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Fears of recession rising in Kuwait amid Trump tariffs

Trump slams Fed's Powell, says won't stop him from quitting

WASHINGTON/KUWAIT: EU Council President Donald Tusk warned yesterday that US President Donald Trump's escalating trade skirmishes with China and Europe could force economies around the world - including in Kuwait and the Gulf - into recession. "Trade wars will lead to recession, while trade deals will boost the economy," Tusk said as leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) countries descended on the French resort town of Biarritz for a three-day summit.

Trump had said Friday that he would not stand in the way of beleaguered Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell if he decided to quit. Asked if he wants Powell to resign, Trump told reporters: "If he did, I wouldn't stop him." Earlier on Friday, Powell had vowed to act to ensure the American economic expansion continues, but warned the central bank has no "rulebook" for dealing with the US-China trade war that deteriorated further almost as he spoke.

Boursa Kuwait ended trading Thursday in the red zone as the Premier Market Index went down 0.51 points reach 6,610.18 points. The Main Market Index dropped 10.36 points to reach 4,799.94 points and the All Share Market Index shed 3.67 points to stand at 6,000.10 points. Stock volume reached 106.9 million shares in 5,095 deals with a value worth KD 22.7 mil-

lion. In Saudi Arabia, the index fell 0.7 percent as Samba Financial Group lost 2.6 percent and National Commercial Bank slipped 0.8 percent. Banking stocks have come under pressure in recent weeks from the Saudi central bank's decision to follow the US Federal Reserve in cutting interest rates, which analysts expect to squeeze lenders' profit margins. Dubai's index was down 0.8 percent at 2,769 points, its lowest close since July 21. Blue-chip developer Emaar Properties slid 2.5 percent, while Emirates NBD traded 1.3 percent lower. Nasdaq Dubai-listed port operator DP World rose as much as 5 percent after a reporting 26.8 percent jump in the first-half profit, before closing 0.4 percent down as global trade disputes and regional geopolitics continued to weigh on its outlook.

Abu Dhabi's index was flat, with First Abu Dhabi Bank gaining 0.3 percent. Gulf Pharmaceutical Industries (Julfar) slumped 10 percent, extending losses to a third straight session after it recalled a batch of its Laxocodyl suppository over a labelling error. Qatar's index rose 0.4 percent in a boost from market heavy-weight Industries Qatar which increased 1.4 percent.

Wall Street stocks finished a bruising session sharply lower Friday, while the Dow sank more than 600 points.

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KUWAIT: A trader is seen on the floor of Boursa Kuwait in this recent file photo.

Salary cap raised for family visas

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah has issued a decision increasing the minimum salary to obtain a family visa to KD 500. The decision amends a previous directive which stipulated that the minimum salary for family visas should be KD 450. The decision added the director general of residency affairs can exempt those already in Kuwait or born here from the salary condition.

The decision also exempts the following professions: Advisors, judges, members of the prosecution, experts and legal researchers in the public sector; doctors and pharmacists; teachers at universities, colleges and higher education institutes; school principals, vice-principals, supervisors, teachers, social workers and laboratory technicians in the public sector; university financial and economic experts; engineers; imams and muezzins; library rectors; health ministry employees (nurses, paramedics, technicians and social service workers; social workers in the government; journalists, media persons and reporters; coaches and players at sports clubs; pilots and flight attendants; funerary workers. — Al-Anbaa

Hundreds of new Amazon fires as outrage grows

PORTO VELHO, Brazil: Hundreds of new fires are raging in the Amazon rainforest in northern Brazil, official data showed yesterday, amid growing international pressure on President Jair Bolsonaro to control the worst blazes in years. Multiple fires were seen across a vast area of the northwestern state of Rondonia on Friday when AFP journalists flew over the area. Several people in the capital Porto Velho told AFP Saturday that what appeared to be light clouds hanging over the city was actually smoke from the blazes. "I'm very worried because of the environment and health," Delmara Conceicao Silva told AFP. "I have a daughter with respiratory problems and she suffers more because of the fires."

The fires in the world's largest rainforest have triggered a global outcry and are a major topic of concern at the G7 meeting in Biarritz in southern France. Official figures show 78,383 forest fires have been recorded in Brazil this year, the highest number of any year since 2013. Experts say the clearing of land during the months-long dry season

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NOVO PROGRESSO, Brazil: Handout aerial picture released by Greenpeace shows smoke billowing from the Jamanxim National Forest - APA (Environmental Protection Area) - in the Amazon biome in Para state on Friday. — AFP

News in brief

Some plastic bottles withdrawn

KUWAIT: Certain types of plastic bottles, namely PS 6 and 7 types, were withdrawn from the market for tests to check if they conform to Kuwaiti health standards, the ministry of commerce said yesterday, adding analysis will be conducted on the material and results will be announced as soon as possible. It affirmed that ministerial teams will continue inspecting the market for plastic bottles of the aforementioned types, issuing tickets to those violating the law. The ministry called on the public to report any violation of the law, especially during the back to school shopping season, by contacting ministerial inspection teams via the 135 hotline or through the ministry's social media accounts or apps. — KUNA

Indian ex-finance minister Jaitley dies

NEW DELHI: Former Indian finance minister Arun Jaitley, a key ally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, died in hospital in New Delhi yesterday aged 66, the government said. A diabetic, Jaitley underwent a kidney transplant last year and stepped down in May after being diagnosed with cancer. The lawyer-turned-politician also had triple heart bypass surgery when he was 52. Modi tweeted yesterday that Jaitley was a "political giant, towering intellectual and legal luminary". "He was an articulate leader who made a lasting contribution to India. His passing away is very saddening." — Agencies



Bashir defence asks court for release on bail

KHARTOUM: Sudan's deposed long-time president Omar Al-Bashir appeared in court yesterday for the second hearing of his corruption trial, during which his defense asked for his release on bail. Bashir, wearing a traditional white gown, sat in the same metal cage he appeared in Monday when his trial on graft charges opened. In the first hearing, an investigator said Bashir had admitted to receiving at least \$90 million in cash in recent years.

The judge in Khartoum yesterday

heard three witnesses, two of them investigators who searched Bashir's residence after his ouster and the other a banker. "We ask the court to release the accused on bail," Bashir's lawyer Hashem Abu Bakr said, to which the judge answered he would examine a written request. After the hearing, as a massive security convoy escorted the 75-year-old Bashir back to prison, two opposing groups of demonstrators staged protests.

One group of a few dozen protesters chanted slogans for Bashir to face justice not just over corruption but for his role in the country's deadly conflicts. "Bashir is a killer" and "He has to face justice", they chanted. "Bashir has committed a number of crimes that he should be prosecuted for as a priority, not for these

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KHARTOUM: Sudan's deposed military ruler Omar Al-Bashir sits in a defendant's cage during his corruption trial yesterday. — AFP

'Polypill' halves cardiac arrests, reduces strokes

PARIS: A cheap, once-a-day pill combining aspirin with drugs that lower blood pressure and cholesterol cuts cardiovascular disease as a whole by a third, and heart attacks by more than half, researchers said Friday. In clinical trials, the so-called "polypill" was especially effective among people with no history of cardiovascular disease, reducing the number of severe events by 40 percent, the researchers reported in The Lancet, a medical

journal. For those with a history of heart problems and strokes, the drug combo was only half as effective compared to the control group, who received advice on healthy living but no drugs.

Among participants who took the pill as directed - at least 70 percent of the time - heart attack incidence declined by 57 percent. The polypill concept was first proposed more than 20 years ago as a simpler, cost-effective approach to treating cardiovascular disease, which often requires taking several medications. Currently, patients are typically prescribed one or more drugs to lower blood pressure along with a statin, which holds lipids such as fatty acids in check. Aspirin, an analgesic, has blood thinning properties.

"The more tablets people have to take, the less they comply in the long-term," noted Kausik Ray, a professor

in public health and Imperial College London not involved in the study. "For chronic diseases, this is a challenge as you are asking people to take multiple medications every day for 30 or 40 years." About a third of patients stop taking their meds as early as 90 days after a heart attack, according to earlier research. But despite its obvious potential, the polypill had yet to be tested on a large number of people over a long period of time.

Scientists led by Reza Malekzadeh from the Tehran University of Medical Sciences recruited nearly 7,000 men and women, aged 50 to 75, living in rural Golestan, a province in Iran. About one in 10 had previously had heart attacks, strokes or other cardiovascular episodes. The participants were divided into two groups of roughly the same size. One was given "lifestyle advice"

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Local

Amir receives congratulatory cables from Nobel Laureate, Kuwait's top judge

Sheikh Sabah receives calls from Lebanese President, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince



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

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a congratulatory cable from 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winner Nadia Murad, on his recovery from his recent health setback. In response, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to Murad, thanking her for her kind words and sentiments. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a congratulatory cable from Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court, and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Jassem Al-Mutawaa, on his recovery from his recent health setback. His Highness the Amir sent a cable to Mutawaa, thanking him for his kind words.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

received a phone call from Lebanese President Michel Aoun, checking up on him after his recent health issue. His Highness the Amir expressed appreciation for President Aoun's concern and wished him long healthy life and more development for Lebanon, which is part of the strong deep-rooted Kuwaiti-Lebanese ties.

Moreover, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a phone call from Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan on his recovery from a recent minor health setback. Sheikh Mohammad uttered his sincere congratulations for His Highness the Amir's recovery and wished him good health. His Highness the Amir expressed thanks and appreciation to him for these warm sentiments and the sincere gesture. — KUNA

Chechnya's Shali mosque important religious center: Kuwait



Amiri Diwan Advisor Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq (first from right) attends the mosque's opening ceremony. — KUNA photos

SHALI, Chechen Republic: The grand mosque in Shali city, Chechnya, is an "architectural achievement" and "important religious center," a Kuwaiti official said Friday. Delivering a speech at the opening of the mosque, representative of the State of Kuwait, Amiri Diwan Advisor and Chairman of the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq hoped that the facility would contribute to the spiritual welfare of the Chechen people and the Muslims in the region. Maatouq conveyed, during the occasion, greetings from the UN global humanitarian leader, His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to President Kadyrov, commending the latter on the efforts to construct the mosque.

Maatouq stressed that building mosques was an important factor in Islam, saying that the first action undertaken by Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessing be upon him, when he migrated to Madinah was to construct a mosque for the first Islamic community. The mosque plays a vital role in the lives of Muslims worldwide, affirmed the



Amiri Diwan Advisor Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq meets with the Mufti of Chechnya Salah Mezhev.

Kuwaiti official, adding that such facilities encouraged piety, humbleness and overall goodness. Delegations from Arab and Islamic nations were present at the opening ceremony of the mosque named after Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The event was attended by

senior officials including Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov. Later on Friday, President Kadyrov received Maatouq at the presidential palace in the capital Grozny. Maatouq also met with the Mufti of Chechnya Salah Mezhev in the Chechen capital Grozny yesterday. — KUNA



Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov receives Amiri Diwan Advisor Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq.



SHALI, Chechen Republic: Amiri Diwan Advisor Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq delivers a speech at the opening ceremony of the grand mosque in Shali city, Chechnya.

Surgeons association hosts 'social media' workshop



KUWAIT: A group photo of attendees at the workshop.

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Association of Surgeons held its second workshop recently in the presence of Health Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Planning and Quality Affairs Dr Mohammad Al-Khashti, head of the association, Head of the Surgery Department at Jaber Hospital Dr Salman Al-Sabah said.

An elite group of international lecturers including Professor Juliro Mayol from Clinico San Carlos of Spain, and Dr Waddah Al-Rifaa

from Georgetown University, the US, attended the workshop which was entitled 'surgeons in social media: between innovation and risks.'

The workshop brought in European and American expertise in methods, laws and rules related to social media, Dr Salman said, adding that a survey was conducted at the end of the workshop on the benefits of social media that serve the society, as well as its disadvantages. Health Minister Dr Basel Al-Sabah is interested in the topic and formed a committee headed by the Ministry's Undersecretary for Private Sector Affairs Dr Fatima Al-Najjar, Dr Salman said.

