics cool, Sony's Walkman turned 40 this year and like its now middle-aged fans, is clinging to its youth with high-tech updates. On July 1, 1979, as the global economy suffered through the second oil shock, Sony unleashed on the world a dark-blue brick of a machine with chunky silver buttons, the Walkman TPS-L2. Priced at a hefty 33,000 yen — \$300 in today's money—the first generation Walkman could not record but its stereo music playback function quickly captured hearts in Japan and then the world.

It had two headset jacks labeled “guys” and “dolls”-to allow two people to listen simultaneously. A bright orange “hotline” button could be pressed to lower the volume while the couple chatted. After a disappointing first month when only 3,000 units were sold, sales exploded to eventually hit 1.5 million worldwide for the first model. The second model, the WM-2, which came in red, black and silver, chalked up sales of 2.58 million. Over the following four decades, Sony sold more than 420 million “Walkmen” and stopped counting the number of models it had produced when it hit the 1,000 mark—about 15 years ago.

The Japanese electronics giant chose the name partly because of the popularity of Superman at the time and the fact it was based on an existing audio recorder called the “Pressman.” The word “Walkman” has since entered everyday language but the device was initially called “Soundabout”, “Stowaway” or “Freestyle” in some parts of the world. “The Walkman is my youth,” said Katsuya Kumagai, now 51, as he browsed an exhibition to mark the 40th anniversary of the first edition. “It was always in my life,” he added, scanning some of the 230 varieties of Walkman on show, which also offers nostalgic visitors the chance to play with some of the older models.

As an 11 year old, Kumagai could never afford a Walkman and envied older children as they whizzed by on roller skates plugged into the latest sounds. “I’m quite emotional. Memories from those days are flooding back,” he said, echoing the thoughts of many a middle-aged fan for whom the Walkman provided the soundtrack to their youth.

‘Play and pause’

Sony continued production of the cassette-tape Walkman until 2010, long after the technology had been overtaken first by the Compact Disc in the 1980s and the MiniDisc Walkman in 1992. Like many in the industry, the Japanese firm was shaken by the emergence of Apple's iPod when suddenly a listener's entire music collection was available on the move. But Sony has scrambled to keep up and the latest high-end versions cost well over \$2,000 and look more like a smartphone with flash memory and high-res audio—a far cry from the early generations. Scott Fung, a 17-year-old also attending the exhibition, has never known a time when people could not listen to music on the move and said he had “only heard” about the Walkman and was keen to satisfy his curiosity.

“Ever since I grew up, devices have always had screens and they don't have physical buttons,” he said clutching his smartphone and gazing at the early Walkmen on display. “When I was born, Sony Walkman was already not as relevant... (it) was not really a big part of my life,” said the student from Hong Kong who listens to music via his smartphone. But perhaps surprisingly, he

revealed himself to be a fan of the older tech. “I think this older design is really intelligent where you can just play and pause, go back and forth in a song, which is very interesting to me,” he said.

‘It's so cool’

Fung is apparently not alone in his penchant for the old-school technology: a first edition Walkman presented as new and never used sold recently for 1.3 million yen, a mere 40 times its initial price. Sony engineer Hiroaki Sato, who worked on the early Walkman editions, even said it would be “quite difficult” to replicate the technology now, as it would involve painstakingly reproducing high-precision components.

He said the current versions would likely not exist in 40 years as the recording formats and rechargeable batteries would undoubtedly have changed beyond recognition. But the old Walkman has stood the test of time. “Repairing this, I realized this is an excellent machine. If we replace the damaged rubber belt, it works normally. It's so cool,” he said. — AFP



Various models of Sony Walkman audio players are displayed at an exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the iconic device, in Tokyo.



A woman walks past an oversized replica of a WM-F5 Sony Walkman audio player, outside the venue for an exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the portable music player, in Tokyo.

OVEN-ROASTED SALMON WITH TANGERINE AND GINGER RELISH



You will really relish this roasted treat

It's no wonder salmon is one of the most popular fish. Its flesh is rich-tasting, thanks to high levels of heart-healthy oils, and it takes well to many treatments. The key is to avoid overcooking it, especially wild salmon, which is leaner than farmed.

Our hybrid roasting method solved this by heating the oven to 500 F before dropping the temperature to 275 F. The initial blast of heat firmed the exterior and rendered some fat while the fish gently cooked. Salmon is often roasted in butter, but we wanted a healthier approach that would contrast with the fish's richness. So we made a bright tangerine relish perked up with spicy ginger.

Skin-on salmon fillets hold together bet-

ter during cooking. If you can't find tangerines, you can use oranges. If your salmon is less than 1 inch thick, start checking for doneness early. If using farmed salmon, cook until thickest part of fillet registers 125 F.

Ingredients

Servings 4

Start to finish 35 minutes

Ingredients for Relish

4 tangerines, rind and pith removed and segments cut into 1/2 inch pieces (1 cup)

1 scallion, sliced thin

2 teaspoons lemon juice

2 teaspoons cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil

1 1/2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

Salt and pepper

Ingredients for Salmon

4 (4- to 6 ounce) skin-on wild-caught salmon fillets, 1 inch thick

1 teaspoon cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper

Preparation

Place tangerines in fine-mesh strainer set over medium bowl and drain for 15 minutes. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon tangerine juice from bowl. Whisk in scallion, lemon juice, oil and ginger. Stir in tangerines and season with salt and pepper to taste. Adjust oven rack to lowest position, place aluminum foil-lined rimmed baking sheet on rack, and heat oven to 500 F. Pat salmon dry with paper towels, rub with oil, and

season with salt, pepper.

Once oven reaches 500 F, reduce oven temperature to 275 F. Remove sheet from oven and carefully place salmon, skin-side down, on hot sheet. Roast until center is still translucent when checked with tip of paring knife and registers 120 F (for medium-rare), 4 to 6 minutes. Slide fish spatula along underside of fillets and transfer to individual plates or serving platter, leaving skin behind; discard skin. Top with relish, serve.

Nutrition information per serving:

283 calories; 115 calories from fat; 13 g fat (2 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 78 mg cholesterol; 356 mg sodium; 13 g carbohydrate; 2 g fiber; 10 g sugar; 29 g protein.

A vinaigrette packed with herbs can make salmon even better

It's no wonder salmon is so popular: Its flesh is rich-tasting thanks to high levels of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. A great way to ensure moist, tender salmon is to poach it. And a vinaigrette packed with fresh herbs offers surprising nutritional value. Poaching the salmon in just enough liquid to come half an inch up its sides meant we didn't need much to boost the flavor of the liquid.

However, the portion of the salmon that wasn't submerged needed to be steamed to cook through properly, and the low poaching cooking temperature didn't create enough steam. To keep the bottoms of the fillets from overcooking, we placed them on top of lemon slices. After poaching, we reduced the poaching liquid and added some olive oil and capers for an easy vinaigrette-style sauce. If using wild salmon, which contains less fat than farmed salmon, cook the fillets until they register 120 F (for medium-rare).

Ingredients

Servings: 4

Start to finish: 30 minutes

1 lemon, sliced into 1/4 inch-thick rounds, plus lemon wedges for serving

2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley, stems reserved

2 tablespoons minced fresh tarragon, stems reserved

2 shallots, minced

1/2 cup water

1 (1 1/2 pound) skinless salmon fillet, 1 inch thick

Salt and pepper

2 tablespoons capers, rinsed and minced

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

Preparation

Arrange lemon slices in single layer over bottom of 12-inch skillet. Scatter parsley stems, tarragon stems and half of shallots over lemon slices, then add water. Cut salmon crosswise into 4 fillets. Pat dry with paper towels, and season with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Lay salmon fillets, skin side down, on top of lemons and herb sprigs. Set pan over high heat, and bring to simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook until centers are still translucent when checked with tip of paring knife and register 125 F (for medium-rare), 10 to 12 minutes.

Transfer salmon, herb sprigs and lemon slices to paper towel-lined plate, cover with aluminum foil, and let drain while finishing sauce. Return cooking liquid to medium-high heat, and simmer until reduced to 1 tablespoon, 3 to 5 minutes. Combine remaining shallots, minced parsley, minced tarragon, capers and oil in bowl. Strain reduced cooking liquid through fine-mesh strainer into bowl, whisk to combine, and season with pepper to taste. Gently transfer drained salmon to individual serving plates, discarding lemon slices and herb stems. Spoon vinaigrette evenly over tops and serve.

Nutrition information per serving: 279 calories; 113 calories from fat; 13 g fat (2 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 78 mg cholesterol; 457 mg sodium; 6 g carbohydrate; 1 g fiber; 2 g sugar; 29 g protein.



POACHED SALMON WITH HERB AND CAPER VINAIGRETTE



Can't-miss Catalonia: Top experiences for first-timers



Venture beyond Barcelona and its urban pleasures and you'll find a region of forested hills, pristine beaches and medieval villages. The dramatic peaks of the Pyrenees offer the perfect backdrop for skiing in winter and hiking in summer, and the vineyards and rustic taverns are a must for anyone interested in learning how Catalonia became one of Europe's most celebrated regions for wine and gastronomy.

Take a tour of a cava bodega

Cava, the Catalan answer to champagne, is perhaps the region's best-known export, and the place to sample it is at the source - in one of the Modernista bodegas that dot the area known as the Penedes. The village of Sant Sadurni d'Anoia is home to the two giants, Freixenet and Codorniu, both of which are easily reached by train from Barcelona. Freixenet has been around for a hundred years, and its tourist facilities include a little train you can ride around the vineyards, and a tasting room. The historic Codorniu bodega, meanwhile, is said to be where it all began, and is worth a visit for its spectacular Modernista building alone. At nearby Vilafranca del Penedes is another eminent cava producer, Torres, and the town also has a wine museum, Vinseum, that makes for a diverting hour or two.

Explore the Costa Brava

The long, twisting coastline that runs up to the French bor-



der is blissfully unspoilt, thanks to the difficulty of reaching its towns by public transport. With a car, however, you can visit a series of tiny coves wrapped around golden beaches bordering crystalline water - some backed by small towns where you might find a place to linger over paella, others completely untouched.

The Cami de Ronda is a coastal path constructed for police patrols to watch out for smuggling at the end of the Civil War, and runs almost uninterrupted for the entire length of the Costa Brava. These days it's used as a hiking route, and even small sections of it can be incredibly rewarding - ask the tourist office for a map.

Make for the mountains

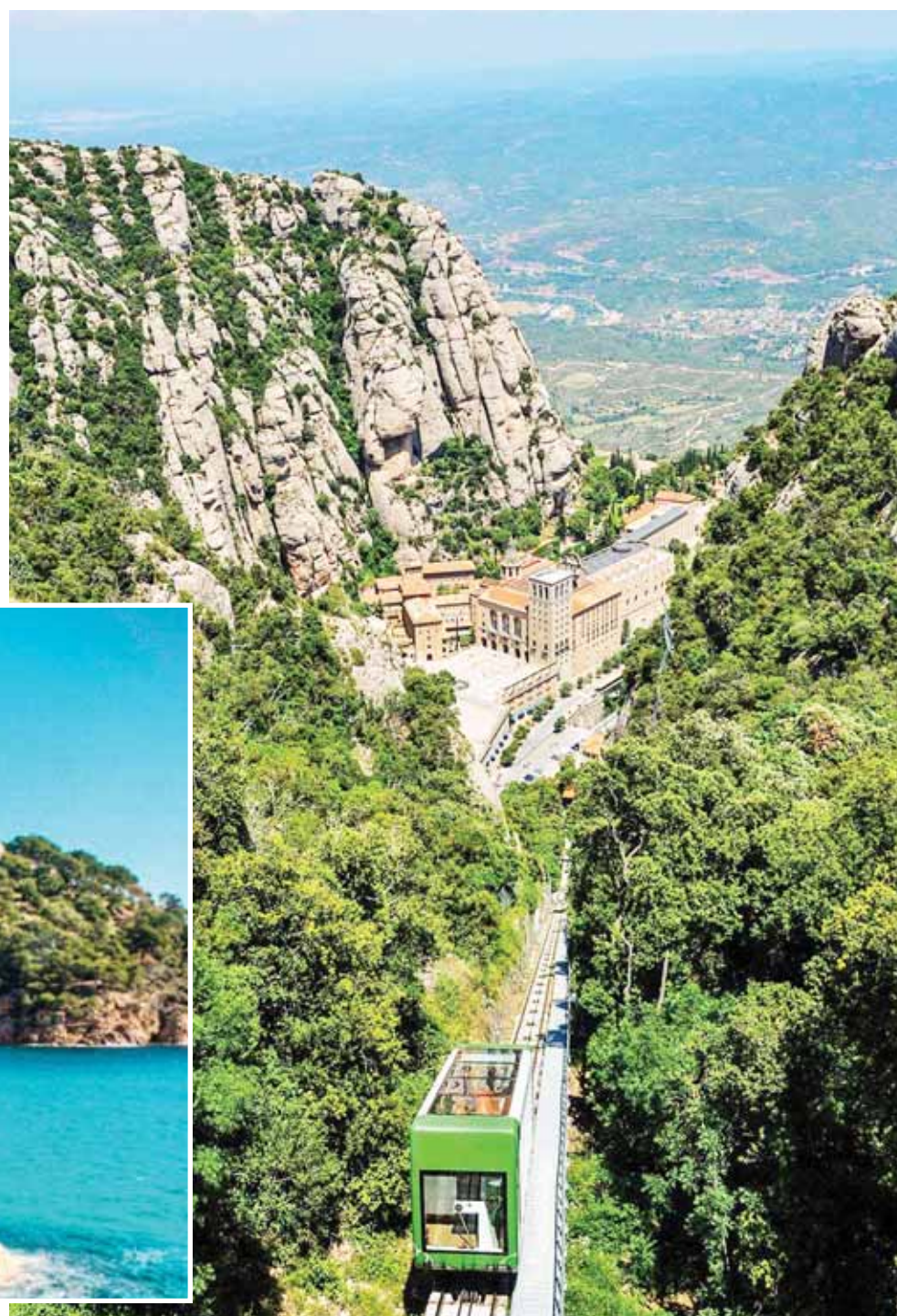
Though known as a mountain range, Collserola - which flanks Barcelona to the northwest - is really a string of hills providing some spectacular views across the city and

out to sea. Similarly good for a morning's hike is the small mountain of Montserrat, considered the spiritual home of Catalonia for the Benedictine monastery that perches there. Take a cable car or cog-wheel train to get up there and enjoy the panoramic views.

Skiers, however, will want to head for the Pyrenees, which usually have a good smattering of snow in winter and cater for all budgets and abilities - from the family-friendly La Molina to the royalty-friendly Baqueira Beret. Glorious mountain towns provide plenty of accommodation and eating options if the resorts or the lively Puigcerda don't appeal - La Seu d'Urgell is especially lovely, a mostly medieval town with a Romanesque cathedral.

Follow in the footsteps of Cistercian monks

Bafflingly under-visited by tourists, the town of Montblanc is one of Catalonia's most picturesque, a labyrinth of winding streets,



Lifestyle | Travel



ringed by 13th-century walls. An easy train ride from Barcelona, it has a smattering of traditional family-run restaurants and hotels and makes a great base to visit the three monasteries of the region: Poblet, Santa Maria de Vallbona and the Monestir de Santes Creus. Collectively known as the 'Cistercian Route', these three extraordinary buildings give a real sense of what the monastic life was like centuries ago.

The Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Poblet (generally known simply as 'Poblet'), built as a palace and religious complex in the 12th century, is quite majestic. You can still visit the 14th-century palace, the church, chapel and cloister as a part of a guided tour. Similarly stunning is the Reial Monestir de Santes Creus, with an especially evocative Gothic cloister and chapterhouse. The most modest of the three is Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Vallbona, a still-functioning convent (with only eight nuns) and a former favourite of queens - Queen Violant of Hungary is buried here.