Germany hails Kuwait's support for Muslims

BERLIN: President of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany Ayman Mazyek praised Kuwait's efforts for serving Muslim causes worldwide. In press remarks yesterday

ahead of his scheduled visit to Kuwait today, Mazyek said Kuwait has a successful and pioneering experience in the service of Muslims, describing it as an example for moderation and humanity. Mazyek said he was looking forward to holding talks with Kuwaiti leaders to discuss means of boosting cooperation with Islamic associations in the country. Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Germany Najib Al-Bader said Mazyek's four-day visit would be paid in response to an invitation from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. — KUNA



BERLIN: President of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany Ayman Mazyek (left) meets with the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Germany Najib Al-Bader. — KUNA

China working on bolstering strategic ties with Arab countries

BEIJING: Minister of the International Liaison Department of the Communist Party of China Song Tao affirmed yesterday that his country is working on bolstering strategic relations with Arab countries. The Chinese Diplomat stressed on his country's keenness on strengthening cooperation ties and finding ways that could be beneficial to both sides. That came in his speech during the meeting organized by the Arab Ambassadors Board at 'Kuwait's House' in the Chinese Capital Beijing. Tao pointed out that the speech of the Chinese President at the 8th Ministerial Meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF) held in Beijing last July, announced the establishment of these strategic relations between China and Arab Nations, and would be a new chapter in the history of China-Arab relations. Meanwhile, Kuwait's Ambassador to China Samih Hayat stressed on the depth of the historical Kuwaiti-Chinese relations, remembering His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-



Kuwait's Ambassador to China Samih Hayat addresses the meeting.



BEIJING: Minister of the International Liaison Department of Communist Party of China Song Tao speaks during the meeting. — KUNA

Sabah's first visit to China back in 1965 when he was the Minister of Finance and Industry. Hayat said that these relations continued growing in the reign of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah by creating an embassy and three Kuwaiti consulates in China. — KUNA

NBK takes Al-Shabab customers to eWorld Cup Grand Finale

KUWAIT: Constantly rewarding its customers with exclusive offers and advantages, the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) took the winners among customers of its youth segment to watch the FIFA eWorld Cup 2019 Grand Finale courtesy of Visa held in London. The trip included accommodation at a premier hotel and visits to leading touristic landmarks in the English capital.

The winners who went on the London trip and attended the FIFA eWorld Cup 2019 Grand Finale were: Shahad Ahmad Nafea Alrasheedi, Abdulaziz Mesfer Mohammad Alqahtani and Rayanah Rashed Nazzal Alhindi, whom each could take a companion with them on the trip. NBK was the only bank in the Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa (CEMEA) region to run a campaign in support of the FIFA eWorld Cup 2019, courtesy of Visa.

The three-day trip started with the arrival of the winners accompanied by their companions and representatives from NBK to the hotel where they were briefed about the activities-filled schedule. The following day, NBK took the winners on a visit to Coca-Cola London Eye where they were given a special access card entailing them to many touristic attractions. The winners concluded their journey by attending the Cup's finale.

Hanadi Khazal, Chief Marketing Officer at NBK, said: "We continue to award our customers with valuable prizes and entic-

ing experiences. We congratulate the winners who have enjoyed attending the event which has become a globally awaited tournament."

She added: "We are always focused at NBK at providing unique services and offers that satisfy the needs of our customers and their diverse lifestyles, especially our Al-Shabab Customers to whom we offer unique benefits and advantages to enhance their banking experience with NBK." Khazal showcased the success of NBK in developing advanced banking products that satisfy its customers' needs while rewarding them along the way with exclusive benefits and offers all year long, including cashback campaigns, discounts and the opportunity to attend international tournaments. NBK's Al-Shabab Package is available to customers between the ages of 13 to 24 years old or who are attending a college or university. Al-Shabab Customers receive Al-Shabab Debit Card and NBK Al-Shabab Visa Prepaid Card for free to enjoy safe online shopping (should the student allowance be transferred to NBK), in addition to a wide range of exclusive offers and discounts.



Hanadi Khazal

Local

Kuwait: Name, shame culprits of genocides against Rohingya

Kuwait calls for punishing officials responsible for harming civilians

NEW YORK: Kuwait has urged the international community to bring to account culprits of massacres against Myanmar's Rohingya, noting that the Muslim refugees cannot abandon squalid camp life and return home in shadow of fears and insecurity. 'Genocides perpetrated in Myanmar: Where do we stand with regard of accountability?' was the title of a statement addressed by Kuwait's permanent representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi to a UN Security Council session on Myanmar. This session, held three years after break-out of violence in the State of Rakhine, Myanmar, aims to shed light on accountability as a main demand supposed to be heeded by the Government of Myanmar, said Otaibi during the session, co-organized by Kuwait, Germany and Peru. Thousands from this community were killed in widespread violence that also forced 742,000 Muslims to flee Myanmar to neighboring Bangladesh spare themselves brutal attacks. According to latest statistics by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are more than one million Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, a port city in southeastern Bangladesh.

Ambassador Otaibi affirmed necessity that the Security Council and the international community continue to advise Myanmar that it must implement the relevant UNSC Presidential Statement and recommendations of Kofi Annan's Advisory Panel on Rakhine State. The UN commission has called for cessation of violence, improving security, ensuring delivery of humanitarian aid to the violence-stricken regions in Rakhine and penalizing the culprits responsible for the mass killing in the state. Ambassador Otaibi, who had visited the Rohingya refugees at Cox's Bazar camp along with a number of diplomats, said the hairy narrations he had heard from the refugees were similar to UN reports including those by an investigation panel, established by the Human Rights Council. He urged Myanmar to cooperate with the UNHCR, praising its formation of a national probe panel but noted that it must coordinate with the "mechanism" worked out by the Human Rights Council.

The senior Kuwaiti diplomat affirmed utter necessity of

speedy accountability and full cooperation with the UN in this respect, indicating that failure to impose justice would lead to further abusive acts and violence. Rohingya refugees cannot return home in shadow of lack of accountability and confidence in the local security authorities, he noted, indicating that they would not favor going back home where their life remained in danger for their current squalid living conditions in the shanty towns in Bangladesh.

Missiles' non-proliferation

Meanwhile, Kuwait called on super powers to avert escalation and engage in effective dialogue for a new pact limiting intermediate and short range missiles' non-proliferation. Ambassador Mansour Otaibi expressed the Kuwaiti during a Security Council's session on the super powers' nuclear missiles treaty. Kuwait dedicates profound concern for any measure intended to solidify global security and stability, he affirmed, regretting that the pact, hammered out during the Cold War era, has turned invalidated.

"Undoubtedly, this matter is worrisome for the pact had profound positive impact; where the two sides (Russia and the US) had dismantled 2,700 missile networks in 1991," Ambassador Otaibi said. Moreover, the treaty helped in alleviating global tension and led to maintaining security and peace, particularly in Europe. Nations of the globe had eagerly anticipated limiting proliferation of medium and short range missiles, "however what has happened faded this hope," he said. Collapse of this treaty may lead to aborting other nuclear accords and speeding up crumble of global security, the Kuwaiti envoy warned, re-emphasizing the necessity to rid the globe of these deadly arms.

Earlier this month, the US announced its formal withdrawal from the key nuclear treaty with Russia, raising fears of a new arms race. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) was signed by the late US President Ronald Reagan and the ex-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987. It banned missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 km (310-3,400 miles). Earlier this year, the US and NATO accused Russia of violating the pact by deploying a new type of cruise missile, which Moscow has denied.



UKHIA: Rohingya refugee youth renovate a makeshift house at Kutupalong refugee camp in Ukhia district in Bangladesh on August 23, 2019. —AFP

Harming civilians

Separately, Kuwait has affirmed necessity of punishing officials responsible for violently targeting civilians including religious minorities. Bader Al-Munaik, the deputy permanent representative at the UN, hailed the UN special team for probing crimes perpetrated by the so-called Islamic State (IS), also known as 'Daesh.' He was speaking during a Security Council's session on boosting individuals' security in armed conflicts. He affirmed Kuwait's support for the team mission in Iraq and expressed hope to see justice served with respect of the Rohingya who have been victims of "ethnic cleansing." The world nowadays is witnessing unprecedented escalation of violence amid recurring attacks on individuals and communities because of religious and racial considerations.

Munaik expressed solidarity with the victims and survivors of such hateful acts targeting Muslims and Christians, namely the tragic assault on a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand, and another one on Christians in Sri Lanka during Easter festivities. One of the methods for resisting indiscriminate against religious and racial minorities is boosting tolerance and combating all forms of radical ideologies, he has suggested. Governments ought to ensure protection and respect for all citizens, he said, noting that there must be equal treatment of citizens without religious indiscriminate. The United Nations, namely the Security Council, can play a crucial role in this regard through continuous condemnation of methodical repression of the minorities, in addition to ensuring full implementation of relevant UNSC resolutions on protecting civilians. —KUNA

Kuwaiti youth can attain UN vision for just world

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti engineer Meshaal Al-Otaibi believes Kuwaiti youth's ambition to be a force in the UN vision of a more peaceful, healthier and more rightful world. He said in a statement that he is the first Kuwaiti and Arab chosen to be an ambassador for young leaders among 55,000 participants worldwide from 190 countries by the 'One Young World Organization.' Otaibi pointed out that the reason why he was chosen as youth ambassador was for his achievements and contributions to the field of scientific research in architecture as well as being a young influential leading figure in community and Arab world. He added that he was invited to attend the 2019 World Youth Summit to be held at the Westminster Palace and the British Parliament in London to represent Kuwait and the Arab world, with the participation of many leaders and presidents from around the world. The 'One Young World Organization' aims to invest in youths and teach them different skills through training and self-development courses to acquire skills, plus the openings of summer centers, the statement noted.

Otaibi added that the summit's goal is to permanently link participants to bring about positive change in their communities and listen to their views and suggestions to help them overcome all the difficulties and obstacles facing them to achieve their projects. He stressed importance of awareness in issues of energy conservation and sustainable cities, which he has conducted several researches over and his quest to



Kuwaiti engineer Meshaal Al-Otaibi

raise awareness in the community and bring forth positive change to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and carbon footprint of buildings and usage of renewable energies available for a more sustainable future and a clean environment. Otaibi is interested in participating in the New Kuwait 2035 Vision to strengthen the role of Kuwaiti youth in achieving development and leadership in various fields.

Otaibi graduated from the University of Kansas and received his best doctoral thesis in architecture from his university in 2017. He was nominated for a PhD in architecture and won first place among 500 researchers from 62 countries participating in the European conference held in Paris. In addition, he was awarded the best Scientific Research Award in the field of architecture among 600 researchers from 54 participating countries worldwide and second best in the third North American International Conference held in Washington DC, representing Kuwait with the support and sponsorship of Public Authority for Youth (PAY). —KUNA

Registration starts for 'My Hobbies 2' project

KUWAIT: Registration for the 'My Hobbies 2' youth project is set to start today, the Youth Public Authority announced yesterday. The project, organized by the authority for the second year in a row, targets youths of the 17-35 age group, and can accommodate more than 500 young men and women in its various activities, said director of recreational activities at the Ministry of Youth Affairs Abdullah Al-Adwani.

Some workshops will be held at youth centers, while others will be held in other places according to the requirements of the courses, Adwani added. The training course covers sports, cultural, artistic and scientific fields and will continue throughout the month, he noted. He



Abdullah Al-Adwani

explained that the project aims to invest in the leisure time of youth and find suitable spaces to practice their favorite hobbies and develop skills in them. Adwani called on all Kuwaiti youth to register for these courses, which are free of charge through the website (www.ypa.gov.kw), pointing out that 450 young men and women benefited from the first 'My Hobbies' project last year and were awarded certificates. —KUNA

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Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Pigeons fly as the sun rises over Kuwait City yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwaiti aid keeps reaching people in need namely war-stricken Yemenis

Millions benefited from Kuwaiti-funded food, water, housing, health projects

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti donors and welfare associations continued delivering aid over the past week to those in need, namely impoverished Yemenis, in shadow of global celebrations marking the World Humanitarian Day. In coordination with Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), Hamza Al-Khayyat, the director of the Kuwaiti linguistic creativity center, donated copies of his book, “the dictation encyclopedia for children,” to Syrian students in Jordan – the latest Kuwaiti tangible kind move toward the war victims following a chain of deliveries, including cash, food and other necessities. He expressed gratitude to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, for covering costs of printing 20,000 copies of the encyclopedia.

In Aden, Yemen’s student support society has signed an agreement with Kuwait Society for Student Support (KSSS) to improve education in two schools in Tareem district in the governorate of Hadhramawt. Waseem Rubaihan, director of the student support society, said in a statement the agreement would contribute to improve education in Damoon and Khadija schools for girls. He said the agreement stipulated provision of 150 desks, maintenance of electrical appliances as well as guaranteeing safety of girls.

Meanwhile, Abdulraqueeb Fateh, the minister of local administration, said that the Kuwait aid to his country contributed to improving people’s humanitarian conditions. Fateh, also the head of the supreme relief commission, said Kuwait, via international agencies, had contributed with \$750 million for relieving the Yemenis. Up to 309,000 citizens had benefited from assistance delivered by the KRCS, he revealed. Yemeni Minister of Information Muammar Al-Aryani, also speaking to the Kuwait News Agency, says

that Kuwait has always supported the Yemeni people, particularly at hard times, and this support has tangibly increased after flare-up of the crisis.

Abdulqawi Al-Mekhlafi, the first undersecretary at the province of Taiz, said the region has received Kuwaiti backing despite the five-year siege of the region by the Houthi militias. Tareq Abdulwasea, chairman of the ‘Yemeni Al-Hikmah’ association, said the society registered 2.7 million people who benefited from Kuwaiti contributions to



\$750 million contributed for Yemenis’ relief

water projects, 1.7 million from food and housing ventures, 1.1 million from health programs and 141,000 from educational help. Sumaia Al-Maimani, director of the philanthropic project, “Pay two dinars and win the two (earthly and heavenly) worlds,” said the program that had been launched at Kuwait University resulted in establishing up to 14 educational projects in eight countries, benefiting up to 6,060 students. Moreover, the donations resulted in building 11 schools in Indonesia, Sudan, The Niger, India, Albania, Kyrgyzstan and China in addition to a library in Serbia. — KUNA



KRCS executed multifaceted projects in Yemen

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) executed during the month of August a number of multifaceted humanitarian projects in the war-torn country of Yemen, said an official yesterday. KRCS Director General Abdulrahman Al-Oun revealed that the project – carried out in coordination with Yemen’s Estijaba (response) network – provided necessary medical equipment and water resources to the Yemeni people. Fifteen incubators were provided to a number of hospitals in Yemen with 5,670 premature babies benefiting from the medical apparatus, Oun revealed, adding that water wells were also dug in Yemen’s Sah city offering clean water to 1,320 people. He revealed that the KRCS also carried out Eid Udhiya (distribution of sacrificial meat during the Eid Al-Adha holiday) projects in several towns and cities in Yemen, benefiting 4,266 people. A cornerstone for a well project in Marib city was set, Oun indicated, saying that 3,500 families will benefit from the well. Meanwhile, the KRCS Director General called on those eager to do more good for the Yemeni people to continue providing a helping hand, stressing that their contributions were important. — KUNA



Local

1,219 outdoor labor ban violations registered in two months in Kuwait

Violators face fines of up to KD 200 for each worker

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: According to law no. 6/2010, the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) issued a decree banning laborers from working outdoors from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm in summer, from June 1 to Aug 31 every year. This includes hard work done outdoors in the heat to protect the laborers from the extreme weather conditions.

Kuwait Times followed the application of the ban and compliance by companies in various areas. Daily observations at different locations, especially construction sites, revealed many violations of this law and tens of workers working under the hot sun. PAM warned companies they would face sanctions in case they violated the law and forced laborers to work during the ban. Inspectors regularly monitored various locations in all of Kuwait's governorates. PAM also received complaints from the public, who reporting seeing laborers working during the ban hours.

“Employer takes full responsibility”

The number of violations registered by PAM's inspectors from the beginning of the ban till July 31, 2019 reached 1,219. “The inspectors went on repeated inspections of these locations that received notices, and legal action was taken towards companies that were still in violation, with their files transferred to the legal department,” Public Relations Director at PAM Aseel Al-Maziad told Kuwait Times.

The penalties for violating companies are set according to the following process: “After the inspector gives the violating employer a notice to avoid the violation, they visit the location again. If the violation is repeated, then the employer will have to pay a fine of KD 100 to KD 200 for each worker,” she said. The worker does not bear

any responsibility. “Whether the worker decided to work during the ban hours by himself or the employer asked him to do so, in all cases the employer takes full responsibility for this violation and the worker will not be penalized,” stressed Maziad.



KUWAIT: This file photo shows workers at a construction site in Kuwait while working during outdoor ban hours.

Earth cannot tolerate more Amazon destruction: Kuwaiti expert

KUWAIT: Planet Earth cannot tolerate more destruction in the Amazon, a Kuwaiti meteorologist said yesterday, warning that “the globe's lungs are being burned.” The Amazon forests are where 33 million people live along with 240 local indigenous Amazon communities, as well as 400,000 plant species, 370 reptiles and 300 types of marine life, Meteorologist Essa Ramadan said in a statement yesterday, adding that the Amazon rainforests are able to reduce global warming and adapt to it.

On Kuwait's weather, Ramadan said humidity is expected to continue until the weekend, adding that it may return at the start of September, which indicates a change in the weather. Yesterday marked the first day of the ‘Suhail season’, he said, adding the Suhail star



PORTO VELHO: Aerial picture showing a burnt piece of land in the Amazon rainforest, about 65 km from Porto Velho, in the state of Rondonia, in northern Brazil, on August 23, 2019. — AFP

(Canopus) is in the south of the Arabian Peninsula and will be visible in Kuwait after September 5.

Kuwait airport customs stop 4 passengers with drugs

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Airport customs officials foiled four separate attempts to smuggle drugs into Kuwait in the past few days. In the first case, a passenger arriving from Europe was noticed to be nervous, so her luggage was searched and 19 pieces of mushrooms mixed with a highly potent drug were found. Another passenger from Europe had cocaine on him, while an Arab man arriving from his country had several hashish pieces. A European man had a marijuana joint which was found

by an officer.

Meanwhile, Nuwaiseeb border outlet supervisor Bilal Al-Khamees said his men foiled yesterday an attempt to smuggle 425 cigarette cartons and 1,127 vaping flavor vials hidden in a Gulf national's vehicle. The contraband was confiscated and will be sold in an auction.

In other news, three vehicles were engulfed in flames in a Salmiya yard. Salmiya and Bidaa fire stations responded and fought the blaze to avoid more losses. Investigations are being made to determine the cause of the fire.



Action taken against 16 ‘non-cooperating’ fish boat owners

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The manpower authority suspended 16 files of fishing boat owners and summoned seven others. It said this action comes in cooperation with the commerce and industry ministry and the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources with the situation in the fish market in mind, as boat owners refraining from fishing negatively affects the fish market. The authority said it took the precautionary measure to guarantee

no repeat of boat owners and fishermen violating the law. It said it is keen on taking care of the public's interests and maintaining stability in the marketplace. Separately, three ruling family members complained against a Kuwaiti man and his son allegedly for swindling them out of KD 350,000. The suspects received money from the complainants to invest it in real estate, but they took the money and refused to return it, the plaintiffs told police. Both suspects were arrested and are being questioned.

Road maintenance works ongoing

KUWAIT: The first stage of developing the Seventh Ring Road and asphalt pavement started Thursday night, the Public Authority for Roads and Transport (PART) said. Meanwhile work on Salmi Road also began earlier in the week, PART said, noting that asphalt paving on the Zour-Wafra Road, as well as road 6.5 south of Abdullah Al-Mubarak also began. In the meantime, the road leading from Sabah Al-Salem to Seventh Ring Road (Al-Ghous Road) is also being worked on, a PART source concluded.



Save the Amazon

local spotlight



By Muna Al-Fuzai

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

The Amazon is the largest tropical rainforest in the world and produces one-fifth of the planet's oxygen. It is often called the “lungs of the world”, as more than 20 percent of the world's oxygen is produced in the Amazon rainforest. There is no doubt that it plays a major role in reducing or preventing global warming.

The Amazon forest plays an important environmental role as a giant water engine. It releases water into the atmosphere and rivers. In fact, the weather systems are largely determined by currents of ocean that transport warm water from the equator to the polar regions, while cold water moves in the opposite direction. Without these currents, the temperatures will take a more extreme turn than they are today.

So, the burning of this tropical rainforest means this vital contribution to Earth's climate equilibrium will reduce, and this in turn will lead to further warming, drought and climate change around the world. I believe that this is a real crisis for everyone and it does not matter if you live in Kuwait or Brazil or anywhere in the world. The issue is important for everyone because it threatens human, animal and plant life and the future of the planet.

Since the beginning of this year, these forests have been exposed to more than 75,000 fires, a record increase of 84 percent over the fires that broke out in these forests last year. European leaders have expressed concerns. French President Emmanuel Macron stated the fires are an international emergency. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson also said he was very concerned about the potentially catastrophic impact of the loss of a large number of trees on the environment. German Chancellor Angela Merkel described the fires as a serious emergency that would have an impact far beyond Brazil. That is a reason for all countries to support Brazil to overcome this crisis and prevent its recurrence in the future.

The fires have plunged the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo into total darkness in the afternoon and many organisms have died, whether by being suffocated or burned by fires. The globe will be severely affected in the coming years if this matter is not address properly and the real reasons behind their occurrence are not found.

I think that this environmental crisis may turn into a political one because there is a trade agreement at stake between the European Union and the South American bloc of Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay, and the occurrence of fires now may affect the ratification of the agreement as a number of heads of European groups have expressed concerns. But these countries have the potential to help Brazil cope with this issue to ensure greater environmental protection.

There are also a number of media statements and reports about climate change and advocacy by geological engineering techniques or so-called climate engineering. It aims to increase the amount of solar radiation reflected in space, but is not yet clear to all and some worry that it may lead to more drought and higher levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Some environment groups worry about a possible overlap of the interests of business, politics and industrial companies in this matter and exploitation to achieve interests unrelated to the climate. I believe that this issue calls for global attention, to be addressed in all its aspects. United Nations organizations and European countries must take the initiative to ensure the protection of the environment. I believe that the Arab world needs to raise awareness of the issue of environmental protection because it does not affect one country, but the entire planet and survival. Brazil needs full support now.

OBITUARY



The Chairman, Director, Principal and the entire family of India International School, Mangaf are deeply distressed with the sudden demise of our dear student Miss Aleeta Anil Jacob on 21 / 8 / 2019. We extend our heartfelt condolence to the grieved family members.

May the departed soul rest in peace.

JOB VACANCIES

An upcoming restaurant promoted by a well reputed company is currently in need of the following:

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OMDURMAN: Sudanese performers dressed in traditional clothing entertain an audience during a street celebration after the swearing-in of the new ruling sovereign council and prime minister, in the capital's twin city of Omdurman. —AFP

Sudan women fight gender imbalance

Sudanese women played a very big part in the revolution

KHARTOUM: They were on the front lines and in the negotiating rooms that brought down military rule but Sudan's women have yet to take their rightful place in the new institutions. The signing last week of the documents outlining the transition to civilian rule was a moment of national jubilation, turning the page on 30 years of dictatorship and eight months of deadly protests.

But as the ceremony attended by a host of foreign dignitaries unfolded, one thing jumped out: the only female speaker at the three-hour event was the host.

"That scene was a slap in our face," Rabah Sadeq, a woman activist and longtime campaigner for gender equality, said the next day. "So many women are talking about this now, we have to raise this issue," she said. Some women attending the signing heckled the speakers to express their displeasure and the indignation quickly spread to the street and social media. "The participation of women in the revolution was very high, they even encouraged men to join the demonstrations," said Sarah Ali Ahmed, a student in Khartoum.

"I was very shocked to see the low representation of women... We want to play a role in the civilian government, just like men," she said. On Wednesday, Sudan's new joint civilian-military ruling body, which is meant to guide the country through 39 months of transition to full civilian rule, was sworn in. Out of its six civilian members, two are women, although only one was included in the list of nominees initially put forward by the protest camp.

Optimism

While the opposition alliance's chief negotiator in the run-up to Sudan's landmark political deal was a woman, Ibtisam al-Sanhouri, women were poorly represented in the various negotiating committees. The shock caused by the all-male line-up at the signing last week, which will go down as a key date in Sudan's history, appears to have had some impact in recent days. Sudan's new prime minister Abdallah Hamdok, who arrived in the country on Wednesday, raised the issue in his first comments to reporters after being sworn in.

"We have to concentrate on women's participation. Sudanese women played a very big part in our revolution," said the 61-year-old former UN economist. "But during the negotiations... as well as during the signing of the documents, it was only men. We have to correct this," Hamdok said. Samahir el-Mubarak, a spokeswoman for the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA), an independent trade union confederation that played a central role in the protests, argued that women's under-representation was not too surprising.

"This absence in the institutions is not acceptable but it's also



KHARTOUM: Supporters of Sudan's deposed military ruler Omar Al-Bashir gather in protest outside the court house in Khartoum yesterday. —AFP

understandable in a way," said Mubarak, a 29-year-old pharmacist. "The organizations and political parties that are active in the transition now have existed all along, and they excluded women. "But I'm very optimistic this is going to change," she said. The legislative body which is due to be formed soon to help steer the country to democratic elections in 2022 will have at least 40 per cent of its seats reserved for women.

Distrust

"In the condition we are in now, we need some kind of positive discrimination... but eventually women are qualified enough to become a majority in parliament and government," Mubarak said. Growing awareness over female under-representation in the transition appears already to be bearing fruit, and a woman is now tipped as the next chief justice.