Head south

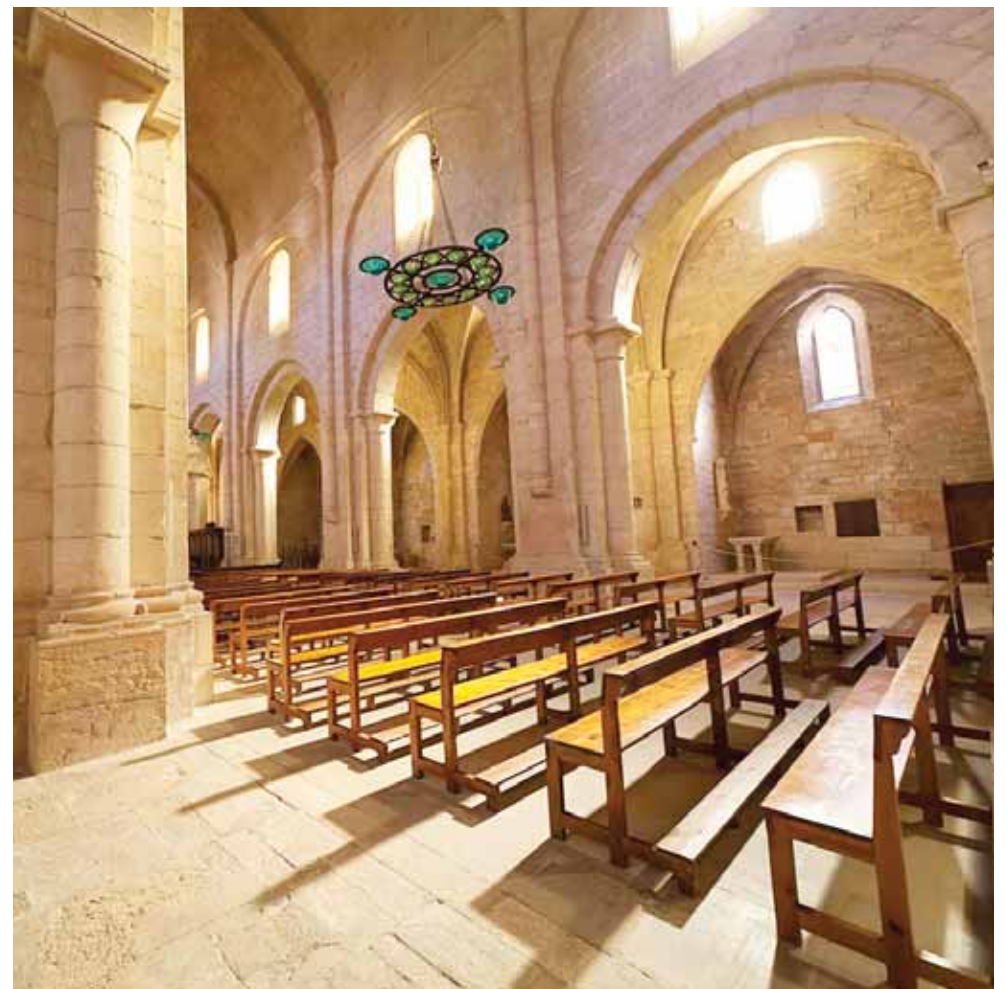
For a sense of the variety that Catalonia has to offer, take a trip down the coast south from Barcelona. Just under an hour away is pretty, whitewashed Sitges, a sedate and up-market place, which goes wild during carnival season thanks largely to its huge LGBTQ community. Carry on south from here and you will arrive at Tarragona, with its world-class collection of Roman remains, which include a

perfectly preserved aqueduct, amphitheatre, circus and forum. End your trip at the Ebre delta, a curious and peaceful region of rice paddies, lakes and flat paths (ideal for cycling), with an abundance of birdlife, including flamingos. Its cuisine, too, is unique - be sure to try dishes with the locally grown rice, and don't pass up on the eel.

Wander the medieval heart of Girona

Girona deserves at least a couple of days all to itself. A splendid medieval town split into old and new (it's all relative) by the river Onyar, its streets are considered so well preserved that it was used as a backdrop for *Game of Thrones*. At its heart is the lofty 14th-century cathedral, which commands a view across what was, until the pogrom of 1492, the city's Jewish quarter. Vestiges of that time include the Banys Arabs (actually a Jewish/Muslim bath-house) and the Museu d'Historia dels Jueus, an outstanding museum devoted to the history of the Call (Jewish quarter).

Less well-known, but utterly charming, is the Museu del Cinema, a fascinating look at story-telling as well as the technical and creative aspects of the seventh art. It has some curious collections of cinematic ephemera, including the dress that Dustin Hoffman wore in *Tootsie*; Batman's mask from the Tim Burton movie; James Dean's boots from *Rebel Without a Cause*; and some kryptonite from *Superman*. (www.lonelyplanet.com)



Comic

Word Search

Car Parts

Find and circle all of the car parts that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of an additional car part.

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

- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| AIR BAG | CLUTCH | GAS TANK | STARTER |
| AIR CONDITIONER | COOLING FAN | HEADLIGHT | STEERING WHEEL |
| ALTERNATOR | CRANKCASE | HOOD | SUSPENSION |
| AXLE | CRUISE CONTROL | HORN | TAIL LIGHT |
| BATTERY | DEFOGGER | IGNITION | TIRES |
| BODY | DEFROSTER | MUFFLER | TRANSMISSION |
| BRAKE | DOOR | POWER WINDOW | TRUNK |
| BUMPER | DRIVE LINE | RADIATOR | TURN SIGNAL |
| CAR SEAT | DRIVESHAFT | RADIO | WHEEL RIM |
| CARBURETOR | ENGINE | REAR VIEW MIRROR | WHEELS |
| CARRIER RACK | FRAME | ROOF | WINDSHIELD |
| CHILD SEAT | FUSE | SEAT BELT | |

Yesterday's Solution

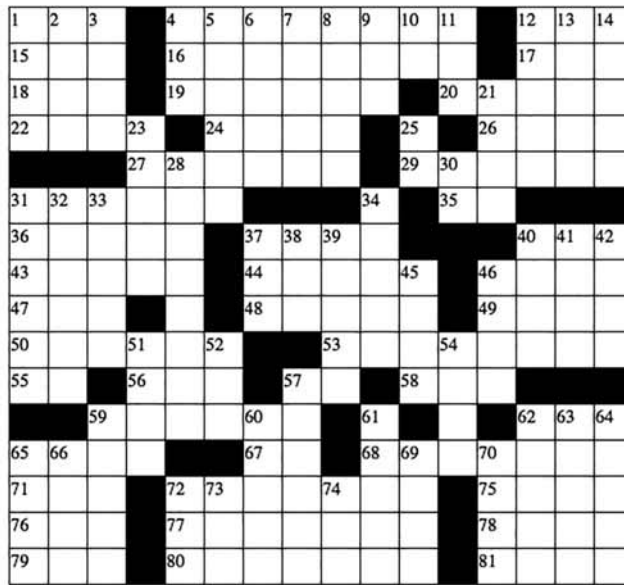
Capital Cities of Europe

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

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AMSTERDAM (Netherlands) | EDINBURGH (Scotland) | ROME (Italy) |
| ANDORRA LA VELLA (Andorra) | HELSINKI (Finland) | SAN MARINO (San Marino) |
| ANKARA (Turkey) | KIEV (Ukraine) | SARAJEVO (Bosnia-Herzegovina) |
| ATHENS (Greece) | LISBON (Portugal) | SKOPJE (Macedonia) |
| BAKU (Azerbaijan) | LJUBLJANA (Slovenia) | SOFIA (Bulgaria) |
| BELFAST (Northern Ireland) | LONDON (England) | STOCKHOLM (Sweden) |
| BELGRADE (Serbia/Montenegro) | LUXEMBOURG (Luxembourg) | TALLINN (Estonia) |
| BERLIN (Germany) | MADRID (Spain) | TBILISI (Georgia) |
| BERN (Switzerland) | MINSK (Belarus) | TIRANE (Albania) |
| BRATISLAVA (Slovakia) | MONACO (Monaco) | VADUZ (Liechtenstein) |
| BRUSSELS (Belgium) | MOSCOW (Russian Federation) | VALLETTA (Malta) |
| BUCHAREST (Romania) | NICOSIA (Cyprus) | VATICAN CITY (Vatican City) |
| BUDAPEST (Hungary) | OSLO (Norway) | VIENNA (Austria) |
| CARDIFF (Wales) | PARIS (France) | VILNIUS (Lithuania) |
| CHISINAU (Moldova) | PRAGUE (Czech Republic) | WARSAW (Poland) |
| COPENHAGEN (Denmark) | REYKJAVIK (Iceland) | YEREVAN (Armenia) |
| DUBLIN (Ireland) | RIGA (Latvia) | ZAGREB (Croatia) |

The hidden sentence is:
THE MOST POPULOUS CITY IN EUROPE IS MOSCOW WHICH HAS OVER EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE

Crossword 2282



ACROSS

- Characteristic of a mob.
- The academic world.
- The smallest multiple that is exactly divisible by every member of a set of numbers.
- Any of various primates with short tails or no tail at all.
- (Italian cookery) Squid prepared as food.
- An association of countries in the western hemisphere.
- Having leadership guidance.
- United States screenwriter who was blacklisted and imprisoned for refusing to cooperate with congressional investigations of communism in America (1905-1976).
- The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
- A fraudulent business scheme.
- (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
- South African term for 'boss'.
- On a ship, train, plane or other vehicle.
- A very loud utterance (like the sound of an animal).
- Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in northernmost Burma and adjacent China and India.
- A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
- Of or relating to or involving an area.
- Wife of Balder.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- Type genus of the Suidae.
- Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
- A sensation (as of a cold breeze or bright light) that precedes the onset of certain disorders such as a migraine attack or epileptic seizure.
- Apathy and inactivity in the practice of virtue (personified as one of the deadly sins).
- A light volatile flammable poisonous liquid alcohol.
- A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- An ugly evil-looking old woman.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- An accidental hole that allows something (fluid or light etc.) to enter or escape.
- A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
- With eagerness.
- A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
- Concerning those not members of the clergy.
- Perennial herb of East India to Polynesia and Australia cultivated for its large edible root yielding Otaheite arrowroot starch.
- Baked dish of layers of lasagna pasta with sauce and cheese and meat or vegetables.
- The part of the eye that contains the iris and ciliary body and choroid.
- A close friend who accompanies his buddies in their activities.
- A disposition to behave in a certain way.
- Soft white semisolid fat obtained by rendering the fatty tissue of the hog v.1.

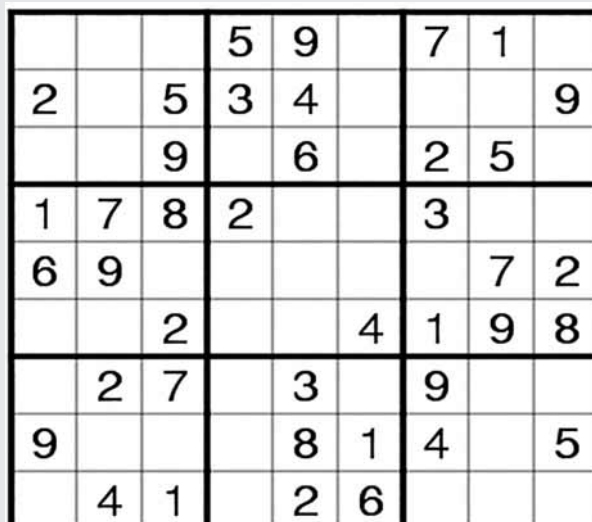
DOWN

- A master's degree in library science.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- English monk and scholar (672-735).
- A legal document codifying the result of deliberations of a committee or society or legislative body.
- An abundant nonmetallic tetravalent element occurring in three allotropic forms.
- Scale-like structure between the base of the wing and the halter of a two-winged fly.
- Any of various hard resins from trees of the family Dipterocarpaceae and of the genus Agathis.
- To fix or set securely or deeply.
- An enzyme that catalyzes the oxidation of many body compounds (e.g., epinephrine and norepinephrine and serotonin).
- A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
- A resource.
- Relating to or applicable to or concerned with the administration of a city or town or district rather than a larger area.
- Tropical American tree producing cacao beans.
- Small shrubby African tree having compound leaves and racemes of small fragrant green flowers.
- (usually followed by 'to') Having the necessary means or skill or know-how or authority to do something.
- United States naval officer and historian (1840-1914).
- A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
- Of or relating to or being a speech sound that is articulated using both lips.
- A Russian river.
- A river that rises in northern Colombia and flows generally eastward to the Orinoco in central Venezuela.
- Perfume esp. with a censor.
- A painful emotion resulting from an awareness of inadequacy or guilt.
- A Turkish unit of weight equal to about 2.75 pounds.
- A wooden pin pushed or driven into a surface.
- A unit of current equal to 10 amperes.
- Ancient Italian deity in human shape, with horns, pointed ears and a goat's tail.
- A rounded thickly curled hairdo.
- Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
- East Indian tree bearing a profusion of intense vermilion velvet-textured blooms and yielding a yellow dye.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- A special way of doing something.
- A native of ancient Troy.
- A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
- A living organism characterized by voluntary movement.
- How a result is obtained or an end is achieved.
- An anti-TNF compound (trade name Arava) that is given orally.
- Someone who plies a trade.
- Any tropical gymnosperm of the order Cycadales.
- English essayist (1775-1834).
- Type genus of the Anatidae.
- The twelfth month of the civil year.
- A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
- A tight-fitting headdress.
- One of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.

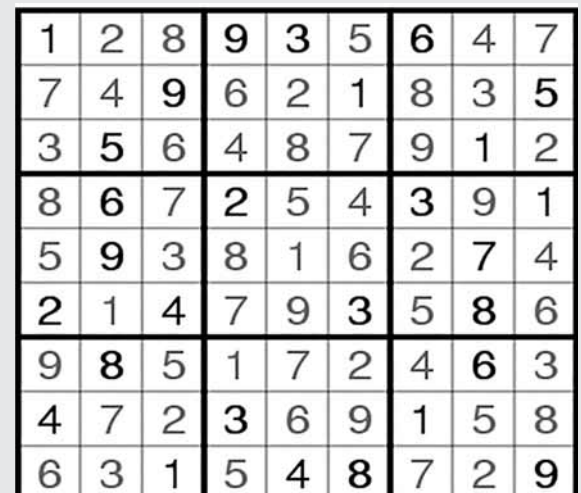
Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



TV Listings



01:10 Ultimate Justice
02:50 Deja Vu
04:55 Faster
06:50 The Drowning
08:30 Faster
10:20 Jack Reacher: Never Go Back
12:20 Last Action Hero
14:30 Deja Vu
16:35 Chasing Gold
18:10 12 Rounds
20:00 Bad Boys
22:00 Child's Play 2
23:45 Saw III



00:45 North Woods Law
01:40 Intruders
02:35 Wolves And Warriors
03:25 Lone Star Law
04:15 North Woods Law
05:02 Wildest Indochina
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees
06:36 Vet On The Loose
07:00 Animal Battlegrounds
07:25 Evan Goes Wild
08:15 Evan Goes Wild
09:10 The Bronx Zoo
12:50 Wolves And Warriors
13:45 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
14:40 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved
15:05 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved
15:35 Intruders
16:30 Flying Wild Alaska
17:25 Animal Cops Houston
18:20 Cats 101
19:15 The Vet Life
20:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
21:05 Wildest Indochina
22:00 Intruders
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees
23:50 The Vet Life



00:20 The Witness For The Prosecution
01:25 Holby City
02:20 Inside No. 9
02:50 The Detectorists
03:20 EastEnders
03:50 EastEnders
04:20 Father Brown
05:05 Death In Paradise
06:00 EastEnders
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Last Tango In Halifax
07:55 Carters Get Rich
08:20 The Detectorists
08:50 The Detectorists
09:20 Holby City
10:15 Death In Paradise
11:10 Father Brown
11:55 Inside No. 9
12:30 Holby City
13:25 The Musketeers
14:20 The Detectorists
15:20 Casualty
17:05 Holby City
18:00 The Detectorists
18:30 Agatha Raisin
20:10 Ordeal By Innocence
21:05 Line Of Duty
22:10 Cold Feet
23:00 The Detectorists
23:30 Ordeal By Innocence