"This is progress but it's still not the level we want. Women

should continue to be empowered," Rabah Sadeq said. Sarah Abdul Laleel, a UK-based pediatrician, agreed that women were insufficiently represented. "When you compare the street and the protests to the institutions, there's a mismatch," she said. Abdul Jaleel, also a member of the SPA, said that political parties did not have people's trust and that a debate was needed to find news ways to integrate women in the country's institutions.

Rabah Sadeq argued that parity was in the country's best interest. "Asking for more women isn't just symbolic, they are more committed to peace. It's not just for equality, it's for the chances of success of this transition," she said. Samahir El-Mubarak said that after decades of oppression under Bashir's Islamist military regime, women had gained a lot of self-confidence in recent months. "Women were the dynamo of this revolution, they can't be taken out of the picture. Otherwise there will be another revolution." —AFP

in Indonesia's second-biggest city Surabaya, where they were also targeted with racial abuse.

In Sorong, search teams had fanned out across the city of some 220,000 in a bid to find the escaped prisoners or contact their families, Yuzar said, adding that a dozen were still on the run. But why would anyone return to prison in a country with notoriously overcrowded and unsanitary jails? "We've always treated them well and they knew that running away was not a solution - it would only make things worse," Yuzar replied. "I really appreciate their willingness to come back to prison." —AFP

US probes link between vaping and lung disease

WASHINGTON: A patient who had recently been vaping has died in the US after developing severe lung disease, officials said Friday, as authorities scrambled to find the cause behind almost 200 more potential cases. "Yesterday we received a report of the death of an adult who had been hospitalized with severe unexplained respiratory illness after reported vaping," Jennifer Layden, the chief medical officer in the Midwestern state of Illinois said.

She declined to provide the person's gender, but said that the ages of the patients treated in the state had been between 17 and 38. As of Friday, there were 193 cases across 22 states of potential cases of severe lung illness associated with e-cigarette use since the end of June, according to figures released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The cause has not been determined but all had recently used e-cigarettes to inhale either vaporized nicotine or cannabis, and many of the products have been sent for lab testing.

"The severity of illness people are experiencing is alarming and we must get the word out that using e-cigarettes and vaping can be dangerous," said Illinois health department director Dr Ngozi Ezike. But Ileana Arias, acting deputy director on non-infectious diseases at the CDC, added that although the cases appeared similar, "it is unclear if these cases have a common cause, or if they are different diseases with similar presentations."

Safer than smoking?

No specific product has been identified or blamed for the illness in any of the cases. E-cigarettes have been available in the US since 2006, and are sometimes used as an aid to quit smoking traditional tobacco products like cigarettes. Their use among adolescents has skyrocketed in recent years: some 3.6 million middle and high school students used vaping products in 2018, an increase of 1.5 million on the year before.

E-cigarette users don't get exposed to the estimated 7,000 chemical constituents present in combustible cigarettes, and vaping is generally believed to be safer than smoking. The liquids do, however, contain nicotine, which has been studied for decades and is known to be highly addictive, and a variety of other constituents classed as "potentially harmful" according to a 2018 study compiled by the US National Academy of Sciences requested by Congress. —AFP

Gentleman jailbreak: Convicts return to Indonesian prison

SORONG: More than 270 inmates - including convicted murderers - who bolted from a prison torched during violent riots in Indonesia's Papua region have returned to finish their sentences,

International

North Korea fires short-range ‘ballistic missiles’ into the sea

North Korea vows to remain the biggest ‘threat’ to US

SEOUL: North Korea yesterday fired what appeared to be two short-range ballistic missiles into the sea after vowing to remain the biggest “threat” to the United States and branding Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as “toxin.” It was the latest in a series of short-range missile tests the nuclear-armed nation has carried out in recent weeks in protest against US-South Korean military exercises, which it sees as a rehearsal for invasion.

The latest joint drill wrapped up on Tuesday. “The military detected two unidentified projectiles presumed to be short-range ballistic missiles,” South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff in a statement Saturday after the latest launch. The missiles flew about 380 kilometers and reached an altitude of 97 kilometers at a top speed of Mach 6.5 before landing in the East Sea, also known as Sea of Japan, it said.

“Our military is tracking the movement in the North in case of additional launches, with firm readiness,” it added. South Korea’s presidential Blue House convened a National Security Council meeting and expressed “grave concerns” in a statement, pointing out Pyongyang had carried out the launch after the joint US-South Korea military drills had ended.

“NSC members agreed to continue diplomatic efforts with the international community to bring the North back to negotiation table with the US to achieve the goal of complete denuclearization in the Korean peninsula.” Tokyo also believed North Korea had fired “ballistic missiles” in violation of UN resolutions, Japanese Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya told reporters. “It can’t be overlooked no matter what the size and distance are,” he said. Washington was monitoring the situation following reports of a missile launch, a senior US official said. “We are consulting closely with our Japanese and South Korean allies.”

‘Biggest threat’

South Korea’s military said it would share intelligence on the launches with Japan despite Seoul saying earlier this week that it was terminating such exchanges amid a growing diplomatic and trade spat with its neighbor, which had raised concern it could weaken tracking of Pyongyang’s actions by the US allies.



Pyongyang brands Pompeo as ‘toxin’

Nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington have been gridlocked since a second summit in Hanoi in February collapsed without an agreement over the extent of denuclearisation in the North and a sanctions relief. US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un agreed to kick start working-level talks during an impromptu meeting at the Demilitarized Zone on June 30 but no contacts have been held since with the North repeatedly expressing anger at the war games.

Earlier this week, Stephen Biegun, the US special envoy for North Korea, said during a visit to Seoul that Washington was “prepared to engage” as soon as it hears from Pyongyang. But on Friday, the North vowed to “remain as the biggest ‘threat’ to the US” if Washington



Photo shows a ballistic missile being launched from an unknown location in North Korea. — AFP

persisted with sanctions, in a statement by Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho. Ri also launched a scathing attack on Pompeo, calling him a “diehard toxin” after the top US

diplomat said Washington would continue to keep the “toughest” sanctions on the North until the reclusive state denuclearizes. — AFP

5 die in Algiers rap concert stampede

ALGIERS: Five young people were killed and dozens more injured in a stampede at a packed rap concert in the Algerian capital, a spokesman for rescue services said Friday. The stampede took place Thursday night as fans thronged an entrance of the August-20 Stadium where rapper Soolking was to perform. The 29-year-old has won a huge number of fans in the North African country, his song “La Liberté” (Freedom) becoming a mainstay of anti-government protests that enter their seventh month on Friday.

Captain Nassim Bernaoui of the civil protection unit told AFP there were five killed in the crush: “two young girls aged 19 and 22 and three boys aged 13, 21 and 16.” Dozens of people were lightly injured, Bernaoui said, 86 of whom were treated on the spot with another 32 taken to hospital. Eight others were transferred to the Mustapha Pacha hospital in Algiers in critical condition, he added.

A medic, who asked to remain anonymous, later said seven people were still in hospital in a critical condition, without giving details on the eighth. In front of the hospital, Ahmed Kadi had red eyes as he

waited to collect the body of his 18-year-old daughter Chourouk. “I didn’t even know that my wife and my daughter had gone to the concert,” he said, holding back tears. They had been separated in the stampede. “The organizers did their job badly,” he said.

Nearby, Abderezak accompanied his friend Rachid Kadri as he collected the body of his 19-year-old daughter Chiraz. “Chiraz wasn’t planning to go but as she had passed her high school exams, her father wanted to give her a present and let her go with her friends,” he said. “It’s criminal to organize a concert like that at the August-20 Stadium,” he added. According to APS, the incident took place at around 1900 GMT, adding that the concert went ahead as planned but with a 30-minute delay.

Algerian journalist Akram Khariief said thousands of fans began gathering outside the stadium from mid-afternoon. More than 30,000 people were estimated to have attended the concert, APS reported. “There were only four small entrances allowing people to enter one at a time,” Khariief told AFP. “This caused a stampede... and people fell” as they pushed to get inside before the start of the concert, he added.

Four concert-goers contacted separately by AFP, who were already inside the stadium when the stampede took place, said they had not been informed about it. They said that when they left the venue at around midnight, no rescue services were



ALGIERS: A picture shows Algiers’ August-20 Stadium where five young people were killed and dozens more injured in a stampede at a packed rap concert. — AFP

visible. The Algiers prosecutor’s office said Friday that it had opened an investigation into the “painful accident” and would identify those responsible. France-based Soolking, whose given name is Abderraouf Derradji, shot to stardom last year and was to perform just a single concert in his home country Algeria.

He dedicated the song “La Liberté” to protesters engaged in months of anti-

government demonstrations. Algerians launched the unprecedented protest movement in February, initially against a bid by veteran president Abdelaziz Bouteflika to seek a fifth term in office. Bouteflika eventually resigned in the face of mass protests but the movement has not let up, continuing to rally weekly on Fridays to demand a complete overhaul of the political system. — AFP

Syrian soldiers surround Turkish observation post

BEIRUT: Syrian government forces surrounded a Turkish observation post in the northwest Friday after overrunning nearby areas, a war monitor said, while Ankara vowed not to withdraw from its position. “Regime forces have surrounded the Turkish observation post in Morek after capturing other towns and villages in this pocket,” said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Speaking at a news conference in the Lebanese capital, Turkey’s Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said “our observation point there is not cut-off and nobody can isolate our forces and our soldiers.” “We are there, not because we can’t leave but because we don’t want to leave,” he said, adding that the issue was being discussed with Damascus’s allies Russia and Iran.

The Syrian regime has upped the stakes with Ankara in its months-long Russian-backed offensive against the jihadist-ruled Idlib region, which borders Turkey. Moscow said on Friday that it has agreed with Ankara to “activate mutual efforts” to ease the situation in Syria’s last major opposition bastion. Turkey later announced that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan would visit Moscow on Tuesday for talks with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, a meeting confirmed by the Kremlin.

The town of Morek, where the Turkish troops have allegedly been cut off, lies in the north of Hama province, part of the region centered on neighboring Idlib province that has been under government assault - initially by air - since late April. Government forces took control of Morek and nearby towns including Kafr Zita on Friday, Syrian state news agency SANA said. Jihadists and allied rebels withdrew from the area ahead of the Syrian army’s entry into the strategic town of Khan Sheikhun on Wednesday and government forces took control without resistance, according to the Britain-based Observatory.

‘Whatever is necessary’

The Morek observation post, established under a deal with Moscow, is one of 12 the Turkish army set up along the front line between Syrian government forces on one side - and the jihadists and Ankara’s rebel allies on the other side - last year. On Tuesday Cavusoglu vowed that the Turkish army “will do whatever is necessary” to defend these positions. The Turkish presidency has also said that

it will not abandon any of its observation posts in Syria. The Turkish troops’ mission was to oversee the establishment of a buffer zone agreed by Ankara and Moscow in September.

But the jihadists failed to pull back from the zone as agreed and in April, government and Russian forces resumed intense bombardment of the region. The Kremlin on Friday said that Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan agreed to “activate mutual efforts” to ease the situation in the Idlib region. “They discussed the issues of Russian-Turkish cooperation in the context of stabilisation of the de-escalation zone,” a statement said.

Erdogan is to host his Russian and Iranian counterparts for a summit in Ankara next month to discuss the latest developments. The Turkish presidency on Friday said regime attacks in Idlib have led to a “grave humanitarian crisis”. “These attacks damage the efforts to regulate the Syrian conflict,” it said. The pro-government Al-Watan newspaper on Friday said the latest regime gains in Idlib will force amendments to the buffer zone deal.

Since January, the Idlib region has been ruled by the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham alliance, which is led by jihadists from Syria’s former Al-Qaeda affiliate. Other rebel groups allied with Turkey were forced to cede overall control. On August 8, Syrian government forces launched a ground offensive with Russian support against the southern part of the rebel-held region, eyeing control of the main highway from Damascus through Idlib province to second city Aleppo.

Khan Sheikhun and Maarat Al-Numan both lie along the highway. The Syrian army on Friday said that its military “push is ongoing,” after it captured Morek and neighboring areas. — AFP



MAARET AL-NUMAN: Smoke billows following a reported regime air strike on the eastern outskirts of Maaret Al-Numan in Syria’s northern province of Idlib yesterday. — AFP

Homemade bomb kills Israeli, wounds two in West Bank

JERUSALEM: A rare homemade bomb attack in the occupied West Bank killed an Israeli teen and seriously wounded her father and brother Friday as they visited a spring near a Jewish settlement, officials said. Israeli security forces deployed throughout the area where the attack took place near the settlement of Dolev, northwest of Ramallah, to search for suspects. Israeli medics had earlier reported that a 17-year-old had been critically wounded in the attack and officials later announced her death, naming her as Rina Shnerb from the central Israeli city of Lod.

Medics from the Magen David Adom rescue service initially gave the ages of the two wounded as 46 and 20, before amending to 21 in the latter case. The army said the three victims were a father and his two children. The two wounded were taken by helicopter to hospital, the army said. “Three civilians who were in a nearby spring were injured in an IED (improvised explosive device) blast,” it said in a statement. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called it a “harsh terrorist attack” and sent condolences to the family, while pledging to continue building settlements.

“The security arms are in pursuit after the abhorrent terrorists,” he said in a statement. “We will apprehend them. The long arm of Israel reaches all those who seek our lives and will settle accounts with them.” United Nations envoy Nickolay Mladenov condemned the “shocking, heinous” attack, saying there was nothing heroic in Shnerb’s “murder”, calling it a “despicable, cowardly act”. “Terror must be unequivocally condemned by ALL,” Mladenov wrote on Twitter.

Israeli forces meanwhile entered the Palestinian village of Beitunia, south of the spring, to take footage from surveillance cameras. An AFP reporter said Palestinians clashed there with Israeli soldiers, but no casualties were reported. Chief of the army, Lt Gen Aviv Kohavi visited the site of the attack to understand the incident and oversee the efforts to locate the perpetrators, which he was “confident” would happen quickly, the military said.

Later in the day, Shnerb was buried in her hometown Lod, with thousands participating in the funeral. Shnerb’s father Eitan, who was wounded and couldn’t attend the funeral, relayed through an uncle his request that people focus on “our strength and love and the wonderful nation and our good land” and avoid sinking into “weakness and anger and strife”. “We should be worthy of the great sacrifice we offered today,” Eitan Shnerb was cited by the uncle as saying.

Gaza border tensions

In a speech on Friday, Ismail Haniya, the leader of the Islamist Hamas movement which rules Gaza, praised the attack but did not claim responsibility for it. He referred to a recent clash between Israeli police and Palestinian worshippers at the highly sensitive Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem and sought to draw a link between the two incidents.

AFP reporters said thousands of Gazans participated in weekly Friday protests at the Israeli border fence, with some youths using slingshots to launch stones at the barrier and a few approaching it. The health ministry in the enclave said over 122 Palestinians were wounded in clashes with Israeli forces, dozens of them hit by live fire. Palestinians sporadically clash with Israeli settlers and security forces in the West Bank, occupied by Israel since the Six-Day War of 1967, but bomb blasts have been rare in recent years.

Palestinian attacks have mostly involved guns, knives and car ramming. There have been concerns about a possible increase in violence in the run up to Israel’s September 17 general election. A week ago, a Palestinian carried out a car-ramming attack in the West Bank, wounding two Israelis before being shot dead. On August 8, an off-duty Israeli soldier’s body was found with multiple stab wounds. Two Palestinian suspects were later arrested. — AFP

‘Mum, don’t die’: Murder of Turkish woman ignites anger

ANKARA: The murder of a Turkish woman by her ex-husband in front of her daughter sparked outrage Friday after a video of the attack was published online. “I don’t want to die,” Emine Bulut, covered in blood, is heard screaming to her 10-year-old child. Her tearful daughter says: “Mum, please don’t die.” The 38-year-old was stabbed to death in a cafe on August 18 by her former husband in the central Anatolian city of Kirikkale, according to the Hurriyet newspaper.

Bulut, who divorced her killer four years ago, later died in hospital. Fedai Baran told police he killed his former wife with a knife he always carried with him, Turkish broadcaster NTV reported. Her name was a worldwide trending topic on Twitter and “I don’t want to die” (#olmekistemioryorum) was widely quoted on social media. Dozens of protesters on Friday gathered in the capital Ankara to denounce the murder.

“We are ready for any form of action. We will not be silent, we are not afraid and we will not obey. We will keep on our struggle until no women are murdered anymore,” protester Elif Sancı said. Another protester, Ilke Isik, blamed the government for its failure to stop violence against women. “Neither Emine nor any of our comrades must die. Emine’s cry ‘I don’t want to die’ is the cry of all of us,” she said. Officials, including Justice Minister Abdulhamit Gul, were quick to condemn the murder after the video was published, along with celebrities and football clubs such as Besiktas.

“We expect the murderer to be punished in the most severe manner,” tweeted presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin. The government said a team of psychologists was caring for the child. Turkey has struggled to contain rising violence against women. In the first six months of 2019, 214 women were killed by men, while 440 women were killed last year, according to the women’s rights group We Will Stop Femicide. That was up from 409 women in 2017 and 121 in 2011. While the government acknowledges the issue of violence against women, critics say not enough is being done to provide shelters and to address the broader problem of gender inequality which permeates society. — AFP

International

In political turn, Taylor Swift accuses Trump of ‘autocracy’

Isolated Trump descends on G7, talking trade war

NEW YORK: Taylor Swift, currently promoting the release of her latest album, has accused Donald Trump of treating his White House reign as an “autocracy,” in a new political turn for the singer. “We’re a democracy – at least, we’re supposed to be – where you’re allowed to disagree, dissent, debate,” the pop star said in snippets of an interview teased Friday by The Guardian. Speaking about the US president, the 29-year-old said, “I really think that he thinks this is an autocracy.”

In American politics, Swift said, “all the dirtiest tricks in the book were used and it worked.” She described the current state of affairs as “gaslighting the American public into being like, ‘If you hate the president, you hate America.’” Swift has faced criticism in the past for shying from politics, especially in 2016 when she did not use her enormous platform to endorse a candidate in the pivotal presidential vote.

Now she says she is “remorseful” for not speaking up during that election, saying in hindsight she would have backed Hillary Clinton. But Swift said at the time her row with Kanye West and Kim Kardashian along with her mother’s cancer diagnosis had her keeping a low profile. “I was just trying to protect my mental health – not read the news very much, go cast my vote, tell people to vote,” she said in the interview, set for full publication Saturday.

“I just knew what I could handle and I knew what I couldn’t. I was literally about to break.” Swift spoke out last October ahead of the 2018 midterm vote, endorsing the Democrat running for US Senate in her home

state of Tennessee and citing the Republican candidate’s poor record on women’s rights. She told The Guardian she would “do everything I can for 2020,” pointing to ongoing battles threatening a woman’s right to choose the option of abortion.

Isolated Trump

Meanwhile, an isolated President Donald Trump arrived yesterday for the G7 summit in Biarritz bearing threats of tariffs against host France and a decision to deepen his trade war with China, despite fears of US or even global recession. Trump dislikes the kind of multilateral forums epitomized by the G7, insisting on a policy of “America first” and his own skills, honed in a real estate career, of one-to-one deal making. Ahead of the summit in the elegant French seaside resort, he has criticized most of his partners, rowing with them over Iran, trade, global warming and Brexit. And on the eve of his trip, he brushed aside concerns of global economic slowdown to exchange new tariffs with China, insisting “we’ll win.” In another piece of brinkmanship, he also confirmed right before departing on the Marine One helicopter that he would retaliate against France’s iconic wine exports if President Emmanuel Macron didn’t retreat on a new tax that will hit US digital giants like Google.

“We’ll be taxing their wine like they’ve never seen before,” he vowed. The other G7 leaders – from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan – are waiting for Trump with a mixture of alarm and resignation. Macron has even decided that for the first time the G7 won’t issue a group state-

ment at the end of the summit, given the extent of divisions. At last year’s meeting in Canada, Trump withdrew his signature in a fury at Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. It would be “pointless,” Macron said.

World economy at stake?

Other G7 leaders are already alarmed at the fallout from the escalating US-China trade war. But Trump, bullish as ever, steeply ramped up tariffs against China on Friday after Beijing slapped its own new tariffs against US products. Trump says he alone is able to take on the Chinese after decades of intellectual property theft and a slate of other unfair trading practices. He called the struggle “a little spat.” At the G7 he is expected to seek allies, but the other leaders are deeply skeptical about whether Trump’s crusade can ever succeed – or whether it will tip a slowing world economy over the edge.

The first working event of the G7 will be a session early Sunday that the White House specifically asked at the “last minute” to be added to the agenda: a meeting of the leaders on economic growth. Trump will tell his partners “to write the rules for this century, in contrast to the unfair trade practices that we see coming out of China,” a senior administration official told reporters. Trump will also urge the Europeans, Canada and Japan to shake up their own economies along US lines. “You’ll have the president really engaging in honest conversations,” the official said.

Cozy no more

Despite the diplomatic storm clouds gath-



US singer Taylor Swift

ering over Biarritz, on the Atlantic coast, Trump said the trip “will be very productive.” But there are questions over the future of the G7 as Trump’s nationalist approach turns it into something more like a 6+1. G7s always used to be cozy affairs, giving the leaders of like-minded, capitalist democracies a chance to relax and talk frankly in the context of largely shared

values. However, there is increasingly little common ground between Trump and what would ordinarily be among the closest of US allies. Yet another diplomatic hand grenade went off days before the trip, when Trump reiterated his desire to recreate the G8 format with Russia, expelled in 2014 after Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Crimea. — Agencies

Canadians’ message ahead of the election: ‘Make life affordable’

OTTAWA: Canadians have a message for politicians appearing on their front stoops ahead of Canada’s upcoming national election in October: life is getting more expensive. The issue of affordability could shape the Oct. 21 election, according to pollsters, and both Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberals and the rival Conservatives plan to make easing household expenses a priority, party sources say. While so-called pocketbook issues are a constant feature of elections everywhere, the subject is especially relevant in Canada’s upcoming contest.

Canadian household debt is at record levels, while the savings rate has fallen to nearly its lowest level in 14 years. A recent Abacus Data poll found 56% of Canadians put cost-of-living as one of their top five issues heading into the vote. Household debt is rising against the backdrop of a solid economy, with unemployment hovering near a record low reached earlier this year, while wage growth is picking up and inflation is low. “Affordability for middle-class families is a key issue,” Jean-Yves Duclos, Trudeau’s social development minister, said in a recent interview.

Conservative leader Andrew Scheer and Trudeau, who took office in 2015, are in a statistical tie nationally, polls show, but the Liberals are outpacing the Conservatives in Quebec and Ontario, Canada’s most populous provinces with the most seats in parliament. The official campaign, which typically occurs every four years, is expected to kick off by mid-September, with 338 seats up for grabs in the House of Commons.

The Conservative Party sources have said promises to make life more affordable will be a cornerstone in their campaign, especially in the key battlegrounds around Toronto, in the Atlantic provinces, and in rural Quebec. “Our candidates ... are hearing from people that they’re working very hard but that the cost of living is getting out of control,” Scheer said this week as he pledged to make maternity benefits tax-free if elected. “All of the major parties are going to be obsessed about carving out territory around affordability,” said Tim Powers, vice-chairman of political strategy firm Summa Strategies.

‘Too expensive’

“There’s food, but there’s no money to buy it,” Florence Oguntade, in her 50s and a mother of three, said at a bus stop in Ottawa. A Liberal supporter, she said she wants the party to address the rising costs of food and cellphones if it wins. Fresh vegetable prices have posted double-digit gains for 10 consecutive months, according to Statistics Canada. Oguntade said cellphone bills, which are among the highest in the world, were costing her “thousands of dollars”. She said she is using money to pay for her kids’ phones that should be spent on food.

Cellphone costs are likely to be addressed by both the Liberals and the Conservatives, the party sources said. The left-wing New Democrat Party (NDP), which released its campaign platform in June, has already pledged measures that include offsetting mobile phone and Wi-Fi costs, creating a universal pharmacare program, and an additional C\$1 billion (\$752.11 million) in childcare funding by 2020.

The Liberal platform may include at least partial compensation for the costs of medicines, sources have said. Canada is the only country in the world with a universal health system that does not include substantial coverage for prescription drugs. Meanwhile, the Conservatives have promised to cancel the Liberal government’s carbon pricing scheme to help lower food and gasoline prices. “People are living in this state of uncertainty ... where one unexpected thing pushes you over the edge,” said Marie Della Mattia, the NDP’s national campaign co-chair. — Reuters

Billionaire donor Koch dies age 79

WASHINGTON: David Koch, a billionaire American libertarian and influential donor to conservative causes, has died at age 79 after a long battle with cancer, his brother Charles said Friday. Koch retired last year as executive vice president of Koch Industries, the conglomerate he co-owned with his older brother and built into the second-largest family-owned company in the United States. “We wish for all to celebrate the life and impact of this most generous and kind man,” Charles Koch said in a statement. “He believed he had a responsibility to a world that had given him so many opportunities to succeed.”