00:00 Homicide Hunter
01:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
01:55 Homicide: Hours To Kill
02:50 It Takes A Killer
03:45 Live PD: Police Patrol
04:10 Live PD: Police Patrol
04:30 The First 48
05:15 Homicide Hunter
06:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
07:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
07:20 The First 48
08:50 Homicide Hunter
10:30 Homicide: Hours To Kill
11:25 Homicide: Hours To Kill

12:20 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol
14:10 It Takes A Killer
15:05 Homicide Hunter
16:00 The First 48
17:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
18:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Homicide Hunter
21:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
22:00 The Jail: 60 Days In
23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
23:30 Live PD: Police Patrol



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



00:05 Kids vs Film
00:30 Insane Coaster Wars: World Domination
00:55 Insane Coaster Wars: World Domination
01:20 My Cat From Hell
02:10 America's Cutest Pets
03:00 Breaking Magic
03:25 Breaking Magic
03:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
04:40 Kids vs Film
05:05 Kids vs Film
05:30 My Cat From Hell
06:15 America's Cutest Pets
07:00 Breaking Magic
07:25 Breaking Magic
07:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
08:40 Weather Top Tens
09:30 How We Invented The World
10:20 How The Earth Works
11:10 Kids vs Film
11:35 Kids vs Film
12:00 Xtreme Waterparks
12:25 Xtreme Waterparks
12:50 The Big Brain Theory
13:40 Did I Mention Invention?
14:05 Did I Mention Invention?
14:30 Strange Evidence
15:20 The Carbonaro Effect
15:45 The Carbonaro Effect
16:10 Kids vs Film
16:35 Kids vs Film
17:00 My Cat From Hell
17:50 America's Cutest Pets
18:40 Breaking Magic
19:05 Breaking Magic
19:30 Guy's Grocery Games
20:20 Sci-Jinks
20:45 Sci-Jinks

21:10 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie
22:00 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
22:25 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
22:50 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life
23:40 Kids vs Film



00:00 Home Alone
01:00 Evil Stepmothers
02:00 The Real Story With Maria Elena Salinas
03:00 Body Cam
03:45 Home Alone
04:30 Who Killed Jane Doe?
05:20 Border Control: Spain
05:45 Border Control: Spain
06:10 Blood Relatives
07:00 Murder Decoded
07:55 Murder Decoded
08:50 Reasonable Doubt
09:45 Reasonable Doubt
10:40 Border Control: Spain
11:10 Border Control: Spain
11:35 Who Killed Jane Doe?
12:30 Family Man, Family Murderer: An ID Murder Mystery
13:25 Blood Relatives
14:20 Nightmare Next Door
16:10 Border Control: Spain
17:05 The Perfect Murder
19:00 Disappeared
21:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
22:00 Forbidden: Dying For Love
23:00 Diabolical: Deadly Love



00:00 Alex & Co.
00:25 Alex & Co.
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:15 Evermoor Chronicles
01:40 Alex & Co.
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:20 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:10 Alex & Co.
04:35 Violetta
05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 Rolling With The Ronks
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks
06:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
06:25 Coop And Cami Ask The World
06:50 Disney Mickey Mouse
06:55 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp
07:20 Penny On M.A.R.S
07:45 K.C. Undercover
08:10 Bizaardvark
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
09:25 Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure
09:50 Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure
10:15 Bizaardvark
10:40 Bizaardvark
11:05 Liv And Maddie
11:30 Liv And Maddie
11:55 K.C. Undercover
12:15 K.C. Undercover
12:40 Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure
13:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
13:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
13:50 101 Dalmatian Street
14:15 Shake It Up
14:40 K.C. Undercover
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:10 Fast Layne
15:35 Penny On M.A.R.S
16:00 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
16:50 Raven's Home
17:15 Coop And Cami Ask The World
17:40 Bizaardvark
18:05 K.C. Undercover
18:30 Bunk'd
18:55 Descendants Wicked World
19:00 Raven's Home
19:25 Liv And Maddie
19:50 K.C. Undercover

20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
20:20 A.N.T. Farm
20:45 Bizaardvark
21:10 Coop And Cami Ask The World
21:35 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:50 Lolirock
23:10 Evermoor Chronicles
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 The Lion Guard
00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes
00:30 Trulli Tales S1
01:00 PJ Masks
01:25 PJ Masks
01:50 The Hive S2
02:00 Zou
02:15 Zou
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 The Hive
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Zou
03:55 Zou
04:10 Zou
04:25 The Hive
04:35 The Hive S2
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster
05:10 Henry Hugglemonster
05:35 The Hive
05:45 PJ Masks
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S2
07:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Y3
07:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
08:00 PJ Masks
08:30 Vampirina
09:00 Sofia The First S1
09:30 Elena Of Avalor S2
10:00 Fancy Nancy Splits S1
10:20 Fancy Nancy Splits S1
10:40 Disney Muppet Babies S1 Splits
11:00 Connect And Protect
12:00 PJ Masks
13:30 Vampirina S1
14:30 Vampirina
15:00 Puppy Dog Pals S2 Splits
15:20 Puppy Dog Pals S2 Splits
15:40 Puppy Dog Pals S2 Splits
16:00 The Lion Guard
16:30 Elena Of Avalor S2
17:00 Gigantosaurus S1
17:25 Paprika S1 Shorts
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
18:00 Fancy Nancy S1
18:30 Vampirina
19:00 PJ Masks
19:30 Puppy Dog Pals S2
20:00 The Lion Guard
20:25 Paprika S1 Shorts
20:30 Doc McStuffins
21:00 Gigantosaurus S1
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
22:00 Fancy Nancy S1
22:30 Vampirina
23:00 PJ Masks
23:30 Puppy Dog Pals S2



00:15 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
01:05 Savage Builds
01:50 How Do They Do It?
02:15 How Do They Do It?
02:35 What On Earth?
03:20 Wheeler Dealers
04:05 Fast N' Loud
04:50 Diesel Brothers
05:35 Garage Gold
06:00 Shed And Buried
06:20 Garage Gold
06:45 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
07:35 Deadliest Catch
08:20 Garage Rehab
09:10 Kindig Customs
09:55 Salvage Hunters
10:45 Diesel Brothers
11:30 Wheeler Dealers
12:20 Fast N' Loud

13:05 Shed And Buried
13:30 Garage Gold
13:55 Salvage Hunters
14:40 Into Alaska
15:30 Wildest Indochina
16:15 American Chopper
17:05 Kindig Customs
17:50 Garage Rehab
18:40 Diesel Brothers
19:25 Wheeler Dealers
20:15 Fast N' Loud
21:00 Unique Rides
21:50 American Chopper
22:40 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman
23:30 Deadliest Catch



00:15 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
00:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
01:00 Boyster
01:25 Boyster
01:45 Counterfeit Cat
02:10 Counterfeit Cat
02:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
03:00 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
03:20 Boyster
03:45 Boyster
04:10 Counterfeit Cat
04:35 Counterfeit Cat
05:00 Furiki Wheels
05:29 Furiki Wheels
06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
06:25 Space Chickens In Space
06:35 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest
07:00 Phineas And Ferb
07:25 Phineas And Ferb
07:35 Phineas And Ferb
08:00 Big Hero 6 The Series
08:25 Mech-X4
08:50 Milo Murphy's Law
09:15 Milo Murphy's Law
09:40 Big City Greens
10:00 Big City Greens
10:25 Kick Buttowski
10:50 Phineas And Ferb
11:00 Gravity Falls
11:25 Gravity Falls
11:50 Milo Murphy's Law
12:05 Furiki Wheels
12:30 DuckTales
12:55 Big Hero 6 The Series
13:20 Lab Rats
13:45 Lab Rats
14:10 Phineas And Ferb
14:35 Phineas And Ferb
15:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
15:25 Phineas And Ferb
15:35 Space Chickens In Space
16:00 Big City Greens
16:25 Big Hero 6 The Series
16:50 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:40 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
18:05 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
18:29 Mech-X4
19:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
19:25 Marvel's Spider-Man
19:50 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest
20:15 Gravity Falls
20:40 Gravity Falls
21:05 Kick Buttowski
21:30 Big City Greens
21:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
22:00 Milo Murphy's Law
22:29 Milo Murphy's Law
23:00 Furiki Wheels
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost
23:50 Dude That's My Ghost



00:00 Botched
01:00 Botched
02:00 E! News
03:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
04:00 WAGs LA
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop
08:55 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian

09:50 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
10:45 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
11:40 E! News
12:35 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
15:20 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 Very Cavallari
19:00 E! News
20:00 Botched
23:00 Very Cavallari



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



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



00:20 Cities Of The Underworld
01:05 Pawn Stars UK
01:50 American Pickers
02:35 Storage Wars
03:25 Ax Men
04:15 Custer: The Final Mystery
05:05 Forged In Fire
06:00 Fifth Gear
06:45 Cities Of The Underworld
07:30 Pawn Stars UK
08:15 American Pickers
09:00 Storage Wars
09:45 Ax Men
10:30 Custer: The Final Mystery
11:15 Forged In Fire
12:00 American Pickers
15:00 Road Hawks
15:45 Detroit Steel
18:45 The Universe

Stars



Aries (March 21-April 19)

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



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

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



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

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



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

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



Leo (July 23-August 22)

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



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

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



Libra (September 23-October 22)

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



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

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



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

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



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

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



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

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



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

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

Country Codes

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

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

Friday, August 16, 2019

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

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

ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

SPECIALIZED IN:

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

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

Specialized in:

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

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

- ◆ Laryngology Fellowship - Canada
- ◆ Fellow of the European Board Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the British Laryngological Association
- ◆ Member of the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
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Dr. Abdullah Al Haddad
 Surgery Department
 Consultant General Surgery, Laparoscopic & Colo - Rectal Surgeon

daralshifa
 Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

Scope of Clinical Practice:

- ◆ General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- ◆ Single Port Surgery
- ◆ Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, including Colorectal Cancer
- ◆ Surgical treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
- ◆ Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- ◆ SIAFT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Pilonidal sinus)
- ◆ Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

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

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

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Dr. Mohammad Agha
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Dr Sahar Ghannam
Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser

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Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 am to 5 pm
Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm

Friday is a holiday.

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

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

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

Academic Certificates – Training

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

Scope of clinical Practice.

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

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

Classifieds

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
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Air India EXPRESS	22438185/4
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

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

BY NIGHT: Hot to relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 38 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	48 °C	33 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	48 °C	33 °C
ABDALY	48 °C	30 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	48 °C	37 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	28 °C
SALMIYAH	44 °C	32 °C
AHMADI	39 °C	33 °C
NUWAISIB	43 °C	31 °C
WAFRA	46 °C	34 °C
SALMY	46 °C	33 °C

SFC. CHART	15/08/2019 0000 UTC
<small>MSL Analysis (hPa) Valid 0000 UTC 15 AUG 2019</small>	

4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	08/16	Very hot and with a chance for rising dust and some scattered clouds will appear	47 °C	32 °C	NW	15 - 50 km/h
Saturday	08/17	Hot with a chance for rising dust	45 °C	29 °C	NW	20 - 55 km/h
Sunday	08/18	Hot	44 °C	29 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 35 km/h
Monday	08/19	Hot	46 °C	31 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	03:50
Sunrise	05:16
Zuhr	11:54
Asr	15:28
Sunset	18:29
Isha	19:51

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	48 °C
MIN. Temp.	31 °C
MAX. RH	46 %
MIN. RH	08 %
MAX. Wind	S 32 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Business

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2019

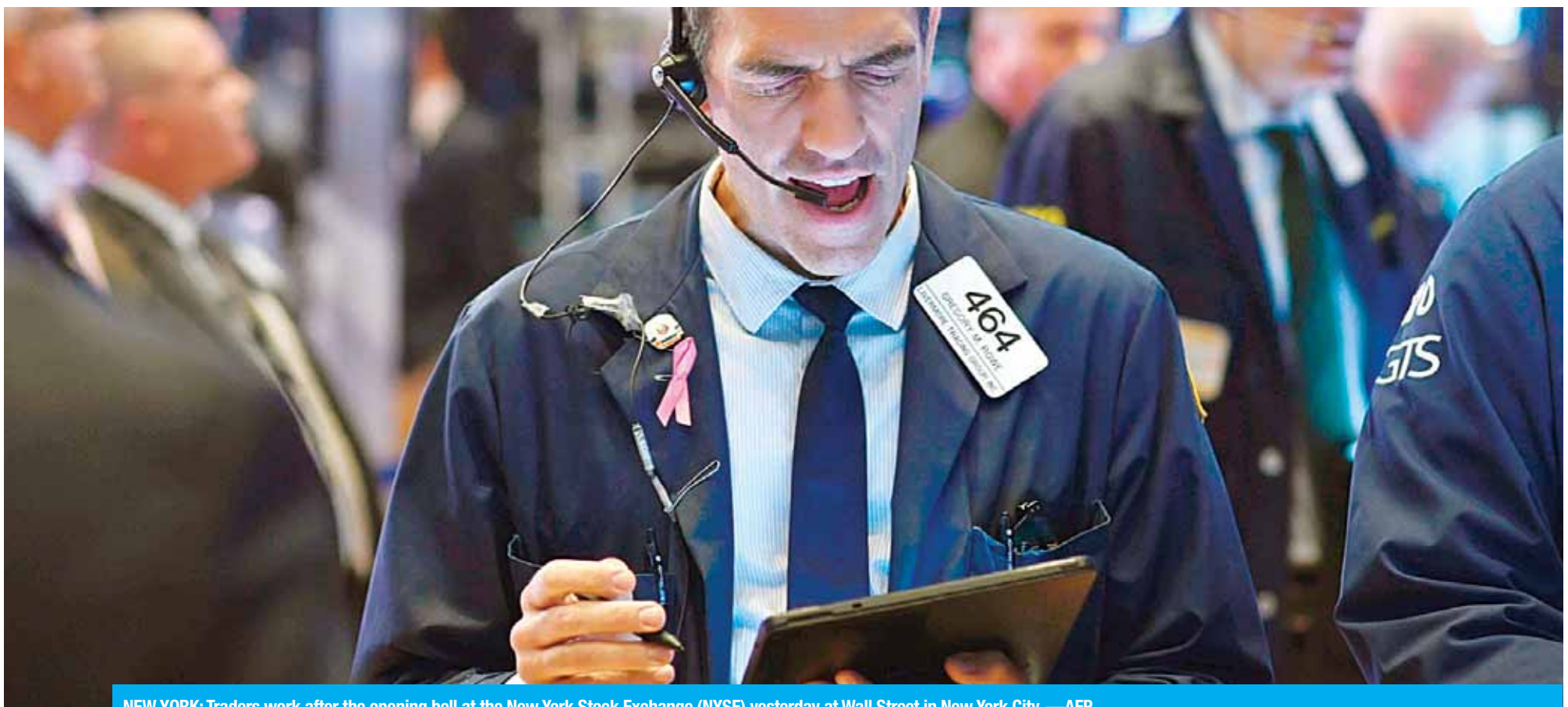
39 US manufacturing sinks, retail sales surge in July



40 Walmart's earnings beat allays worry over tariff impact for now



41 Relentless rise of consumer debt in Russia fuels bubble fears for some



NEW YORK: Traders work after the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) yesterday at Wall Street in New York City. —AFP

Global stocks choppy amid trade war fears

Wall Street clings to narrow gains but investors remain pessimistic

LONDON: Global stock markets nervously traded sideways yesterday as investors all but gave up hope that a trade war could be nearing its end. Fears over the stand-off between the world's two biggest economies added to jitters over the state of the world economy which had inflicted heavy losses on equities Wednesday, including the worst one-day fall this year on Wall Street's Dow.