Both brothers were a force behind the scenes in Republican politics, donating heavily to candidates and causes that reflected their conservative economic positions. But David was socially liberal – a supporter of abortion rights and same-sex marriage as well as a non-



US billionaire David Koch

Americans for Prosperity, centered on demands for low taxes and deregulation with the aim of influencing US elections. Those organizations helped fuel the rise of the Tea Party movement in 2010, mounting a frontal

interventionist foreign policy. Both brothers were recognized in 2015 for bipartisan work on prison reform in the United States. Among those offering condolences was Secretary of State Mike Pompeo who, like the Koch brothers, is from Kansas.

David Koch ran as the Libertarian Party’s vice presidential candidate in 1980, but later broke with it and swung to the Republicans. He joined his brother Charles in financing a network of conservative organizations, in particular Americans for Prosperity, centered on demands for low taxes and deregulation with the aim of influencing US elections. Those organizations helped fuel the rise of the Tea Party movement in 2010, mounting a frontal

Republican challenge to former Democratic president Barack Obama.

The Kochs’ power was such that in the next presidential elections, Republican candidates vied for their endorsement, attending exclusive conferences the brothers organized. Donald Trump, whose conservative credentials the brothers viewed with suspicion and who in turn often mocked them, was the exception. Of the two, Charles has been most involved in the political networks while David had been more active in philanthropic endeavors, mainly in New York.

He was remembered as an important financial contributor to cultural organizations and medical research. He was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer 27 years ago but through “a combination of brilliant doctors, state-of-the-art medications and his own stubbornness kept the cancer at bay,” Charles said. Born in Wichita, Kansas, Koch studied chemical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before joining Koch Industries. Forbes estimated his wealth at the end of his life at \$42.4 billion, making him one of the world’s richest people. — AFP



MEXICO CITY: Mexican activist Julia Klug takes part in a protest in Mexico City, commemorating the first anniversary of the disappearance of the Ayotzinapa students. — AFP

Mexican families scour arid plains for graves of disappeared

TORREON: Fifteen years after her daughter’s disappearance, 55-year-old Silvia Ortiz spends day after day raking through arid scrubland in northern Mexico hoping to find her remains. Ortiz belongs to a group of families working to uncover graves of some of the 40,000 people who have gone missing in mounting lawlessness since the government sent in the armed forces to tackle Mexico’s drug cartels at the end of 2006.

More than 200,000 people have been killed in the violence since then, and shedding light on the fate of the disappeared is one of the toughest challenges facing the administration of President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. Criminal gangs often bury the bodies of victims in clandestine graves. Some have been known to try to minimize evidence by dismembering or dousing them in acid.

Meanwhile, Mexican criminal investigators and forensic teams have struggled to keep up with the increased workload during the surge in killings. Fear of reprisals at the hands of perpetrators can also impede efforts to identify victims. Decked out in surgical masks and sun hats, Ortiz’s collective – Grupo Vida or “Life Group” – keeps up a near-constant digging operation around the city of Torreon in the state of Coahuila.

The volunteer association made up of relatives of local missing people set out six years ago to uncover clandestine graves, saying government officials were not trying hard enough to find or identify human

remains. “This is why we say we’re facing a forensic emergency,” said Ortiz, sitting at home with her husband, Oscar Sanchez, surrounded by framed photos of their daughter Silvia Stephanie Sanchez before she disappeared in 2004, aged 16. She has not been heard from since.

Jose Angel Herrera, Coahuila’s special prosecutor for disappeared people, said authorities are cooperating with Grupo Vida in the area around Torreon and conducting their own missions in other parts of the state. In Coahuila, 2,144 people reported missing have never been found, Herrera said. Many disappeared while the territory was ravaged by the Zetas, a notoriously brutal drug cartel. The state has identified the remains of 235 missing people through digs, including those led by Grupo Vida. The group works for a week at a time, and many members struggle to keep their jobs during digs, Ortiz said.

Two weeks ago, Grupo Vida opened a tortilleria, launched with a grant from the American Jewish World Service, a non-profit group. They hope money from the enterprise can cover the operating costs of their community-led forensic digs. Grupo Vida said since 2013 it has uncovered 27 sites with human remains, 10 full skeletons and hundreds of thousands of bone fragments, enabling over 100 disappeared to be identified. Lopez Obrador has vowed to identify thousands of human remains in morgues and mass graves around the country, which he has called the “worst legacy” of past governments.

Members of Grupo Vida have yet to feel the benefits of his pledge, according to Ortiz, who said the result has been “working groups and photos, no real action on the searches.” Still, prosecutor Herrera said the new administration helped fund construction of a center that will work to establish the identities of the state’s backlog of human remains. Regardless of the adversity, Ortiz said she would continue the search “until the last person is found.” — Reuters

German army seeks out gamers in hunt for computer-savvy recruits

COLOGNE: Among countless stands of car manufacturers, software developers and engineering universities at Cologne’s video games convention, the sight of fatigue-clad soldiers manning the German military’s brightly-lit stall draws in the curious. With a stand boasting a helicopter simulator and ultra-fast games, the Bundeswehr, Germany’s army, has turned to the Gamescom fair in its bid to recruit computer-savvy potential soldiers.

The call to arms is clear under a “Centre of Cyber Operations” sign with a keyboard-inspired logo in the colors of the German flag – “the Cyber-force of the Bundeswehr”. “We are looking for people who specialize in information technology — those with a taste for computers are knocking at the right door,” Nils Feldhoff, an army communications officer said. Dozens of young gamers, visiting the stand at the Gamescom convention, flocked to try their hand at the army’s flight simulator or test their reactions on a two-player game.

However, the military personnel were careful to spell out the difference between the reality of life in the ranks and violent military-based video games. “We have a clear educational mission: We strictly try to separate virtual games from reality by explaining to any interested young people that this is not a video game,” Feldhoff said. If a gamer “wants to become a soldier because he is interested in weapons, that’s not a good argument,” he added.

Online battles

Drawn by the unusual stand, 19-year-old computer enthusiast Lucas Heilmann said he “answered a few questions about different programming languages, networks and databases”. The army’s broad campaign to enlist computer-savvy youngsters includes a series of computer-themed posters, one featuring a blond female recruit in fatigues working on a robot. It is part of an initiative to change the public image of obsolete equipment and under-investment that has plagued the Bundeswehr, made worse by recent scandals over the presence of far-right soldiers in the ranks. Since Germany ended conscription in 2011, the military must now recruit pro-actively.

But it has struggled to find talent in the information technology field, badly needed in a possible cyber warfare. While the army’s stand was buzzing with visitors, other Gamescom visitors chose to stay away as they voiced skepticism over the recruitment campaign. — AFP

International

As students map the weather, an India village bests its water woes

Struggle for water intensifies in India

KOTHAPALLY: The village school in Kothapally, in southern India, has only a handful of amenities - blackboards, desks and chairs, a playground with a wooden bench under a tree. But it has one unusual resource: an automatic weather station. Nestled among farms, the government school is the only one in the southern Indian state of Telangana - and possibly in the country - to have a weather station on its premises, scientists overseeing the station said.

Ninth graders, all children of local farmers, record rainfall, humidity, wind speed and the air temperature as part of a bigger project led by an international crop research institute to customize the village's farming to its water availability. "I understand how this works. I know if it rains well the previous day it is a good time to put fertilizer on the crops the next day," said Vamshi Voggu, 14, who doesn't much like science lessons but enjoys his morning weather-monitoring job at school. "My parents are farmers. This information helps them," Voggu said during a class break, with his giggly friends chiming in on how farmers in the village benefit from the device.

Two decades ago, Kothapally faced an acute water crisis, with little available to irrigate farms or to drink and women walking miles to fetch water. Nearly half the village's children were out of school, many herding cattle to supplement family incomes, villagers said. Around the same time, officials at an office of the non-profit International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), located about 60kms from Kothapally, were planning to replicate an on-campus watershed management project in a village.

A local politician nudged them to the water-scarce village. The project, which brought in rainwater harvesting pits, dams, farm ponds and the weather station, has yielded rich harvests over the years, with the groundwater level rising by about four meters and farming increasingly tuned to rainfall readings. As the struggle for water has intensified in India in recent years, with many villages and cities running out of the precious resource, Kothapally has stayed afloat. "The number of rainy days in this region is decreasing, which means longer dry spells and more rains per day," said AVR Kesava Rao, an agro-climatologist who is an honorary fellow with ICRISAT in Hyderabad. The changing weather patterns and improved groundwater access have brought changes to traditional farming prac-

tices in Kothapally. Fields of mostly cotton have diversified to include water-smart sorghum, maize, pigeon peas, vegetables and also flowers.

Recording the village's rainfall for the first time has also given key indicators of soil moisture, to help plan cropping patterns, Rao said. ICRISAT scientists originally visited the weather station once a month to take readings, he said. "But we thought of involving the community and moved it inside the school about a decade ago. Every year, we train children over two days on how to check the readings. The students are proud now of what they have in school," Rao said.

Morning drill

When Binkam Sudhakar joined Kothapally high school as its principal four years ago, he had never seen a weather station before. Now he considers it the school's best tool for practical lessons on climate change, a departure from the rote learning common in the Indian education system. Every morning, before the school assembly, two students walk to the station with a notebook and pen, pull out the mobile phone shaped display unit and check rain and temperature readings by punching a few buttons. They then write the readings on the colorful weather chart painted on the wall outside the school.

Local farmers say the daily bulletins are hugely helpful. "This is very important. We check the rainfall here on our way to work," said Voggu Anjaiah, 50, who owns six acres of farmland and checks the weather readings every day. "I grow cotton, bitter melon, green beans and pigeon peas. Earlier we grew only cotton. We did not know how much it rained. Now that we do, we understand when the soil moisture is good and have started growing vegetables," he said.

But with many farmers illiterate, less than half of village farmers check the weather station readings like Anjaiah does. Some children read out the information from the board to their parents who never went to school. Others students share important updates, such as good rainfall the previous day, when they get home from school. The young weather recorders believe they are engaged in an important task. "I never miss my turn," Vamshi said.

Turnaround

When Venkat Reddy of child rights organization MV Foundation first visited Kothapally in 1991, he saw vast



ALLAHABAD: An aerial view shows villagers using boats to cross a flooded River Ganges as water levels in the Ganges and Yamuna rivers rise. — AFP

tracts of dry farmland and children working as laborers. Four years later, after intensive campaigns involving young people going door-to-door to urge parents, employers and village council members to send children to school, Kothapally was declared 'child labor free' by the local government.

"The entire village came together for its children," Reddy said by phone from the southern Indian city of Hyderabad. Student numbers improved in the village primary school, and enough students have stuck with learning that the village now has both a primary and a high school, which offers classes through tenth grade. And as more children enrolled in school, the weather station readings became accessible to more farmers.

"My parents never made a profit from farming. We

sions, or even taking disciplinary action. US President Donald Trump revived his criticism of Google this month, referencing a fired engineer who claimed the internet giant was working against his re-election.

The comments were the latest from the US leader alleging, without evidence, that Silicon Valley giants distort searches and social feeds to suppress conservatives. Trump has assailed Google on several occasions, claiming bias against him and his supporters. Google repeated its response that these claims are baseless. "The statements made by this disgruntled former employee are absolutely false," a Google spokesperson said in a statement, referring to the fired engineer.

"We go to great lengths to build our products and enforce our policies in ways that don't take political leanings into account." In recent years, Google employees have challenged the company on issues including sexual harassment in the workplace; bidding on contracts with US defense or immigration agencies; and the potential for tailoring its online search engine for use on China's heavily censored internet. — AFP

Google workers urged to avoid arguing politics

SAN FRANCISCO: Google has told employees to focus on work instead of heated debates about politics with colleagues at the internet company, which has long been known for encouraging people to speak their minds. Updated workplace guidelines for "Googlers" called on them to be responsible, helpful, and thoughtful during exchanges on internal message boards or other conversation forums. "While sharing information and ideas with colleagues helps build community, disrupting the workday to have a raging debate over politics or the latest news story does not," the updated guidelines stated.

"Our primary responsibility is to do the work we've



each been hired to do, not to spend working time on debates about non-work topics." The updated guidelines pointed out that comments made internally by Google employees, no matter the intent, could go public and be wrongly attributed to the company, leading to mistaken impressions. "We're all free to raise concerns and respectfully question and debate the company's activities - that's part of our culture," the guidelines read.

"Take care not to make false or misleading statements about Google's products or business that could undermine trust in our products and the work that we do." Managers or those moderating forums were directed to intervene if the policy is violated, revoking comments, ending discus-

US, Southeast Asia to hold first ever joint maritime drill

BANGKOK: The US and 10 Southeast Asian states will hold their first-ever joint maritime exercises in September, aimed at preventing "wrongdoings" as Washington and Beijing jostle for influence in the region. Washington has traditionally been the dominant naval power in Southeast Asia and its re-engagement with the area comes as a deteriorating trade war with China threatens to engulf the global economy.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo attended a regional summit earlier this month with the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in a bid to promote the Trump administration's so-called "Indo-Pacific" strategy. Also a source of friction is China's expansive claims to the South China Sea, as the resource-rich waters contain some of the world's most vital commercial shipping lanes.

Despite having conflicting interests with four rival claimants in ASEAN, China last year held a joint maritime drill with the regional bloc. The navies of the US and ASEAN will do the same on September 2, the US embassy in Bangkok announced late Friday, with the exercises launching at a Thai naval base in Chonburi province east of Bangkok. The purpose of the five-day maritime drill is to "maintain maritime security, focus on prevention and pre-empt wrongdoing in the sea", said a US embassy statement.

The drills will primarily take place off the coast of Vietnam's southernmost Ca Mau province, where the US Navy will dispatch "suspicious boats" in a mock exercise to help ASEAN's navies to "search, verify and legally prosecute" the boats. Tensions between China and Vietnam have been high since July in the disputed sea when a Chinese survey ship entered waters where Hanoi has several oil and gas projects. The ship left for a brief period this month, and then came back - prompting calls from Hanoi to vacate the area.

But a Thai defense ministry spokesman yesterday played down the timing of the US-ASEAN drills. "We held exercises with China, now we are having exercises with the US... it has nothing to do with the current situation," said Lieutenant General Kongcheep Tantravanich. On Friday, a US military ship sailed through the Taiwan Strait to conduct a "freedom of navigation" voyage, the island's defense ministry said. The move is likely to further irk China in the wake of Washington's latest \$8 billion arms sales to self-ruling Taiwan, which Beijing views as part of its territory. — AFP



UKHIA: Rohingya refugee men carry soil during work at a hillside to prevent from landslides at the Kutupalong Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh's Ukhia district. — AFP

2 years on, Rohingya still trapped by new war

YANGON: When Myanmar officials toured refugee camps in Bangladesh last month, inviting Rohingya Muslims who fled the country to return, they brought with them pamphlets adorned with cartoons showing hijab-wearing women passing through checkpoints and happily grasping identity cards. They did not mention the new war being waged at home.

While the majority of Rohingya residents of northwestern Myanmar were driven out by a military campaign that began in August 2017, a scattered community of some 200,000 remained behind in Rakhine state, in villages that were spared the violence. Two years on, many of them are now trapped by a new conflict. Since late last year, government troops have been battling the Arakan Army, an ethnic armed group that recruits from the mostly Buddhist Rakhine, who make up the majority in the region.

The worsening fighting has left Rohingya caught in the middle and facing threats from both sides, a dozen villagers told Reuters, making returns ever more unlikely. "We are stuck in the middle of their fight," said Tin Shwe, a villager from Buthidaung township, where clashes have been intense. "There has been no improvement of our lives over the past two years, only degradation. Only trouble."

More than 730,000 Rohingya fled Rakhine to Bangladesh after Myanmar's armed forces launched a crackdown following attacks on security posts on Aug 25, 2017. United Nations' investigators have said the army campaign included mass killings and gang-rapes and was carried out with "genocidal intent". The military denies almost all the allegations made by refugees during what it said was a legitimate counterterrorism operation. On

Thursday, a third attempt to begin the repatriation of 3,450 Rohingya cleared by the authorities to return to Myanmar failed when the refugees refused to go back. Min Thein, director of Myanmar's social welfare ministry, said security measurements were in place for returning refugees. "The Myanmar police force will guard them," he said. A military spokesman did not answer phone calls seeking comment.

Authorities have shut northern Rakhine off from journalists and most humanitarian agencies, and imposed an internet blackout since late June, citing the need to avert unrest. The restrictions make information difficult to verify, but Reuters spoke to a dozen Rohingya still in central and northern Rakhine and refugees in Bangladesh with relatives who stayed behind. Some described landmine blasts and shells falling in Muslim villages, as well as intimidation from combatants on both sides of the conflict. Two told Reuters they would flee to Bangladesh if they could, but routes out of the country used during the previous exodus have been rendered unsafe by the violence.

More than 1,000 Rohingya have arrived in the camps in Bangladesh since January, according to the United Nations refugee agency, a figure that also includes arrivals from India, which has in recent months been cracking down on what it says are illegal Rohingya immigrants. Those from Myanmar cited violence linked to fighting between Arakan Army insurgents and the military as well as poor living conditions, spokeswoman Louise Donovan said.

Many refugees living in the crowded Bangladesh camps say they want to return home, but under specific conditions, including guarantees of citizenship and security and improvements in the lives of Rohingya still in Myanmar. Denigrated as illegal immigrants, although many can trace their ancestry in Myanmar back centuries, the Rohingya there are mostly denied citizenship and subject to tight restrictions on movement that keep them confined to camps and villages. The Arakan Army has been fighting for greater autonomy for Rakhine, a region that was an independent kingdom for centuries. In its calls for an armed "revolution", the group draws on deep-seated historical resentment felt by some Rakhines towards the ethnic Bamar majority that dominates the central government. — Reuters

were very poor. I was pulled out of school after tenth grade," said Malleshwar Goud, whose 13-year-old son Gurulingam is in the ninth grade in the village school. Goud grows pulses, soybeans, maize and vegetables on his farm and said he is no longer dependent on one yield to survive the entire year. He said he never checks the weather as his son shares the readings with him when he returns from school. Though it was not planned, Kothapally has become a laboratory for social change experiments, campaigners and scientists said. Reddy of MV Foundation said his organization replicated the Kothapally campaign to end child labor across villages in Telangana and neighboring Andhra Pradesh state, as ICRISAT expanded its watershed management project to 13 villages in different — Reuters

Islamabad moves to ban plastic; carrier bag spat erupts

ISLAMABAD: When inspectors showed up to investigate reports that a popular Islamabad take-out restaurant was flaunting the city's new plastic bag ban this week, the response was less than contrite. Video footage - which quickly appeared on social media - showed one of the inspectors being grabbed and shoved. Islamabad's district commissioner ordered the culprits identified and arrested, and the restaurant was sealed overnight.

"We had received complaints that this large restaurant in the Blue Area was continuing to use plastic bags for every item they sell," said Farzana Altaf Shah, director general of the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency. "They are a major contributor to plastic bag waste in Islamabad," she said. But when inspectors arrived to confiscate the restaurant's plastic carry bags, "the head of the local traders association showed up with other members and they started behaving violently", Altaf Shah said.

The restaurant has since reopened, after the owner apologized, saying delivery of the needed new biodegradable bags had been delayed by a holiday period. But the incident suggests that growing efforts in Pakistan - and globally - to reduce plastic waste may not go as smoothly as hoped.

Around the world, a surge of plastic bag bans have been met, at times, with equally enthusiastic efforts to get around them. Kenya, for instance, which banned plastic carrier bags in 2017, has struggled to stop smuggling of the bags over the border from Tanzania and Uganda, which do not have the same restrictions in place. In other places, frustration with the bans - sometimes because good, low-cost green alternatives are difficult to find - has led to everything from faked green compliance certificates to fake biodegradable bags.

In Islamabad, the local government banned the manufacture, sale and distribution of plastic carrier bags last week, on the country's independence day, as part of Prime Minister Imran Khan's "Clean, Green Pakistan" campaign. Authorities have said they intend to expand the ban to other types of plastic bags used in packaging, and have asked bag manufacturers to come up with recycling plans for plastic waste.

Bag threats

The new ban follows a three-month-long campaign to raise awareness about the environmental hazards of plastic bags, which can kill wildlife, block drainage systems, collect in waterways and cause other environmental and health problems. Altaf Shah, of Pakistan's EPA, said Islamabad's ban had for the most part been well accepted. "Other than this unfortunate incident our campaign to ban plastic bags was going well. The managers of most of the shopping malls we visited were cooperative and appreciative of our efforts," she said. Wasim Khan, the manager of another popular eatery near the temporarily shuttered restaurant, said his business had long used mainly paper bags to sell their bread and sandwiches.

"Since we opened in 2017 we have opted for paper bags and the 5% plastic bags we used we have now discarded" he said. "It is more expensive for us, as we use strong paper bags, but this ban is good for the environment and our health." According to Pakistan's Minister of State for Climate Change, Zartaj Gul, who is spearheading a broader countrywide anti-plastic campaign, the ban is focused on changing both attitudes and behaviors. "We can survive without plastic bags," she said, noting that even many political opposition leaders were on board with the campaign. — Reuters

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12 Lebanese govt says committed to reforms after rating downgrade



13 NBK-Egypt reports KD 18.7m in net profits in first half 2019



14 The Loft by Brussels Airlines and Lexus at Brussels Airport honored



BIARRITZ: US Secretary of Treasury Steven Mnuchin (C) walks with security personnel in Biarritz, south-west France yesterday on the first day of the annual G7 Summit attended by the leaders of the world's seven richest democracies, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States. —AFP

Trump, EU clash over trade at G7 opening

Mass protests outside Biarritz to greet G7 leaders

BIARRITZ: US President Donald Trump and EU leaders exchanged trade war threats yesterday as they arrived in France for a G7 summit of wealthy democracies overshadowed by trans-Atlantic tensions before it had even begun.

"Trade wars will lead to recession, while trade deals will boost the economy," EU Council President Donald Tusk said in Biarritz, the chic Atlantic resort chosen by French host President Emmanuel Macron to stage the annual meeting. Trump flew into Biarritz on Air Force One hours after promising to impose punishing tariffs on French wine imports if Macron doesn't withdraw a tax on US tech giants.

And Tusk vowed that the EU "will respond in kind." "The last thing we need is a confrontation with our best ally, the United States," he said. "This is not our initiative, this trade and tariff struggle, but we have to be ready and we are ready."

It was a combative opening to the G7 summit, traditionally a forum for frank yet cordial discussions among leaders from the world's leading economies—but much less so since Trump's election.

European leaders are also using the summit to mount a tough push for action against fires in the Amazon rainforest, despite Brazilian right wing President Jair Bolsonaro's angry response to what he

sees as outside interference. Echoing a warning from France, Tusk said Bolsonaro's response to the fires and his downplaying of climate change threw into question a major EU-South America trade deal.

"We of course stand by the EU-Mercosur agreement, which is also about protecting the climate and the environment," he said. "But it is hard to imagine a harmonious process of ratification by the European countries as long as the Brazilian government allows for the destruction of the green lungs of planet Earth."

'People are mobilized'

G7 leaders were greeted by a mass protest outside Biarritz, though 13,000 police have been deployed to keep them far from view. Organizers said 15,000 people rallied around 30 kilometers (20 miles) south of the G7 gathering at the border town of Hendaye for a march over the Bidassoa River toward the Spanish town of Irun. Red, white and green Basque flags waved above a crowd that included anti-capitalists, environmental activists as well as a few dozen of France's "yellow vest" anti-government protesters, according to AFP journalists at the scene. "It's important to show that people are mobilized and do not accept the world they're offering us," said Elise Dilet, 47, of the Basque anti-globalization group, Bizi.

The rally was peaceful so far, after police said 17 people had been arrested as of Friday night amid clashes with protesters camped out near Hendaye.

Escalating threats

Talks in the beach resort, known for fierce rainstorms that blow in from the Atlantic, will also be dominated by the darkening clouds over the world economy.

Wall Street stocks slumped Friday after Trump escalated his trade war with China that is seen as responsible for a global slowdown. "We don't need China, and, frankly, would be far... better off without them," Trump tweeted on Friday, saying US companies were "hereby ordered to immediately start looking for an alternative to China."

And as he left for Biarritz, Trump also fired a salvo at France, threatening to slap heavy tariffs on its wine in response to its move to impose a sales tax on tech giants like Facebook, Apple and Google. "Those are great American companies, and frankly, I don't want France going out and taxing our companies. Very unfair," he told reporters at the White House. "And if they do that, we'll be taxing their wine... like they've never seen before." In a televised address ahead of the summit, Macron said his goal was "to

convince all our partners that trade tensions are bad for everyone".

The G7 meeting will also be the full international debut of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who will meet Trump for the first time as leader. They are expected to discuss the UK's impending exit from the European Union, which the US president has enthusiastically backed.

But though Johnson needs Trump's support for a free-trade deal, he is at odds with him on a range of issues including the Iran nuclear crisis, climate change and global trade.