"Every time investors find the strength to pick themselves up off the floor, the trade war delivers another blow and knocks them down again," said Craig Erlam at Oanda. "This morning that came in the form of reports that China is threatening retaliation against Trump's tariffs that are due to come into force on 1 September."

Wall Street stocks clung to narrow gains early yesterday following mixed US economic

data in a choppy follow-up to the Dow's worst session of the year. US indices briefly veered into negative territory shortly after the opening bell, but were all positive after 20 minutes.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average stood at 25,529.18, up 0.2 percent. The blue-chip index lost 800 points, or more than three percent, on Wednesday. The broad-based S&P 500 added 0.3 percent at 2,847.58, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index edged up 0.1 percent to 7,784.48.

Major US indices plunged Wednesday after a key US bond benchmark raised recession worries amid mushrooming fears of a global slowdown. Yesterday's tentative start to trading came after CNBC reported that a Chinese official said it hoped to "meet the US halfway" on trade, comments that were viewed by some investors

as conciliatory, even as other observers said the statement was not new.

The yield on the 10-year US Treasury bond slid on Wednesday below the yield on the two-year note, an "inversion" that has been a reliable harbinger of recession for decades. "The slew of negative news has seen a huge shake down in global equity markets, and money has poured into government bonds," noted David Madden, analyst at CMC Markets UK.

'More sinister'

The trade war has hammered global demand while investment and retail sales have also slowed in the world's second biggest economy. "Trade tensions have metastasized into something more sinister by affecting global growth to such a large degree that bond markets are pric-

ing-in a high probability of a worldwide recession," warned Stephen Innes, managing partner at VM Markets.

Economists have warned for months that trade tensions threatened investment and dampened global sentiment, which was already suffering owing to fears over Brexit's impact on Britain and Europe, where the German economy is showing signs of contraction. The pound climbed against the dollar and euro as data showed British retail sales rose unexpectedly by 0.2 percent in July. "The UK's retail data surprised the investors by posting an upbeat reading and traders pushed the (pound) currency higher," said Naeem Aslam, chief market analyst at Think Markets. He warned however that "there is no light at the end of the Brexit tunnel" so far. —AFP

Business

UK to loosen budget purse strings as Brexit approaches

Javid to give more details next month before a full annual budget

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government has made billions of pounds of new spending commitments in its first three weeks in office, even before the potential costs of a disruptive, no-deal Brexit are taken into account. New Finance Minister Sajid Javid will give more details of the plans next month, before a full annual budget later in the year - assuming that a no-confidence vote and an election do not intervene before then. Following is a summary of where the public finances may be heading.

How are Britain's public finances now?

Britain's government borrowed 23.5 billion pounds (\$28.4 billion) in the year to March 2019, equivalent to 1.1 percent of annual economic output and the lowest since the 2001/02 financial year. This is down sharply from a peak of 9.9 percent of GDP in 2009/10, when the financial crisis triggered a slump in tax revenues and greater spending on some social benefits.

Public debt - the total amount of outstanding borrowing - has fallen much more slowly as a share of GDP and is still more than double its level before the financial crisis at 83 percent of GDP, excluding borrowing by state-owned Royal Bank of Scotland. Britain is not alone in struggling to reduce debt against a backdrop of lackluster growth since the financial crisis, with

Germany the only big advanced economy to have a lower debt-to-GDP ratio.

What has Johnson's government planned?

Johnson declined during his leadership campaign to back the government's existing fiscal rules, which aim to keep the deficit below 2 percent of GDP during normal economic times, and ensure debt falls as a share of GDP.

Javid has said he will respect this rule when he sets spending budgets for the next financial year in September, but the government says the longer-term future of the fiscal rules is "under review". Since coming to power, Johnson has announced a series of costly spending pledges on police, schools and deprived towns, which taken together are likely to add as much as 9 billion pounds a year to borrowing if fully implemented.

One-off spending on Brexit preparations and new prison and hospital capacity could cost nearly 7 billion pounds, with potential ongoing funding costs not included.

Exact details - crucially including how rapidly the money is expected to be spent - will become clearer in September's spending round, though planning beyond next year is being deferred until a full spending review in 2020.

Javid has also said he will respond to a public commission that has called for more long-term

infrastructure spending. The public will probably have to wait for Javid's first budget to learn how fast Johnson plans to implement a campaign goal to raise the threshold at which the 40 percent income tax rate becomes payable to 80,000 pounds from 50,000 pounds.

Similar tax changes in the past have been spread out over several years, delaying the full budget impact which is likely to be about 9 billion pounds a year. Johnson also said he wanted to reduce payroll taxes for lower earners, without giving details. Credit ratings agency Moody's said the total cost of all these measures, if fully implemented, would increase the budget deficit by 1.5 percent of GDP, or roughly 30 billion pounds, unless there were other offsetting tax rises or spending cuts. Analysts at RBC pencilled in a cost of 26 billion pounds.

Can Britain afford this?

Britain can borrow about 25 billion pounds a year more, and still achieve a marginal fall in debt as a share of GDP. Moreover, the cost of new borrowing from the bond market is currently at a record low, due to fears that the world economy could be heading for a recession. Investors currently charge the UK less than 0.5 percent interest a year to borrow for 10 years, and an annual interest rate of around

1 percent for 30-year borrowing. But interest rates are unlikely to remain this low forever, making these borrowing rates more relevant for specific infrastructure projects than for ongoing spending on public services or tax cuts. In the longer run, Britain will face higher day-to-day expenses for pensions, healthcare and social care for an ageing population. Recessions, which typically come around every decade, add to debt and will put it on a long-run upward path unless efforts are made to reduce borrowing during good times.

How would Brexit affect this?

Britain's Office for Budget Responsibility estimated last month that leaving the EU without a deal on Oct. 31 would add 30 billion pounds a year to public borrowing in the 2020/21 tax year, even under the more benign of two scenarios outlined by the International Monetary Fund. Britain's government would be under pressure to direct public spending to prop up businesses or aid regions that are particularly affected by new barriers to trade with the EU.

Tax revenue would also fall due to a recession pushing up unemployment and reducing asset prices, and only a small part of the drop would be offset by customs duties and a further forecast fall in debt interest costs. — Reuters

German bond yield curve flattens as recession concerns mount

LONDON: Eurozone government bond yields went further into negative territory yesterday, reflecting concerns of an impending global recession after the US yield curve remained inverted for the second straight trading session. Risk aversion globally among investors also increased after US President Donald Trump appeared on Wednesday to tie a US trade deal with China to a humane resolution of the weeks of protests in Hong Kong.

China's Finance Ministry countered by saying China would take the necessary counter measures to the United States' additional tariffs on \$300 billion of goods, adding that the tariffs violate the consensus reached by the two countries. This pushed yields further down after a brief respite in early trade, adding to worries about global growth, and pushing the German government bond yield curve to its flattest since 2008.

Government bonds globally are signalling recession with the US and UK curves both inverted. The US curve has inverted before every recession in the past 50 years, offering a false signal just once in that time. While some analysts warn against reading too much into the indicator, what they do agree is that the inversion piles pressure on the US Federal Reserve to cut interest rates.

"Yes the inversion in the past has coincided with a recession in the following 18-24 months, we're not talking about tomorrow," said Andrea Iannelli, Investment Director, Fidelity International.

"We have seen stocks trading very poorly as a result of the yield curve inversion, so that will be flashing some additional warning lights for the Fed that they have to do more. The only question is can the Fed out-dove the market? At the very least



HEINERSBRUECK: A large bucket wheel extractor operates in the Jaenschwalde open pit mine near Heinersbrueck. — AFP

they will have to match market expectations in the short term." The trade war between the United States and China has hit the global economy hard. Data showed that German economic output contracted in the second quarter of 2019 by 0.1 percent with analysts noting that the third-quarter numbers point to a contraction as well.

Analysts will also be watching data from the United States in the form of the Empire State Index and Philadelphia Fed surveys, which Mizuho says are the most forward-looking indicators on the economy released yesterday. Germany's 30-year bond yield fell below -0.2 percent for the first time yesterday to a low of -0.232 percent, while 10-year German bonds were 2.5 basis points lower at -0.674 percent.

The German yield curve is also flattening with the spread between two-year and 10-year German debt tightening to as little as 20 basis points. It was last that flat in 2008. "The only game in town is the central banks, hence the bond markets are rallying," said Peter Schaffrik, global macro strategist at RBC Capital Markets. — Reuters

Argentine peso claws back after three days of grim losses

BUENOS AIRES: Argentina's beleaguered peso clawed back some recent losses yesterday, jumping nearly 5 percent after losing nearly a quarter of its value in the wake of a shock primary-election result on Sunday that once again plunged the country into economic chaos. The peso began tumbling after center-left presidential candidate Alberto Fernandez, running alongside former leftist President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, unexpectedly trounced center-right President Mauricio Macri, whose austerity measures turned off voters, in the primary vote.

But the peso appeared to have turned a corner yesterday, bucking three days of painful losses and surging 4.7 percent to 57.5 pesos per dollar, according to traders. Fernandez' strong showing led investors to sell Argentine assets, fearing a return to leftist policies and the end of free-market economic and structural reforms. Ever since a massive meltdown in 2001, Argentina's economy has been blighted with weak growth, defaults and sky-high inflation.

Argentina's lurch back into crisis comes amid widespread volatility and fears of a global recession triggered by the trade war between China and the United States, and protests in Hong Kong. Emerging markets have been particularly badly hit by recent volatility in global markets. Speaking earlier in a radio interview, Fernandez said he was comfortable with an exchange rate of 60 pesos to the dollar. "The dollar at 60 seems fine to me," Fernandez said in comments before the market opened. — Reuters

Business

US manufacturing sinks in July, dragging down total output

Retail sales surge in July; weekly jobless claims rise

WASHINGTON: US manufacturing continued its steady decline in July amid the ongoing trade war and slowing global economy, while the hurricane-hit oil sector also helped drag down total output, the Federal Reserve said yesterday.

Production fell across the board in US manufacturing, with only rare bright spots, dropping 0.4 percent compared to June. The sector has fallen in four of the last six months and is down 1.5 percent so far this year, according to the data. Total industrial production fell 0.2 percent, erasing the gain in June, and defying analysts who had expected a slight uptick, according to the report.

Output also was pulled down by the 1.8 percent drop in mining after Hurricane Barry "caused a sharp but temporary decline in oil extraction in the Gulf of Mexico," the Fed said. The volatile utilities sector jumped 3.1 percent last month as summer heat increased the need for air conditioning, nearly offsetting the sharp drop in June.

Overall output is still 0.5 percent higher than a year ago but manufacturing has seen two quarters of contraction, meaning the sector is in recession. The only sizable increase in manufacturing was in aerospace and miscellaneous transportation equipment. Industrial capacity in use retreated again, falling back to 77.5 percent, far below the long-run average, the report said.

Meanwhile, US retail sales surged in July as consumers bought a range of goods even as they cut back on motor vehicle purchases, which could help to assuage financial markets' fears that the economy was heading into recession. The upbeat report from the Commerce Department yesterday, however, will likely not change

Markets register a shock, but is Trump right to blame the Fed?

WASHINGTON: It takes a lot to kill an economic expansion, typically requiring a major shock to bring growth to a halt and trigger a US recession.

This week investors signaled that moment may have arrived, and one big question is whether that shock has come from President Donald Trump's trade war or a mistake by policymakers at the US Federal Reserve.

As bond markets flashed concern about recession on Wednesday and major stock indices cratered, Trump put the blame squarely on the Fed for continuing to raise rates through the end of last year. Even Trump foe and New York Times economics columnist Paul Krugman dinged the Fed for "a clear mistake."

In raising interest rates four times last year "the Federal Reserve acted far too quickly, and now is very, very late," in reversing itself and

expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates again next month as the outlook for the economy continues to darken against the backdrop of trade tensions and slowing growth overseas.

A key part of the US Treasury yield curve inverted on Wednesday for the first time since June 2007, triggering a stock market sell-off. An inverted Treasury yield curve is historically a reliable predictor of looming recessions. Financial markets have fully priced in a 25-basis-point rate cut at the US central bank's Sept. 17-18 policy meeting. The Fed lowered its short-term interest rate by a quarter point last month, citing the acrimonious US-China trade war and slowing global economies. But the data could see markets dialing back expectations of a 50-basis-point rate cut next month.

Retail sales increased 0.7 percent last month after gaining 0.3 percent in June, the government said. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast retail sales would rise 0.3 percent in July. Compared to July last year, retail sales increased 3.4 percent.

Strong consumer spending

Excluding automobiles, gasoline, building materials and food services, retail sales jumped 1.0 percent last month after advancing by an unrevised 0.7 percent in June. These so-called core retail sales correspond most closely with the consumer spending component of gross domestic product. US stock index futures extended gains after the release of the data. US Treasury yields rose while the dollar was slightly weaker against a basket of currencies.

July's gain in core retail sales suggested

cutting borrowing costs only modestly so far, Trump tweeted. "Too bad, so much to gain on the upside!"

Earlier on Wednesday, White House trade adviser Peter Navarro told Fox Business Network the US central bank should cut rates by half a percentage point "as soon as possible," an action he claimed would lead "to 30,000 on the Dow." A cut of that magnitude would typically be associated with serious economic risk, not an economy with record low unemployment and ongoing growth. As it stood, major US stock indices slumped by around 3 percent by Wednesday's close with the blue chip Dow Jones Industrial Average suffering its largest percentage loss of the year. Bond investors pushed the yield on the 30-year Treasury bond to a record low.

Causing even more concern: The yield on the 2-year Treasury note briefly went above the yield on the 10-year Treasury note, the sort of "inversion" that, when it proves durable, has preceded prior US recessions. Trump himself took note of the development, blasting the Fed chair he appointed - Jerome Powell - as "clueless" in a tweet citing the "CRAZY INVERTED YIELD CURVE."

It was perhaps the most dramatic bit of evidence yet of just how the landscape for the Fed has changed over the past few months, from



LOS ANGELES: In this file photo, a shopper at an outlet mall walks past an Adidas store in Los Angeles. American consumers spent far more than expected in July, as retail sales jumped on strong online purchases, according to government data released yesterday. —AFP

strong consumer spending early in the third quarter, though the pace will likely slow from the April-June quarter's robust 4.3 percent annualized rate. Consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of the economy, is being underpinned by the lowest unemployment rate in nearly half a century. While a separate report from the Labor Department on Thursday showed an increase in the number of Americans filing applications for unemployment benefits last week, the trend in claims continued to point to a strong labor market.

Solid consumer spending is blunting some of the hit on the economy from a downturn in manufacturing, which is underscored by weak busi-

ness investment. Manufacturing's struggles were highlighted by a third report from the Labor Department showing productivity in the sector tumbled at its fastest pace in nearly two years in the second quarter, with factories cutting hours for workers.

The economy grew at a 2.1 percent rate in the second quarter, decelerating from the first quarter's 3.1 percent pace. Growth estimates for the third quarter are below a 2.0 percent rate.

In July, auto sales fell 0.6 percent after rising 0.3 percent in June. Receipts at service stations rebounded 1.8 percent, reflecting higher gasoline prices. Sales at building material stores gained 0.2 percent. —Agencies

one that Powell deemed "remarkably positive" as of last October, to one of rising risks for the United States' record-setting, decade-long expansion.

As of last fall, the Fed thought the economy, fueled by the Trump administration's massive \$1.5 trillion tax cut package and spending plans, would grow strongly enough to justify steadily higher rates. At that point the threat of a recession seemed distant unless some sort of outside event intervened to throw the economy off course - something like the collapse of the dot-com stock market bubble ahead of the brief 2001 recession, or the implosion of the US housing and credit markets ahead of the more serious 2007-2009 Great Recession. Yet, as Trump's trade rhetoric and his imposition of tariffs on trading partners ratcheted up this year, particularly since May, investors have acted as if a breaking point had been reached. Global trade flows have dropped. Economic growth in Germany, a bellwether economy of sorts given its reliance on exports, contracted in the second quarter. Indices of uncertainty also have spiked. If Fed policy suddenly seemed out of step, it was perhaps inevitable given the difficulty of keeping up with Trump's whipsaw approach to trade policy, and the growing sense that the fallout may be deeper and longer

lasting than expected.

"The challenge is that Trump's trade policy has proven so erratic that you cannot relieve the sense of uncertainty," as firms adjust to what may be a years-long rearrangement of global supply chains and cost structures, said Tim Duy, an economics professor at the University of Oregon. "So the question becomes is policy going to be easing enough ... or remain so tight that the economy remains vulnerable?" Investors in federal funds futures contracts are currently pricing in a quarter-point rate cut at each of the Fed's remaining three policy meetings in 2019. That would take the benchmark fed funds rate to a range of between 1.25 percent and 1.50 percent.

Along with the rate cut at the last Fed meeting in July, it would also mean the US central bank will have used up almost half the rate-cut "ammunition" assembled during a slow-moving, and ultimately truncated series of rate increases begun in 2015. For Trump, who is hoping to make the economy a central part of his case for his 2020 re-election campaign, further rate cuts could not come fast enough. He has been berating the Fed for its rate increases for more than a year - since even before his trade rift with China morphed from being considered an economic annoyance to a larger and potentially durable risk. —Reuters

Business

Walmart's earnings beat allays worry over tariff impact for now

US e-commerce business could rise to about \$1.7 billion

WASHINGTON: US retailer Walmart Inc reported strong second quarter results and raised its earnings expectations for the year, temporarily sidestepping concerns around consumer demand in the wake of tariffs on imports.

Walmart's performance was helped by shoppers who spent more at its stores and websites, indicating the US consumer economy has not lost steam, sending its shares up 5 percent in premarket trading. The world's largest retailer posted a 20-quarter, or five-year, streak of US growth, unmatched by any other retail chain.

Consumers are responding to the changes the company is making to its business and the company is gaining market share, Chief Executive Doug McMillon said in a statement. The retailer gets 56 percent of its revenue from food and grocery sales, which allows it to manage the pressure from tariffs better than many rivals, analysts said.

In an interview yesterday, Chief Financial Officer Brett Biggs said Walmart has raised prices on some items due to these tariffs, but it is not passing all the cost pressure it faces to consumers.

It is managing that by negotiating with suppliers and sourcing from alternate supply bases, he said.

"We still feel good about the consumer overall," Biggs said. A Walmart shopping trip was 5.2 percent more expensive in June compared with a year earlier, according to Gordon Haskett Research Advisors, which compared prices on a basket of about

76 identical items over the past year. US President Donald Trump raised tariffs on \$200 billion of imports to 25 percent from 10 percent earlier this year, a move that has begun pushing up prices of thousands of products including clothing, furniture and electronics.

Earlier this week, Trump backed off his Sept 1 deadline for imposing 10 percent tariffs on imports, delaying duties on cellphones, laptops and other consumer goods, to shield US holiday sales.

The move offered relief to the retail industry but will do little to mitigate the impact on consumers during the holiday season. Most retailers have purchased their holiday-season merchandise, and the inventory has for the most part already arrived at US ports and warehouses. Walmart has also come under growing pressure and criticism over its policy to continue selling firearms after two mass shootings, one at its store, killed 31 people in Texas and Ohio. The retailer said its policy to sell guns had not changed and did not offer further updates on the issue. Sales at US stores open at least a year rose 2.8 percent, excluding fuel, in the quarter ended July 31. Analysts estimated growth of 2.07 percent, according to IBES data from Refinitiv.

Adjusted earnings per share increased to \$1.27 per share, beating expectations of \$1.22 per share. The retailer raised its forecast for adjusted earnings-per-share to a "slight decrease to slight increase," from a "decline by a low single-digit



ROSEMEAD: In this file photo, a woman walks past a shopping cart in the parking lot of a Walmart Supercenter in Rosemead, California. —AFP

percentage range." That forecast includes the effect from the acquisition of Indian e-commerce firm Flipkart. Online sales surged 37 percent, in line with the previous quarter's increase and higher than the company's expectation of 35 percent. That contributed 140 basis points to US comparable sales, from 100 basis points during the same quarter last year.

Walmart's online expansion has come at a cost to profitability and losses at the US e-commerce business could rise to about \$1.7 billion this year from \$1.4 billion in 2018, according to estimates from Morgan Stanley. Walmart is looking to sell ModCloth, the women's apparel site it acquired two years ago, as it looks for ways to pare losses at its online business.—Reuters

US CEOs earn 278 times more than their workers: Study

WASHINGTON: The top executives at large US companies are paid 278 times more than their company's workers and the gap continues to widen, according to a study published on Wednesday.

Average CEO compensation at the 350 largest US firms in 2018 was \$17.2 million a year, including stock options, which generally account for two-thirds of their pay packages, according to a study by the Economic Policy Institute. The gap between CEO and workers has soared from 58-to-1 in 1989 and 20-to-1 in 1965, according to EPI, a nonpartisan think tank that focuses on issues facing low- and middle-income workers.

From 1978 to 2018, CEO compensation has increased by more than 1,000 percent—with increasingly rich stock awards—while worker pay has risen just under 12 percent. "This escalation of CEO compensation, and of executive compensation more generally, has fueled the growth of top 1.0percent and top 0.1percent incomes, leaving less of the fruits of economic growth for ordinary workers and widening the gap between very high earners and the bottom 90percent," the study said.

"The economy would suffer no harm if CEOs were paid less (or taxed more)." And the study said the pay inflation "does not reflect rising value of skills, but rather CEOs' use of their power to set their own pay. And this growing power at the top has been driving the growth of inequality in our country." —AFP

Irish Ryanair pilots announce 48-hour strike

DUBLIN: Irish Ryanair pilots are to strike for two days next week, their union said Wednesday, escalating an internal pay row at the budget airline. Irish trade union Forsa said directly-employed pilots would strike for 48 hours from 00:01 am, August 22 (2201 GMT on Wednesday, August 21) — matching planned industrial action from British pilots.

A strike notice was served on Dublin headquartered Ryanair on Wednesday after mediation stalled earlier in the day. A spokesman for Forsa—the parent union of the Irish Airline Pilots' Association (IALPA) — said the organization submitted a detailed proposal in March "which sought pay levels and structures it says are in line with sector norms" as well as "proposals on pensions, working conditions and related matters."

"IALPA is seeking pay levels it believes are common and competitive in the commercial airline sector, from a company that made a substantial profit of euro 1 billion [\$1.1 billion] last year," said Forsa national secretary Angela Kirk. "They tell me they feel forced into serving notice of potentially-disruptive industrial action by a company that seems either unwilling or unable to negotiate in a professional, transparent



and constructive manner."

Last Wednesday members of the British Airline Pilots Association (BALPA) employed with the low-cost carrier voted 4-1 in favor of a strike with a 72 percent turnout. BALPA's demands include "pensions; loss of license insurance; maternity benefits; allowances; and a fair, transparent, and consistent pay structure," it said in a statement. British strikes will be held from August 22 to 23 and again from September 2 to 4 unless an agreement can be forged.

Forsa said notification of further industrial action days from their pilots will be given "in due course". Ryanair has seen first-quarter net profits plunge by more than a fifth, as it faces rising costs, intense competition and Brexit turmoil, the Irish airline said on July 29.

Performance was also hit by pan-European strikes last year that forced it to cancel flights, affecting thousands of passengers, and offer improved pay to staff via landmark union deals. —AFP

Business

Relentless rise of consumer debt in Russia fuels bubble fears for some

CB takes measures to cool market down

MOSCOW: Natalia Leontyeva, a Siberian sales manager, bought a second hand car in 2013 with a loan worth about four monthly salaries. She now owes the equivalent of at least four years of earnings, one of a growing number of Russians struggling with debt.

"You pay one month's installment, then the second. But then something happens again and it all piles up," she said by phone from the city of Novosibirsk in Siberia where she works at a steelworks. After five years of shrinking real incomes, many Russians are borrowing to make ends meet or even just to pay off their creditors - and the issue is climbing up the political agenda.

"A third of those people taking loans already owe more than their annual income," Maxim Oreshkin, Russia's economy minister, told Reuters. "This is an issue of financial education, a debt trap, in some cases worse than gambling."

For Russia as a whole, the burden of total household debt is relatively low, partly because only 5.5 million of its 147 million people have mortgages. But interest rates on personal loans are high and more than half of Russians surveyed by state pollster VTsIOM said they had debts. For a significant number, they are a major concern.

Some 2.5 million people earning up to 20,000 rubles (\$303.09) a month, which is less than half the average wage, spend more than half of that on loan repayments, the National Association of Professional Collection Agencies estimates. On Wednesday, President Vladimir Putin discussed consumer debt with Andrey Kostin, head of second-biggest state-run bank VTB, telling him in televised comments, "people should not be pushed to some kind of extreme state".

Kostin told Putin he understood the problem and that banks should wear a "human face" when dealing with its clients. Their exchange highlighted the sensitivity of the problem for Putin, whose popularity ratings have slipped since he was reelected by an overwhelming majority last year.

Moscow is in the grip of protests over the exclusion of opposition candidates from a local election and sporadic protests over issues ranging from waste disposal to unwanted construction have flared elsewhere.

Tightening

The central bank has tightened lending rules

Russia releases French banker from jail into house arrest

MOSCOW: A Moscow court yesterday released French banker Philippe Delpal from jail into house arrest, days before a summit be-

in recent years, and raised the amount of money banks need to set aside to cover loan losses. This has moderated the potential fallout for the financial system but Oreshkin said borrowers are still exposed.

"In consumer lending, there is high indebtedness and ... it is growing at a rate far higher than the nominal increases in incomes," he said. Outstanding loans were 16.3 trillion rubles (\$248 billion) as of early July, up from 10.6 trillion five years ago, according to central bank data.

And while the rate of consumer lending increase has dropped from a 60percent year-on-year peak in 2012, it was still over 20percent last year despite the central bank's attempts to rein it in.

Consumer lending growth rate has currently stabilized at 24-25percent in annual terms, the central bank said in a response to a request to comment from Reuters. "A fast increase in... outstanding consumer debt is leading to a rising debt burden for households," it said. "This increases vulnerability of the financial system but the size of this lending segment does not pose... a threat, either for the banking sector's stability, or for the economy."

Olga Ulyanova, an analyst with Moody's rating agency in Moscow, praised the central bank's measures but said more actions might be needed including a possible ban on lending to highly indebted borrowers. "The central bank's measures are timely and preemptive," she said. "But it will have to continue the policy of tightening as the current measures are not sufficient to normalize the segment's growth rate." The central bank said in its response that it will raise risk requirements again for consumer loans in October, under which banks will have to evaluate a borrower's existing debt before issuing a new loan.

Oreshkin has also said there was no risk for the financial system's stability as banks have enough provisions while adding, in comments to Russian media last month, that there was a bubble in consumer lending when it came to certain households.

The economy ministry is working on proposals to simplify the process of individuals declaring themselves bankrupt and on changing the criteria for people to claim insolvency based on income left over after loan repayments, he told Reuters.

"Point of no return"

Russia's household debt to gross domestic

tween the Russian and French presidents. Delpal, a senior executive in investment firm Baring Vostok, was arrested in February together with company chief Michael Calvey and other suspects.

The arrests raised serious concerns among foreign investors in Russia.

Judge Anatoly Korolev in the Moscow City court ruled in favor of Delpal's appeal against last month's decision to extend his detention by another three months. Delpal was released in the courtroom, an AFP correspondent there said. The surprise decision came ahead of talks between Russian President Vladimir



MOSCOW: People walk past an office of a local bank in Moscow. The signboard reads "Deposits. Loans". —Reuters

product ratio is 14percent, compared with around 30percent in Czech Republic and Poland and 75percent in Sweden, Moody's said. Non-performing loans, or outstanding debt by individuals that is not being serviced for more than 90 days, stood at 797 billion rubles, or 5percent of the total retail loans held by banks, as of July 1, according to the central bank. These loans are provisioned by over 90percent, it said. But almost one in five new loans are being spent on servicing existing debt and more than 30percent of consumer loans issued in January-March 2019 went to people already spending more than half their income on debt servicing, Moody's said, citing central bank data.

This means the lending is not fully filtering into growth in the economy, which is projected to grow at 1-1.5percent this year versus 2.3percent last year, under pressure from drop in oil prices and sanctions since 2014 over Russia's annexation of Crimea. One high-ranking government financial official who asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of the issue said that when it came to those already spending large sums in debt servicing, "the point of no return has been passed already".

"The most dreadful thing is not that banks

Putin and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron, who are meeting at a seaside retreat in southern France on Monday.

The case alleges that Calvey, Delpal, and other suspects defrauded Russia's Vostochny Bank of 2.5 billion rubles (\$38.7 million) — charges they deny as fabricated by a competitor. Speaking during Thursday's hearing, Delpal rejected the allegations and promised he would not leave Russia if released from detention during the investigation.

"I am not implicated in this alleged crime," he said. "My life is in Moscow, fleeing is not an option because it will seem like I recognize

or the central bank do not realize there is an issue, but that people with salaries of 30-40,000 rubles have to spend 20,000 on servicing their debt," the official said.

The number of bankruptcies has grown from up to 20,000 in 2016, the year after a new private bankruptcy law came in, to almost 44,000 in 2018. It grew by around 29,000 in the first six months of this year, a 52percent rise year-on-year, according to Russian official registry Fedresurs.

Consumer lending accounts for over a tenth of total loans at Russia's top banks, state-owned Sberbank and VTB, while for private TCS Group consumer lending forms its core business.

Mikhail Matovnikov, chief analyst with Sberbank, said that consumer lending growth is already slowing down and does not pose systemic risks. VTB said that consumer loans are one of the most profitable businesses for the bank. But it said that VTB has a high quality consumer loan portfolio so there is no rise in non-performing loans in this area.

"Our bank has had risk processes for a long time already which do not allow loans to highly-indebted borrowers," VTB said in a written reply to Reuters. TCS did not reply to a request for a comment. —Reuters

my guilt." His release into house arrest follows a similar decision for Calvey, a longtime investor in Russia whose fund gave a head-start to some of the country's top companies.

Delpal has lived in Russia with his wife and two children for the last 15 years. His wife had long argued that Delpal should be moved to house arrest. She bought a flat in Moscow to increase the chances of her husband being released from jail and into a residence. Macron urged Putin to release Delpal when the two met during the G20 summit in Japan in June, according to an aide to the French leader. —AFP

Sports

Pujols passes Beltre in Angels' win

Cardinals blank Royals again to cap sweep

ANAHEIM: Albert Pujols drove in three runs, and Dillon Peters pitched six solid innings to help the Los Angeles Angels post a 7-4 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates on Wednesday in the finale of a three-game series in Anaheim, Calif. Pujols went 2-for-4 to raise his career hit total to 3,168 and surpass fellow Dominican Republic native Adrian Beltre (3,166) for most among players born outside the United States. Pujols had a two-run single in the eighth to give the Angels a 6-3 lead as they avoided a three-game sweep and won for just the fifth time in the past 19 contests. Peters (3-1) gave up two runs and four hits during a 94-pitch effort. He struck out six and walked one. Pittsburgh's Chris Archer (3-9) struck out 10 in five innings but saw his winless stretch reach 12 starts.

YANKEES 6, ORIOLES 5

Gary Sanchez capped a four-run first inning with a three-run homer as host New York ran its winning streak over Baltimore to 16 games. The Yankees finished the season series 17-2, their most wins against any opponent in a single season since going 17-5 against the Kansas City Athletics in 1959. New York's 16-game winning streak is its longest against an opponent in a season since winning 21 straight over the St. Louis Browns in 1927. Sanchez hit his 10th homer against the Orioles when he drove a 2-0 changeup from Dylan Bundy (5-13) over the center field fence and on top of the netting above Monument Park. It was his 26th homer of the season and New York's 61st against Baltimore, extending the major league record for homers against one opponent in a season.

PHILLIES 11, CUBS 1

J.T. Realmuto hit a grand slam, Bryce Harper homered twice, and Philadelphia routed Chicago in Cole Hamels' return to the City of Brotherly Love. Hamels (6-4) lasted only two-plus innings, allowing nine hits and eight runs in his first start in Philadelphia since July 19, 2015. Kris Bryant homered for the Cubs' only run. Harper had three hits, three RBIs and two runs as he notched his second two-homer game in his past five games. Phillies starter Aaron Nola (11-3) tossed seven strong innings and allowed only three hits and one run.

DODGERS 9, MARLINS 1

Clayton Kershaw struck out a season-high 10 batters, and rookie Edwin Rios hit his first two major league homers — doing so in his hometown — as the Los Angeles downed host Miami. Kershaw (12-2) struck out the first seven batters he faced, six of them swinging. The Marlins finally got their first baserunner when Harold Ramirez singled with two outs in the fifth. In the end, Kershaw pitched seven scoreless innings, allowing just two hits — both singles — and no walks. He also doubled, getting one more extra-base hit than he allowed to the Marlins.

BRAVES 6, METS 4

Tyler Flowers' soft single chased home the go-ahead run as Atlanta batted around and scored five times in the seventh inning to stun visiting New York. The Braves, who had given up the lead in the top of the inning, strung together six singles — five of them against reliever Seth Lugo (5-3), who was charged with all five runs and retired only one batter. The Braves survived

a New York rally in the ninth. Atlanta reliever Mark Melancon gave up two runs and was removed with two outs and the bases loaded. Ex-Met Jerry Blevins struck out Michael Conforto to end the game and earn his first save.

CARDINALS 6, ROYALS 0

Held hitless by Brad Keller through six innings, St. Louis scored five runs in the seventh to defeat host Kansas City. The Cardinals didn't allow a run in the two-game series, as they won 2-0 on Tuesday. St. Louis earned its fifth win in a row, immediately following a five-game losing streak, while Kansas City fell for the 11th time in 14 games. St. Louis starter Dakota Hudson (11-6) scattered five hits over six frames, walking two and striking out four. Keller (7-13) was charged with three runs on three hits with five strikeouts and three walks in six-plus innings.

RED SOX 5, INDIANS 1

Xander Bogaerts homered twice to lead visiting Boston past Cleveland in the rubber match of a three-game series. Rafael Devers also homered to cap a streak of eight hits in eight at-bats. He went 6-for-6 in a 7-6 win against the Indians Tuesday night, singled in his first at-bat Wednesday and hit a solo homer in the third inning. For the second time in team history, the Red Sox used at least seven pitchers in a nine-inning game and allowed one run or fewer. Nathan Eovaldi (1-0) threw two innings of scoreless relief to earn the win. Indians right-hander Shane Bieber (12-5) allowed two runs in six innings.

WHITE SOX 13, ASTROS 9

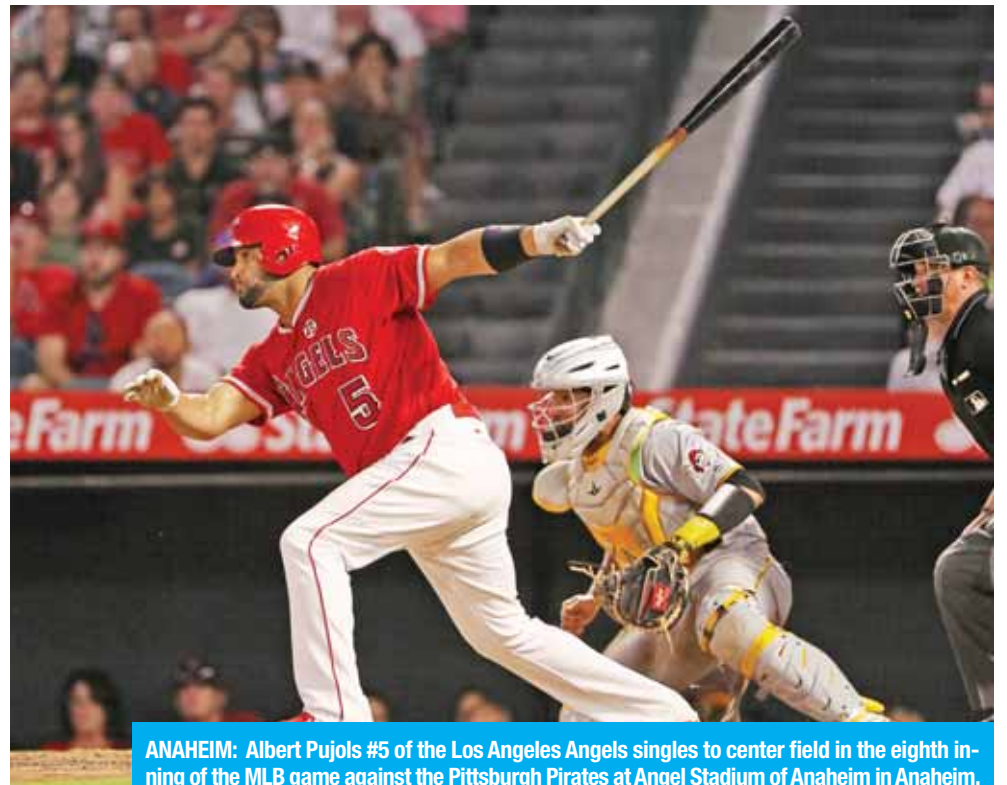
James McCann hit a tiebreaking grand slam with two outs in the eighth inning as Chicago outlasted visiting Houston. Down 0-2 in the count, McCann slugged a slider from Houston reliever Ryan Pressly (2-3) deep to right-center field for his 13th homer. Tim Anderson went 4-for-5 with two doubles to lead Chicago's 15-hit attack. Alex Colome (4-2) tossed 1 2/3 innings of scoreless relief for the victory. Michael Brantley was 4-for-5 with two doubles and two runs for Houston. Yuli Gurriel went 3-for-4 with two solo homers.

ROCKIES 7, DIAMONDBACKS 6

Nolan Arenado hit a two-run, walk-off homer in the ninth inning as Colorado rallied to beat Arizona in Denver. Arizona closer Archie Bradley (3-5) hit Trevor Story leading off the bottom of the ninth with the Rockies trailing 6-5. Arenado hit the next pitch down the line in left to give Colorado the win. Ketel Marte had four hits, and Eduardo Escobar and Wilmer Flores homered for Arizona. Diamondbacks starting pitcher Robbie Ray left the game in the third inning due to lower back spasms.

NATIONALS 17, REDS 7

Adam Eaton and Kurt Suzuki each belted a three-run homer to highlight a 10-run, nine-hit fifth inning as host Washington drubbed Cincinnati. Suzuki added an RBI single as part of a six-run sixth inning, and Asdrubal Cabrera collected three hits and three RBIs for the Nationals, who completed a sweep after erupting for a season high in runs. Stephen Strasburg (15-5) matched a career high for wins in a season after allowing four runs on seven hits in 5 2/3 innings. Rookie Aris-



ANAHEIM: Albert Pujols #5 of the Los Angeles Angels singles to center field in the eighth inning of the MLB game against the Pittsburgh Pirates at Angel Stadium of Anaheim in Anaheim, California. The Angels defeated the Pirates 7-4. — AFP

tides Aquino belted his ninth homer in 13 games for the Reds, who lost their fourth in a row. Cincinnati starter Trevor Bauer (10-9) surrendered a career-high nine runs on eight hits in 4 1/3 innings.

PADRES 7, RAYS 2

Luis Urias hit a two-run, tiebreaking double, Eric Hosmer added a solo home run, and Cal Quantrill allowed just two runs over 5 1/3 innings as San Diego downed visiting Tampa Bay. The result snapped a nine-game road winning streak for the Rays and was the Padres' first victory ever over Tampa Bay at Petco Park. Urias drove in a total of three runs for a second straight game as the Padres snapped a three-game losing streak to end a 4-3 homestand. Quantrill (6-3) held Tampa Bay to three hits and a walk with four strikeouts while throwing a career-high 108 pitches.

ATHLETICS 9, GIANTS 5

Matt Chapman hit two home runs, and Robbie Grossman added a two-run shot to back the seven-inning shutout pitching of Homer Bailey as visiting Oakland held off San Francisco. Matt Olson made it 4-0 against Giants starter Tyler Beede (3-7) with a two-run double in the third before Grossman broke the game open with a two-run homer to make it 6-0 in the sixth. Bailey (10-8), who had been roughed up for seven runs in 4 2/3 innings in his previous start against the Chicago Cubs, was near-perfect in his seven innings against the Giants. He allowed three baserunners — two on singles by Kevin Pillar — and no runner past second base.

BREWERS 6, TWINS 5

Trent Grisham hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning to rally Milwaukee over visiting Minnesota. The Brewers were trailing 5-3 entering the eighth when Ryan Braun reaching base on a throwing error by Jorge Polanco on a rou-

line grounder to short. Braun took third on a ground single to center by Hernan Perez. Grisham, playing in just his 11th major league game, then hit a homer into the bleachers in right off Sergio Romo (2-1). Junior Guerra (6-3) picked up the victory with two hitless innings of relief. Matt Albers, despite issuing consecutive walks to Polanco, Miguel Sano and Eddie Rosario and throwing 10 consecutive balls during one stretch with two outs in the ninth, notched his fourth save by getting C.J. Cron to fly out to deep left-center to end the game.

RANGERS 7, BLUE JAYS 3

Danny Santana homered and had three RBIs, Nomar Mazara also went deep, and visiting Texas beat Toronto. Elvis Andrus added four hits, two RBIs and two stolen bases for the Rangers, who avoided being swept in the three-game series. Texas starter Kolby Allard (1-0) allowed three runs on four hits with three walks and five strikeouts in 5 2/3 innings. Blue Jays starter Sean Reid-Foley (2-3) gave up three runs on four hits with three walks and as many strikeouts in 3 1/3 innings.

TIGERS 3, MARINERS 2

Edwin Jackson won his second straight start since returning to Detroit, Victor Reyes drove in two runs, and the host Tigers edged Seattle. Jackson (3-5) was recalled from the minors last week after signing with the Tigers last month. He gave up two runs on four hits and a walk in five innings. Joe Jimenez recorded the last three outs for his second save. Harold Castro contributed three hits, a run and an RBI for Detroit, which snapped a three-game losing streak and defeated Seattle for the first time in six games this season. Mariners starter Marco Gonzales (12-10) allowed all three runs on 11 hits and a walk while striking out six in six innings. — Reuters

Sports

Hansen insists he's 'loving it' as top All Blacks axed

AUCKLAND: All Blacks coach Steve Hansen insisted he was "loving it" as he axed three senior players and demanded a 200 percent improvement from his forwards in tomorrow's winner-takes-all Bledisloe Cup clash with Australia.

Hansen showed no mercy after last week's thrashing in Sydney, dumping prop Owen Franks and wings Ben Smith and Rieko Ioane — a combined total of 213 Test caps — for the return match at Auckland's Eden Park.

"They're not playing so you can say they've been dropped," Hansen said yesterday, with the highly rated trio not even making the bench. In their place is the relatively raw talent of Nepo Laulala (18 Tests), George Bridge (three) and Sevu Reece (one), as the top-ranked All Blacks bid to avoid relinquishing the annual trans-Tasman trophy for the first time since 2002.

New Zealand have long been hot favourites for a third straight title at the World Cup, starting next month in Japan, but they finished just third in the Rugby Championship after last week's 47-26 beating in Sydney.

"Obviously, we'd like to see Ben, Owen and Rieko playing better but we've made the decision because we've got to find out more about these other people in pressure-cooker situations and you don't get much bigger than this," Hansen added.

"We wouldn't be doing it if we didn't think that the guys we put in aren't good enough to do the job on Saturday if we play well. I don't think it's a risk and there's lots of reward in it."

Australia need to win on Saturday to end their 16-year Bledisloe Cup title drought, while an All Blacks victory would level the series at 1-1 and keep the trophy in New Zealand.

'BEST CHALLENGE WE COULD GET'

"I'm loving it. This is the best challenge we could get prior to going to a World Cup," Hansen said, after the Australians' record victory in round one. "We didn't front up last week and we need to front up this week or it (the trophy) will be going back to Australia."

The two other changes to the All Blacks' starting team are the return of Sonny Bill Williams for injured centre Jack Goodhue, while Patrick Tuipulotou replaces suspended lock Scott Barrett.

Australia won the all-important battle up front a week ago and that is where Hansen is demanding the biggest improvement from his side, with the finger pointed directly at 110-cap lock Sam Whitelock.

Asked how big an improvement he wanted from the tight five, Hansen said: "200 percent. I need Sam Whitelock to lead it. He's the guy with 100 Tests, he's the big boy in the pack, you expect those guys to lead." The reaction from Australia following their crushing win a week ago has been one of confidence.

Even though they haven't won at Eden Park in 18 Tests since 1986 there have been suggestions in the Australian media that the current All



PERTH: File photo shows New Zealand's Aaron Smith (C) passes the ball during the Rugby Championship Bledisloe Cup Test match between the Australian Wallabies and New Zealand All Blacks in Perth on August 10, 2019. — AFP

Blacks are over the hill and history could be turned on its head.

Hansen, however, said the situation was the same as in 2015. That year the Wallabies won the

first Bledisloe Test in Sydney 27-19 before losing 41-13 in Auckland and the All Blacks, with eight players aged over 30, went on to beat Australia in the World Cup final. — AFP

'Hungry' Wallabies stick with winning formula for All Blacks

MELBOURNE: The Wallabies are "hungry" to snap a 17-year Bledisloe Cup drought, coach Michael Cheika warned yesterday as he savours the chance to inflict back-to-back defeats on the All Blacks. His team stunned the world champions 47-26 in Perth last weekend and head to Auckland needing another win to claim the trans-Tasman silverware for the first time since 2002.

An All Blacks victory would level the series and see them retain the trophy as holders, gaining a psychological edge heading into their World Cup title defence in Japan next month. "We know we haven't had it for a long time and we're hungry to get it, to go there and do our best and try and take the trophy," Cheika said ahead of the team's departure from Melbourne, where they have been fine-tuning before Saturday's blockbuster clash.

"We know we're going to come up against an excellent opponent who is ready to go as well. That's why the game is so looked forward to and anticipated." Cheika named an unchanged side, apart from one injury-enforced absence, as he looks to build on their record win in the Bledisloe Cup opener.

The only change is Adam Coleman, who will start his first Test of 2019, replacing giant lock Rory Arnold who hurt his hand in Perth, with Rob Simmons among the reserves. It is an otherwise familiar team with Nic White and Christian Lealifano again preferred to Will Genia and Bernard Foley in the playmaking roles, and former bad boy James O'Connor retaining his place at outside centre. Utility Adam Ashley-Cooper was included on the bench for his first Test of the year, and an appearance will hand him his 118th cap. Along with Ashley-Cooper the reserves include Genia (103 Tests), Simmons (96) and James Slipper (89),

making it the second most-capped bench the Wallabies have ever named and the first time they have boasted two Test centuries as replacements.

'SPECIAL ONE'

Injury-hit former captain David Pocock, who has barely played all season, trained with the squad this week but was not included in the match-day 23. That leaves just one Test against Samoa in Sydney on September 7 for the acclaimed flanker to get match practice ahead of the World Cup.

Despite last week's win, Australia face a mammoth task tomorrow — they have not tasted victory at Eden Park since 1986 with the All Blacks on a 42-match unbeaten streak at the Auckland venue. Nowhere in New Zealand has been a happy hunting ground for the Wallabies, who have lost their last 22 away games to the All Blacks, with their last victory at Dunedin in 2001.

"Obviously when you play New Zealand you know you're going to get the quality of play, the physicality as well. You know you're going to get that every time from them," said Cheika. "Like I said last week, when they have 15 on the field it's like they have 20. "We just want to build on our footy and have a really good attitude. We know how much this (Bledisloe Cup) means to a lot of Aussies." George Gregan, the last Australian captain to lift the Bledisloe Cup and the most capped Wallaby of all-time, agreed it was a huge occasion. "It's a big trophy and it means a lot to both countries. It's a special one to have but you've got to work really, really hard to get it," he told rugby.com.au.

Australia (15-1)

Kurtley Beale; Reece Hodge, James O'Connor, Samu Kerevi, Marika Koroibete; Christian Lealifano, Nic White; Isi Naisarani, Michael Hooper (capt), Lukhan Salakaia-Loto; Adam Coleman, Izack Rodda; Allan Alaalatoa, Tolu Latu, Scott Sio Replacements: Folau Fainga'a, James Slipper, Taniela Tupou, Rob Simmons, Liam Wright, Will Genia, Matt Toomua, Adam Ashley-Cooper. — AFP

Raka, Cros get first caps for France v Scotland

NICE: Fijian-born winger Alivereti Raka and backrower Francois Cros will win their first caps for France tomorrow in their World Cup warm-up match against Scotland. Veteran Camille Lopez, 30, wins back his place at fly-half, preferred as starter to Romain Ntmack, who will sit on the bench for the match in Nice.

Ahead of the September 20-November 2 World Cup in Japan, French coach Jacques Brunel has been keeping a watchful eye on Clermont's gifted Raka, 24, who obtained French citizenship only last December.

Gros, for his part, made a strong case for inclusion at flanker during a stunning past season performance with French champions Toulouse. He gets his chance with regular back rowers Wenceslas Lauret and Yacouba Camara unavailable through injury. Toulon's Charles Ollivon also returns at flanker after two years to win his seventh cap after struggling with a shoulder injury. Lopez, dropped after he criticised the coaching setup in February following the sides 44-8 defeat by England, is back in favour and will link up with Toulouse scrum-half Antoine Dupont.

Cros and Ollivon join Gregory Alldritt (five caps) at number eight who is preferred to Louis Picamoles in an experimental backrow combination playing together for the first time. Paul Gabrillagues gets his first start in the second row since June last year while in the front row Camille Chat starts at hooker in place of Guilhem Guirado, the team captain who is injured along with prop Demba Bamba.

France play Scotland again in Edinburgh on August 24 and complete their three-match World Cup preparations against Italy on August 30 at the Stade de France. — AFP

Sports

King Kohli leads India to victory and overshadows Gayle swansong

PORT OF SPAIN: Classy Virat Kohli upstaged rampant Chris Gayle as India defeated the West Indies by six wickets in the rain-affected third and final One-Day International of their series at the Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad on Wednesday.

Set a revised target of 255 based on the DLS scoring method after Gayle blazed 72 in pacing the home side to 240 for seven off 35 overs, Kohli was at his most imperious in compiling an unbeaten 114 — his second consecutive ODI hundred — to pilot his team to 256 for four with 15 balls to spare.

His 43rd ODI hundred off 99 balls with 14 fours and overall impact on the series ensured him the double accolade of 'Man of the Match' and 'Man of the Series'. This successful chase under leaden skies and with the floodlights switched on gave India the series 2-0 following the abandoned first match in Guyana last week.

Kohli's masterminding of another successful pursuit will leave Jason Holder and his West Indies team wary of what the Indian captain will have to offer with the bat in the upcoming two Tests in Antigua and Jamaica.

"It was important for me to convert the big innings in this series but I must acknowledge the role of Shreyas (Iyer) in these two matches here. He has presented a great case for himself," the Indian captain said after victory was achieved. "We also did really well to keep the West Indies total to a manageable level. Credit to the bowlers for sticking to the task." As commanding as his innings was though, the hosts were left to rue a

straightforward opportunity missed by wicket-keeper Shai Hope off all-rounder Keemo Paul when the champion batsman was just on 11.

He received excellent support, as in the previous match, from Shreyas Iyer with an innings of 65 off 41 balls in a 120-run third-wicket partnership that tilted the match decisively India's way following a brief wobble when left-arm spinner Fabian Allen had dismissed both Shikhar Dhawan and Rishabh Pant in the same over.

Allen had also effected the run out of Rohit Sharma for the first wicket of the innings but was unable to complete his seven-over allotment due to an injury sustained attempting to save a boundary. While Kohli illuminated the gathering gloom in at the end of the match, it was Gayle who stole the show at the start.

Playing what is likely his final ODI in a 20-year-international career in which he hopes to still represent the Caribbean in defence of the World T20 title in 14 months' time in Australia, Gayle savaged the Indian bowlers after Holder chose to bat first, occupying only 41 balls with five sixes and eight fours distinguishing his typically bludgeoning innings. Opening partner Evin Lewis made a bold attempt to match arguably the most destructive power-hitter in the international game, his innings of 43 coming off 29 deliveries and embellished with three sixes and five fours.

Their rampage had taken the West Indies to 114 after ten overs, the most productive ten-over start to an ODI since the 2015 World Cup.

However, Lewis departed in the next over, the



PORT OF SPAIN: India's team celebrates with the trophy after winning the 3rd and final ODI match against West Indies at Queens Park Oval, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. — AFP

first bowled by leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal while Gayle was well caught by Kohli at mid-off striking out at Khaleel Ahmed. As he left the field, the manner of the Indian players' appreciation of the 39-year-old's innings, and his acknowledgement of the applause as he departed the field, left the distinct impression that he had played his final ODI innings.

'HEAVY PRICE' PAID

There followed a lengthy rain stoppage and the West Indies lost wickets in the mad scramble for runs on the resumption. Ahmed picked up two

more wickets to be the most successful bowler, although he was also the most expensive, conceding 68 runs off seven overs. Mohammed Shami picked up two wickets but the spinners — Chahal, Kedar Jadhav and Yuzvendra Chahal — were the most economical for India during the frenetic innings. "We paid a heavy price for letting Kohli off the hook today, but I also felt we didn't execute as well as we should as a bowling unit," Holder said in assessing his team's effort. "There's still a lot of work to be done at all levels of our cricket and we have to turn things around quickly with the Test series starting next week." — AFP

Hazlewood double rocks England in second Ashes Test

LONDON: Australia's Josh Hazlewood marked his entry into this season's Ashes with two early wickets before England held firm as the second Test finally got under way at Lord's yesterday. England were 76-2 at lunch on the second day, having been 26-2 after Hazlewood captured the wickets of Jason Roy and captain Joe Root.

But Rory Burns (34 not out) and Joe Denly (27 not out) prevented further collapse, with Hazlewood having the excellent figures of two wickets for 14 runs in 10 overs at lunch. Australia, 1-0 up in the five-match series after a 251-run win in the first Test at Edgbaston last week, saw captain Tim Paine show faith in his attack by deciding to bowl first after winning the toss following Wednesday's opening day washout.

It took just nine balls for his decision to be rewarded. After Pat Cummins had bowled a probing maiden to Rory Burns, Hazlewood — recalled in place of James Pattinson in the only change to Australia's side — struck with just his third ball when Roy was caught behind for a duck by wicketkeeper Paine after fending loosely outside off stump at a rising delivery.

England had now lost their first wicket without a run on the board. Although the sun was breaking through the clouds, easing the conditions for batting, that did not stop Australia's new-ball duo from repeatedly beating the outside edge of Root and left-hander Burns — who scored his maiden Test century at Edgbaston.

But Root, England's best batsman, did hit the first boundaries of the match in when he cover drove two successive Cummins deliveries for textbook fours in the seventh over.

And when first-change Peter Siddle replaced Cummins, England took 13 runs off his first over including three well-struck



LONDON: England's Jonny Bairstow (C) watches as Australia's David Warner (L) fails to stop his shot on the second day of the second Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia at Lord's Cricket Ground in London yesterday. — AFP

boundaries. But Hazlewood then had Root, aiming across his front pad, lbw for 14 with a ball that nipped back.

Root thought about a review but decided against, with England now 26-2 as the under pressure Denly walked out to bat. England should have been 40-3 but Burns, on 16, saw Usman Khawaja drop a routine gully chance from an edge drive off Siddle.

It is 18 years since Australia last won an Ashes series in England. Wednesday's washout saw play extended to 98 overs per day, with the follow-on reduced to within 150 runs rather than 200 now this is a four-day match. On the last two occasions that an entire day's play has been lost in a Lord's Test (first day, 2001 v Pakistan and first day, 2018 v India), the match was still over within four days. Thursday saw Lord's turn red in support of the Ruth Strauss Foundation — a lung cancer charity set up to honour the late wife of Andrew Strauss, the former England captain and director of men's cricket, who died from the disease. — AFP

McConnochie to make England debut against Wales

LONDON: Ruaridh McConnochie will make his England debut a week later than hoped for after overcoming a hip problem in time to start against Wales in a World Cup qualifier in Cardiff tomorrow.

The Bath wing and sevens specialist was picked in the team to face the Grand Slam champions at Twickenham last weekend but was among a trio of late withdrawals due to injury for England's 33-19 win.

Eddie Jones makes three changes for the trip to Cardiff with Maro Itoje and Courtney Lawes also coming into the side. George Ford is again named as captain with regular skipper Owen Farrell making his first appearance of the World Cup warm-up schedule, but only on the bench.

"Our selection strategy for our second game is similar to the first, so a bit of a mix-and-match approach. We are looking at different combinations and have a particular strategy for this game," said Jones, who has already announced his 31-man squad for the World Cup.

"The game is very much about ourselves preparing for the World Cup and we are respectful that we have got such strong opposition at their home ground. We are looking forward to it.

"The squad has been progressing well this week and I think there is a realisation among the squad now that the hard work really starts, nothing has been achieved." Wales also made three changes with Dan Biggar drafted in for the injured Gareth Anscombe. — AFP

False promise? Britain's got talent in the Bundesliga

BERLIN: Rising British starlets Jonjoe Kenny, Ethan Ampadu and Ademola Lookman will all be hoping to get a first taste of Bundesliga action when the German league kicks off this weekend. Starved of game time in the Premier League, Schalke loanee Kenny, 22, and RB Leipzig newcomers Lookman, 21, and Ampadu, 28, are hoping to emulate the success of English Borussia Dortmund star Jadon Sancho, 19, in the Bundesliga.

Yet, as Leipzig coach Julian Nagelsmann told AFP-subsiary SID this week, life in German football can be tougher than expected for young British players. "Ethan has a great career ahead of him but he still has a bit to learn. Mola (Lookman) is unbelievable in one-on-ones...but he has a fair bit to learn defensively," warned Nagelsmann.

Lookman, his former Everton team-mate Kenny and Chelsea loanee Ampadu are the latest in a wave of British talent which has relocated to Germany in recent years. Since 2016, 11 British youngsters have moved to the Bundesliga, either on loan or permanent deals, and the success of Sancho appears to have created a domino effect.

Everton defender Kenny admits that he was persuaded to join Schalke by England Under-21 team mate Reiss Nelson, who spent last season on loan at Hoffenheim from Arsenal.

"I spoke to Reiss a lot. He had nothing but praise for the quality here," said Kenny.

"He told me how much he learned, and he really helped me make my decision to come here."

Yet as Nelson's experience shows, coming to a Bundesliga club is no guarantee of game time.

Despite impressing in his first few games, the Arsenal loanee made five starts in 23 appear-

ances for Hoffenheim last season, averaging just 27 minutes a game.

Leipzig boss Nagelsmann, who coached Nelson at Hoffenheim last season, knows that young British players can find it hard to integrate.

"The main problem is that the players arrive very late (in the transfer window), because English clubs tend to wait and see what happens with their young talents," Nagelsmann said.

"Reiss arrived at the beginning of August. He didn't speak the language and he wasn't familiar with what we were working on."

'SANCHO HAD TIME'

Nelson is not the only one to have struggled. Language problems and difficulties adapting to a different set of tactical demands, mean many English players have come back from Germany disappointed.

Scottish winger Oliver Burke, who had a spell at Leipzig and is now at West Bromwich Albion, and English striker Kaylen Hinds, who was at Wolfsburg and is without a club, failed to establish themselves.

Of the 11 young Brits who have tried their luck in the Bundesliga, only Sancho has made the jump from bit-part impact player to first-team regular. Nagelsmann believes that the Borussia Dortmund star has benefited from being given time to settle.

Sancho was signed from Manchester City in August 2017, yet only played his first 90 minutes in the Bundesliga the following January.

"These loan deals only work if the player is there for perhaps two years, and he has time to acclimatise," he told SID.

"Jadon also took a bit of time to get going. He had time to develop, but others don't have that."

S Africa's Nkwe seeks Guardiola inspiration

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's interim team director Enoch Nkwe says he will look to English Premier League soccer coach Pep Guardiola for inspiration during his side's upcoming tour of India. Nkwe replaces West Indian Ottis Gibson, the previous head coach, for the trip which starts in September and includes three Tests and three Twenty20 Internationals.

Nkwe's role, though, is all-encompassing and marries the role of head coach, selector and team manager, with other members of the support team reporting directly to him - a similar role to that of a European-style director of football.

Nkwe, 36, told a press conference on Thursday that he was a big fan of Manchester City manager Guardiola and the way he creates successful environments.

"He is on another level. There are a lot of things you can learn from different sporting codes. I have followed his work and enjoy how he backs his philosophy, he always tries to set new boundaries and break new records," he said.

"Seeing his growth, from coaching one of the biggest clubs in the world (Barcelona) at the age of 37, is an in-

spiration." Nkwe's appointment drew criticism from some former national team players, given his relative lack of experience - he did not play international cricket - and despite his success coaching the Lions in the 2018/19 domestic season.

Nkwe, though, has had coaching spells as assistant with the Netherlands national side, on the Canadian T20 circuit and with the South African 'A' side, including a tour to India, and argues he has enough know-how to take the team forward.

"I don't feel it is a suicide mission (in India)," he told reporters. "As a coach I strongly believe that every challenge is an opportunity. As management we need to create the right environment as soon as possible.

"I have just been in Canada working with some of the best T20 players in the world. Just to manage Chris Gayle is a massive task in itself!

"Being someone that is always open to new experiences and learning, the last year has been massive in my coaching career and as a person."

Nkwe will be backed up by batting, bowling and fielding coaches who are expected to be former players with experience of playing or working in India.

"I will take full responsibility for how things unfold in India, but I like to create the environment where each coach has a say, learns and grows," Nkwe added.

South Africa start the tour with the limited overs matches, the first in Dharamsala on Sept. 15. The tests follow in Visakhapatnam (Oct. 2-6), Pune (Oct. 10-14) and Ranchi (Oct. 19-23), the first for the team in the newly-formed ICC Test Championship. — Reuters



LEIPZIG: File photo taken on July 8, 2019 RB Leipzig's new coach Julian Nagelsmann leads his team's first training session ahead of the upcoming season German First division Bundesliga football, in Leipzig. "This club has the potential to win a title in the coming years." Julian Nagelsmann, the young star coach recruited by Leipzig, arrives with a mission: to establish RB permanently at the top of German football. — AFP

By that logic, Lookman may have a better chance of establishing himself at Leipzig than Welsh international Ampadu.

Lookman spent six months with RB Leipzig in 2018, and has now joined on a permanent deal.

Ampadu and Kenny are on one-year loans and have just a season to make their marks in

German football. For now, Kenny feels he is settling well, though there is one thing he misses already — a certain chain of chicken restaurants.

"If I could bring one thing over from home, it would probably be either my family or Nando's," he said. "I really miss Nando's." — AFP

New European T20 league postponed until 2020

LONDON: The inaugural Euro T20 Slam, a Twenty20 franchise tournament with six teams from Scotland, Netherlands and Ireland, has been postponed until 2020, the organisers said yesterday.

The cricket boards of Scotland, the Netherlands and Ireland had agreed in March to form a new European league, developed in consultation with the International Cricket Council (ICC), to be held from Aug. 30 to Sept. 22.

The organisers did not provide a detailed explanation for the decision, citing "unforeseen circumstances".

"The Board of the Euro T20 Slam, funding partners and franchise owners of this exciting new T20 tournament have reluctantly come to the decision that staging of the event will not be possible in 2019," board member Prashant Mishra said in a statement <https://et20s.com/2019/08/15/euro-t20-slam-to-be-postponed-until-2020>.

"We believe the right course of action is to postpone the Slam to a further date. This will give us the necessary breathing space to ensure we are ready to go. We will work with the three cricket boards, our principal investors, the franchise owners, players and other stakeholders within the game to ensure we fulfil any commitments we have made to the extent possible."

The tournament schedule had already been released. Six city-based franchise teams, two from each country, were set to play 30 group-stage matches followed by semi-finals and a final in Dublin. GS Holding Inc and Woods Entertainment were to deliver the tournament under an initial 10-year agreement, with the matches set to be broadcast in global markets. — Reuters

Sports

Fiery Nick Kyrgios smashes racquets, tosses shoes in loss

Japan's Nishioka knocks out idol Nishikori

CINCINNATI: Nick Kyrgios stepped off court to smash two racquets and toss his shoes to spectators Wednesday in a meltdown during a second-round ATP Cincinnati Masters loss to Russia's Karen Khachanov.

Eighth-seeded Khachanov rallied for a 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (7/4) 6-2 victory over the volatile Australian, but the final set was close to farce, with Kyrgios engaged in a running dialogue with Irish chair umpire Fergus Murphy.

"He has a really great talent but sometimes the head not in the right place," Khachanov said. "It was a really difficult match for me — I had to really work it out, how to get the win. It's really tough (playing Kyrgios), not only for me but for everybody. You have to try and handle it, then you can have chances to win the match. Always try to stay in there."

Kyrgios, who won his sixth career ATP singles crown two weeks ago in Washington, also complained last week in Toronto in an apparent dispute as to why he could not have a white towel during a match.

World number 27 Kyrgios, rarely far from controversy, was defaulted three months ago after throwing a chair as he quit a match in Rome. The latest iteration of the Kyrgios saga erupted after he lost the second set to Khachanov.

Sitting in his chair at the pause, Kyrgios suddenly announced he was going on a bathroom break, with Murphy telling him there was no time. The Aussie walked anyway, carrying two racquets with him. Television showed him going through a stadium door partly made of glass and smashing his racquets be-

fore collecting them and walking back onto court.

All the while, he was nagging and occasionally cursing at Murphy. Kyrgios calmly held his own at the start of the final set, producing a hold which featured three aces. But it was the ice-calm Khachanov who took advantage, breaking for 4-2 and running out to a 5-2 margin.

Kyrgios, by now hardly in the match, double-faulted to hand over two match points and served up another double after saving a first match point. He refused to shake Murphy's hand on the way off court and tossed his shoes and other soft articles into the crowd and handing his broken racquets to young fans before walking off.

At one point in the drama, Kyrgios stood at the back of the court, wrapping his racquet grip, which Murphy kept telling him he was not ready. Kyrgios told Khachanov to go ahead and serve, but the Russian declined until all was in place on the Kyrgios side of the net.

Tournament supervisor Gerry Armstrong sat near the court, observing, but was not called upon to make any ruling during the bizarre closing stages of the evening. Khachanov will play Frenchman Lucas Pouille in third round.

Meanwhile, Yoshihito Nishioka secured a dream result on Wednesday as he defeated longtime idol and Japanese countryman Kei Nishikori 7-6 (7/2), 6-4 at the ATP Cincinnati Masters. Sixth-seeded Nishikori, Asia's top-ranked player, went down to his 77th-ranked compatriot, who came through qualifying, in just over 90 minutes.

For the winner, the second-round success was



MASON: Nick Kyrgios of Australia throws his racket against Lorenzo Sonego of Italy during Day 3 of the Western and Southern Open at Lindner Family Tennis Center on August 12, 2019 in Mason, Ohio. —AFP

legendary. "I was so excited to play with him, because he's the hero of the Japanese tennis, Asian tennis," Nishioka said. "I couldn't sleep yesterday, I know him very well. I was watching him when I was junior. I was learning many things from him."

"I tried to go his weakness, I just wanted to be my best against my hero. "This was a very important

experience for me. Today I learned many things from him. The most important thing was to play with him."

Nishikori, a 2014 US Open finalist, has never been past the third round in Cincinnati while Nishioka is making his first appearance. Nishioka will aim for the quarter-finals today against Australian Alex di Minaur. —AFP

Fate of India-Pak Davis Cup tie to be decided on Monday

MUMBAI: The All India Tennis Association will discuss its concerns over next month's Davis Cup tie between India and Pakistan with security advisers from the International Tennis Federation (ITF) on Monday, AITA General Secretary Hironmoy Chatterjee has said.

Security representatives of the governing bodies will speak in a telephone call that will also be attended by India's Davis Cup captain Mahesh Bhupathi, after which AITA will decide whether the Indian team travels to Islamabad, Chatterjee added.

The Indian side wants safety guarantees before travelling for the Sept. 14-15 tie, with tensions high between the neighbours after New Delhi removed "special status" from its portion of the contested region of Kashmir. AITA wrote to the ITF on Wednesday to ask if the tie could be moved to a neutral venue or postponed after Pakistan last week expelled India's ambassador and suspended bilateral trade and public transport links with its neighbour.

India and Pakistan have fought two wars over Kashmir since 1947 and came close to a third in February after an attack on Indian police by a Pakistan-based militant group resulted in air strikes by both countries. —Reuters

Osaka, Halep advance, Barty beats Sharapova

CINCINNATI: World number one Naomi Osaka and Wimbledon champion Simona Halep battled to three-set triumphs Wednesday at the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Masters while top seed Ashleigh Barty ousted Maria Sharapova.

Reigning US and Australian Open champion Osaka needed more than two hours to outlast Aliaksandra Sasnovich 7-6 (7/3), 2-6, 6-2. The Japanese star will next face a third-round match against Taiwan's Hsieh Su-Wei, who defeated American Jennifer Brady 7-6 (11/9) 6-3.

Osaka finally scored a win here at the US Open warm-up after losing in the first round a year ago. "I was just trying to have fun," Osaka said. "In the second set I was taking myself too seriously and was down on myself."

"Now I just want to have fun and enjoy it. That's what I'm supposed to do." Osaka advanced with eight aces, 24 winners and breaks on four of five chances against an opponent who was treated on her right knee several times.

Australia's Barty, 23, won the battle of former number one players in just over 90 minutes. The

reigning Roland Garros champion beat five-time Grand Slam winner Sharapova, who was Cincinnati champion in 2011, for the second time this season after a win at the Australian Open.

It was Barty's 40th victory of 2019 and she goes on to face Estonia's Anett Kontaveit, who beat Polish teenager Iga Swiatek 6-4, 7-6 (7/2). Barty said she remained focused after last week's opening defeat in Toronto.

"It was certainly no panic sessions after last week. I knew I was a little bit underdone going into Toronto and certainly had no worries or concerns there," Barty said. "I've been striking the ball really well over the last seven or eight days. I found my groove a little bit more. It took a little bit to adjust to conditions, but it was easy for me to swing out at the start."

Barty fired 18 winners, breaking Sharapova four times as the Russian made 31 unforced errors. Fourth-seeded Halep took a late break in the penultimate game of the final set to beat Russian Ekaterina Alexandrova 3-6, 7-5, 6-4 after two hours on court.

The Romanian has finished runner-up in Cincinnati three times, last reaching the final a year ago against Kiki Bertens. In the next round, the 27-year-old, who retired injured from her Toronto quarter-final against Czech qualifier Marie Bouzkova last week, will face American Madison Keys, a 6-4, 6-1 winner over Russia's Daria Kasatkina.

"It was a very, very tough match," Halep said. "She played well, hitting the ball very



MASON: Ashleigh Barty of Australia returns a shot to Maria Sharapova of Russia during the Western & Southern Open at Lindner Family Tennis Center in Mason, Ohio. —AFP

strong. "Mentally, it was tough to return for me at the start after playing injured last week. "But I didn't have pain, which is good. It took time to get a rhythm and then do something on court." —AFP

Adrian the hero as Liverpool beat Chelsea to win Super Cup

ISTANBUL: Stand-in goalkeeper Adrian capped a "crazy week" as his save from Tammy Abraham allowed Liverpool to beat Chelsea 5-4 on penalties and win the UEFA Super Cup on Wednesday after a richly entertaining match in Istanbul finished 2-2 at the end of extra time.

Every penalty in the shoot-out had been successful before Mohamed Salah converted Liverpool's fifth kick at the home of Besiktas. Substitute Abraham then had his effort saved by Adrian, the new signing only playing in the absence of the injured Allison Becker.

"Welcome to Liverpool! It's been a crazy week. I'm really happy for the team, I'm happy to play for Liverpool and happy for the fans," Adrian, who signed 10 days ago, told BT Sport. It was Liverpool's fourth Super Cup victory, with their last coming in 2005 on the back of their memorable Champions League triumph in Istanbul.

They have now won 13 European trophies overall, and how their supporters would love to come back to the banks of the Bosphorus for the final of this season's Champions League. "It was a very difficult game for both teams. It was all about winning it and we did that in the end," admitted manager Jurgen Klopp.

Sadio Mane had earlier been Liverpool's star, cancelling out Olivier Giroud's first-half strike to ensure the match ended 1-1 in 90 minutes, and then putting Klopp's team in front on 95 minutes.

But it was perhaps inevitable that French referee Stephanie Frappart would play a role in the outcome of the game. The first woman to take charge of a major men's match in European competition, Frappart gave Chelsea a penalty when Abraham went down under contact from Adrian. Jorginho netted the spot-kick.

He also scored in the shoot-out, but there would be no first trophy as Chelsea coach for Frank Lampard, who lost the Super Cup twice with the club as a player.

"To lose the game was disappointing but if it means Chelsea's season can be something like how we played today, we'll be ok," he insisted. Lampard has stated a willingness to give youth a chance this season, although here he left Mason Mount and Abraham — aged just 20 and 21 respectively — on the bench.

N'Golo Kante played after a summer plagued by injury problems, while Giroud started and Christian Pulisic made his full debut. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain made his first start for Liverpool in 16 months after injury. The England midfielder released Salah for an early chance only for the Egyptian's effort to be saved by Kepa Arrizabalaga. However, he generally struggled to make an impact and was replaced at half-time by Roberto Firmino.

Chelsea had enjoyed the better of the opening 45 minutes, with Pedro Rodriguez striking the bar midway through the first half before Adrian saved from Mateo Kovacic.

The opener arrived in the 36th minute, with Kante finding Pulisic and the American drawing several red shirts towards him before releasing Giroud to score. Shortly after, Pulisic thought he had made it 2-0, but his fine finish was disallowed for offside.

The introduction of Firmino helped change things at the start of the second half, though, with Liverpool needing little more than two minutes to draw level.

The Brazilian knocked the ball into the path of Mane, who scrambled home from close range



ISTANBUL: Liverpool players celebrate with the trophy after winning the UEFA Super Cup 2019 football match between FC Liverpool and FC Chelsea at Besiktas Park Stadium in Istanbul. — AFP

despite Kepa getting a glove to it. Kepa fared far better in the 75th minute, blocking a Salah shot and then reacting brilliantly to turn Virgil van Dijk's follow-up onto the woodwork.

Brought on from the bench along with Abraham, Mount briefly thought he had restored Chelsea's lead late on but his crisp low strike was disallowed. On into extra time they went and, to the delight of the crowd, who were mostly supporting the European champions, Liverpool

went 2-1 up thanks to that same combination.

Mane found Firmino and then latched onto the Brazilian's cutback and fired home off the underside of the bar. But, in the 101st minute, Jorginho converted from the spot to bring back the possibility of a penalty shoot-out.

Having conceded that spot-kick, Adrian later produced a firm hand to deny Mount and was at it again as he denied Abraham to secure the trophy. — AFP

PSG and French football braced as Neymar exit

PARIS: The saga of Neymar's seemingly inevitable departure from Paris Saint-Germain is proving a long, drawn out affair bringing the curtain down on what will ultimately feel like a fleeting and failed experiment.

Having arrived in France in 2017 hoping a world-record transfer to PSG would help him emerge from the shadow of Lionel Messi at Barcelona and win the Ballon d'Or, two years on he looks set to leave with his reputation having taken a serious hit.

There is no doubting the 27-year-old forward is a brilliant player, and there is every chance he will get the success he craves — collectively and, chiefly, individually — by returning to Spain, whether with his old club or Real Madrid. However, there is every reason to believe a Kylian Mbappe-led PSG, and football in France in general, will ultimately be better off without him.

The French champions' first Ligue 1 game of the campaign last Sunday, a 3-0 win against Nimes, saw supporters unfurl banners

insulting the 222 million-euro (\$264 million at the time) man. Neymar himself was not involved in that game, left out amid the uncertainty over his future. He already missed the season-opening Champions Trophy against Rennes in China due to suspension.

Since moving to the Parc des Princes, he has played in almost exactly half of his club's matches. When he has been on the field he has frequently been brilliant, scoring 51 goals in 58 games, but when it has really mattered he has been absent.

Foot injuries saw him miss three of the four Champions League knockout matches the Qatar-owned club have played in since his arrival. Without him, they lost in the last 16 to Real Madrid in 2018 and then to Manchester United this year.

"I like Neymar, I want to keep playing with him, with Kylian and with everyone," coach Thomas Tuchel said last weekend.

"But the reality is that we must find solutions without 'Ney'. You can't lose Neymar and just find someone else who will do the same things."

Mbappe added that "without Neymar, it's not the same team," but PSG can still improve by investing in a more balanced squad — summer signings made so far under sporting director Leonardo are a step in the right direction. — AFP

Van Dijk, Messi and Ronaldo vie for UEFA Player of the Year award

PARIS: Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and Virgil Van Dijk have been shortlisted for the UEFA Player of the Year award, the sport's European governing body said yesterday. While Ronaldo, a three-time winner, has been ever-present in the final three since the award was created in 2011, centre back Van Dijk makes his first appearance after helping Liverpool win the Champions League title last season.

Van Dijk was voted both the Premier League Player of the Season and the Players' Player of the Year, and was instrumental in the Merseyside club's sixth European Cup triumph.

Two-time award winner Messi was the leading scorer in both La Liga (36 goals) and the Champions League (12 goals) last season but his Barcelona side fell in the semi-final stage to Liverpool, who overcame a three-goal deficit in the second leg to advance.

Ronaldo, who has won five Champions League titles, did not fare too well in Europe in

his debut season with Juventus, the Italian side losing in the quarter-finals to Ajax Amsterdam.

However, he helped Juve seal their eighth successive league title with 21 goals and was voted the Serie A's 'Most Valuable Player'.

For the women's award, treble-winners Olympique Lyonnais made it a clean sweep with striker Ada Hegerberg, right back Lucy Bronze and midfielder Amandine Henry short-listed. Hegerberg was the first recipient of the women's Ballon d'Or last year. The awards will be presented during the Champions League group stage draw ceremony in Monaco on Thursday Aug. 29. — Reuters

Live		MATCHES ON TV	
		LOCAL TIMING	
SPANISH LEAGUE			
Athletic de Bilbao v FC Barcelona	22:00		
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA			
Bayern Munich v Hertha Berlin	21:30		
FRENCH LEAGUE			
Olympique Lyonnais v SCO Angers	21:45		

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2019

MASON: Ashleigh Barty of Australia returns a shot to Maria Sharapova of Russia during the Western & Southern Open at Lindner Family Tennis Center in Mason, Ohio. — AFP

Osaka, Halep advance, Barty beats Sharapova in Cincinnati

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