Trump is likely to find himself under pressure from the Europeans, particularly Macron, to ease off on his policy of "maximum pressure" on Iran over its nuclear program. Since pulling out of the landmark 2015 nuclear agreement limiting Tehran's nuclear program, Trump has slapped crippling sanctions on the Iranian economy.

Macron wants him to put a "pause" on the policy, an aide said recently, which would enable talks to find a new diplomatic solution to the crisis.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told AFP on Friday that Macron's "suggestions" to find a way out of the current impasse were "moving in the right direction." —AFP

Fuel supplies halted to debt-ridden Air India

MUMBAI: Air India called Friday for government help after oil companies stopped supplying the debt-ridden national flag carrier with jet fuel at six domestic airports due to late payment of dues.

"We have huge outstanding debts and are awaiting equity support from the government to maintain current operational levels," Dhananjay Kumar, spokesperson of Air India told AFP.

Air India owes three state-run oil firms more than 45 billion rupees (\$630 million), Indian news agency Press Trust of India (PTI) reported on Friday. Oil firms suspended fuel supplies to Air India aircraft at six Indian cities—Pune, Ranchi, Patna, Mohali, Kochi and Vishakhapatnam on Thursday, an official confirmed. The airline was continuing to fly from these six locations by looking at alternative routes and filling up on fuel elsewhere, the spokesman said. —AFP

India Inc grows weary as reform fails to revive slowing economy

MUMBAI: When Prime Minister Narendra Modi was re-elected in May with a sweeping majority, Indian stock markets jumped to all-time highs as investors anticipated big bang pro-business reforms to revive a flagging economy.

But sentiment is souring in the country's boardrooms after a much-anticipated budget in July failed to provide any stimulus, and instead hiked taxes on the ultra-rich and on foreign portfolio investors. Several businessmen say Modi's government needs to take swift action on the economy, but instead it seems preoccupied with the situation in Kashmir.

"The speed of decision-making is very good for example in Kashmir, but the speed of decision-making on business matters is not good," said Adi Godrej, chairman of the Godrej Group, which sells everything from electronics to chemicals.

"India Inc is worried that the slowdown may deepen further. We need action," Godrej said in an interview, citing tax breaks for the auto sector and big

companies among his top wishes ahead of his taking any major decisions to weather the slowdown. India's GDP growth in January-March slid to a near five-year low of 5.8 percent, and most analysts expect data due later this month to show that growth in April-June faltered even further.

Domestic passenger vehicle sales, a key economic indicator, plunged an annual 31 percent in July - the steepest recorded pace of decline in nearly two decades.

Godrej's fears were echoed in interviews with over a dozen businessmen, fund managers, foreign investors and executives with multinationals, revealing widespread unhappiness among the very business elite that cheered Modi to power. Modi's office did not respond to requests for comment. Later on Friday, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a roll-back of the tax on foreign portfolio investors. Sitharaman stressed that the government was aware of the business sector's pain and would announce more economic measures in coming days.

Companies have already started to cut their workforces. The autos sector alone has laid off about 350,000 workers since April and even companies like cookie maker Parle - which sells biscuits for as little as 5 rupees, or 7 cents, a pack - have warned they may have to lay off up to 10,000 workers, due to weakening demand.

The broad Nifty index has shed more than 10 percent since hitting a high in June, in part pressured by the trade

war between the United States and China. Foreign portfolio investors yanked \$1.8 billion out of Indian equities in July alone.

Heavy lobbying

Investors say they want clarity from Modi on what his government plans to do about the economy, and the beleaguered lending sector. Banks are grappling with almost \$150 billion in bad loans and a massive shadow lending industry has been stung by a liquidity crunch after the collapse of major player Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS).

Foreign portfolio investors seeking a tax cut and automakers demanding easier access to finance for dealers and buyers have flocked to New Delhi to lobby Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Similarly, bankers have urged the government to announce a stimulus package that drives investment and new lending. The Finance Ministry did not respond to questions about any planned measures. Officials in New Delhi, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters the government is unlikely to provide a stimulus or tax breaks because this could compromise India's fiscal deficit target of 3.3 percent for fiscal 2019-20.

Krishnamurthy Subramanian, India's chief economic adviser, said on Thursday that using public money to help the private sector was a "moral hazard." Some banking and finance executives who met Sitharaman recently have criticized her, saying her attitude during meetings was not constructive. —Reuters

Business

Lebanese govt says committed to reforms after rating downgrade

Fitch lowers rating to CCC, S&P keeps rating at B-/B

BEIRUT: The Lebanese government has vowed to make urgent progress on reforms to help overcome a worsening economic crisis that prompted Fitch Ratings to cut the country's credit rating on Friday.

Speaking after Fitch downgraded the sovereign to CCC on debt-servicing concerns, President Michel Aoun said the current crisis had been brewing for many years, but that "everyone" was now working to tackle its causes. S&P Global, which on Friday affirmed Lebanon's credit rating at B-/B with a negative outlook, said it considered Lebanon's foreign exchange reserves sufficient to service government debt in the "near term".

However, Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil said both ratings reports showed the urgency for reform, which the government has long put off. "There should be no slackening for a single moment," he told Reuters on Friday. "We will deal responsibly with the reports," Khalil said. "We are confident we will be able to get out of the crisis."

Lebanon is grappling with one of the world's heaviest public debt burdens at 150 percent of GDP and years of low economic growth. Government finances, riddled with corruption and waste, are strained by a bloated public sector, debt-servicing costs and subsidizing the state power producer.

Lebanese leaders have warned of a financial crisis without changes. The impetus to enact reforms has grown with the slowdown of deposits into its banking sector, a critical source of finance for the state. The government is now trying to put public finances on a more sustainable path with a deficit cut in the 2019 budget and a plan to fix the state-run power sector, which bleeds funds while inflicting daily power cuts on Lebanese.

'Intensifying pressure'

Fitch said its downgrade from B- reflected "intensifying pressure on Lebanon's financing

model and increasing risks to the government's debt servicing capacity." Lebanon requires substantial capital inflows to fund its large twin budget and current account deficits, it added.

Friday's report by S&P Global said it expected the country to make progress on reforms to improve investor confidence given the weakness of foreign currency inflows.

But it warned it could lower the sovereign's rating in the coming six-12 months if bank deposits and central bank foreign exchange reserves continued to fall. "Continued weakness in foreign currency inflows and the use of [the central bank's foreign exchange] reserves to meet government debt-service could test the country's ability to maintain the currency peg," the report said.

The Lebanese pound is pegged to the dollar. Moody's downgraded Lebanon's rating to Caa1 in January.

The head of parliament's budget committee, Ibrahim Kanaan, called for the 2019 reforms and the timely adoption of a 2020 budget to be carried out in an atmosphere of "political stability". Fitch said political instability and ineffective government continue to weigh on investor confidence in the country. Markets had been pricing in the risk of a sovereign credit rating downgrade. Bond prices fell to new lows and five-year credit default swaps (CDS) — the cost of insuring against a Lebanese sovereign default—rose in recent days.

Friday's downgrade will have no "material impact" on investor holdings of Lebanon's bonds as the debt was already rated non-investment grade, said Jan Dehn, head of research at emerging markets investment manager Ashmore Group. Economists have questioned whether the govern-



BEIRUT: A view of containers at Beirut's port, Lebanon on Friday. — Reuters

ment's efforts will be enough to meet its goals. The IMF said last month the deficit would likely be well above the government's target of 7.6 percent of national output. In 2018, it was over 11 percent.

Nassib Ghobril, chief economist at Byblos Bank,

said the situation should be a "wake-up call" for politicians to form a credible plan that would result in an investment grade rating. "They have to restructure the public sector; they have to fight tax and customs evasion, not in words but in actions." —Reuters

Qantas to test 'ultra long-haul' Sydney to NY, London flights

SYDNEY: Qantas said it will run "ultra long-haul" test flights in the coming months from New York and London to Sydney in order to assess the health of pilots and passengers, as it eyes commercial services on the marathon routes. Three flights aboard Boeing 787-9 aircraft will take place from October, with up to 40 passengers and crew on the 19-hour flight.

Those on board will be subject to medical checks, while their sleep patterns and food consumption will be monitored, as Qantas bids to establish non-stop commercial flights from Australia's east coast to London and New York.

Qantas last year introduced the first direct service from the western Australian city of Perth to London, with the 17-hour journey one of the longest passenger flights in the world.

"Flying non-stop from the East Coast of Australia to London and New York is truly the final frontier in aviation, so we're determined to do all the groundwork to get this right," Qantas CEO Alan Joyce said in a statement. Both Airbus and Boeing have pitched aircraft for the ultra long-haul routes, and Joyce said it was still not a "foregone conclusion" which plane will be chosen. A decision will be made on the validity of the flights at the end of the year.

"This is ultimately a business decision and the economics have to stack up," he said.

The airline posted a 6.5 percent fall in annual net profit Thursday, attributing the slide in earnings to higher oil prices and a weaker Australian dollar. Despite record revenues, the Australian flag carrier said its after-tax profit fell to Aus\$891 million (US\$604 million), down from Aus\$953 million the previous year. The airline was hit by an Aus\$614 million fuel bill increase and Aus\$154 million in foreign exchange impacts. —AFP

On-off trade tariffs wreak havoc on US company planning

CHICAGO: Win Cramer thought his company was out of the firing line in the escalating Sino-US trade war after his "Made-in-China" wireless headphones, speakers and earbuds were taken off Washington's tariff list a year ago.

Little did the JLab Audio chief executive know that nine months later those products would again be targeted, posing an even greater risk to his California-based company.

Earlier this month, US President Donald Trump unexpectedly put off new 10 percent tariffs on about half of \$300 billion of targeted Chinese imports until Dec. 15. But JLab's shipments will be subjected to the tariffs starting Sept. 1.

Trump's push to rewrite global trade rules has upended supply chains and inflated costs for many U.S. companies. His tariff threats, also aimed at forcing American companies to move operations back home, have complicated planning for those with suppliers or manufacturing in China.

On Friday, Trump in a tweet "ordered" US companies to exit China after Beijing unveiled retaliatory tariffs on \$75 billion in US goods, throwing a new twist into the bitter trade war between the world's two largest economies. After the tariff reprieve in August 2018, JLab poured \$1 million into new product development and spent another \$500,000 to expand its

U.S. workforce by 20 percent. The investment, one of the biggest for the mid-sized company that was founded in 2005, is now at risk.

"We invested because we felt confident tariffs would not be put back on these products," Cramer said in an interview. "Perhaps, it would have been better if, last year, they hadn't removed us from the tariff list."

The \$550 billion US chemical industry is also finding itself in a pickle after 111 products that it imports from China are on the latest tariff list. They had been exempted in August 2018 on grounds that they were essential for US manufacturing and agriculture. The about-turn has frustrated chemical manufacturers, said Ed Brzytwa, a director at the American Chemical Council (ACC). "There is no explanation from the administration why they flip-flop like this. It is very confusing to us."

Chemical manufacturers are spending copious resources dealing with tariffs rather than on product innovation and research and development, Brzytwa said, adding that some companies have had to cut travel budgets. An official at the office of US Trade Representative declined to comment beyond saying that the products, covered in the latest round of tariffs, were not included in the previous duty increases.

Sitting tight

With no end seen to the trade war, companies are going slow on new spending until future US trade policy becomes clearer. Business investment shrank in the second quarter for the first time since 2016, Commerce Department data showed. US business confidence has sunk to the lowest in nearly three years, according to a OECD survey. "We need to get a trade deal resolved to get some confidence back in this market," Dow Inc CEO James Fitterling told investors recently.

Until then, the chemical producer will keep capital spending "tight," he noted.

Caterpillar Inc said last month its customers had turned cautious about making large capital expenditures. JLab has canceled hiring plans for the United States.

Cramer is meeting with retailers such as Best Buy, Target Corp and Walmart Inc, imploring them to accept tariff-induced price hikes for his products. Similar talks in 2018 were suspended after JLab's products got a reprieve. Since price increases alone will not fully offset the tariffs, JLab is reviewing all options to cut costs - from coffee suppliers and cleaners to marketing and advertising plans - for the second half of the year.

Invest overseas

To reduce its reliance on China, JLab will start production in Vietnam in January. But with the Trump administration's focus on correcting trade imbalances, Cramer worries that the Southeast Asian nation could be next in the line of fire.

US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer last month warned Hanoi over the "unsustainable" bilateral trade gap. The US trade deficit with Vietnam was \$39.5 billion in 2018 and is expected to widen further as many American companies move production into the country to avoid the trade war with China.

JLab also has fast-tracked plans to expand overseas. Sales abroad currently account for 10 percent of its revenues. "As things stand today, we are not hiring in the US anymore," Cramer said. "But I am hiring overseas and creating jobs in Europe, APAC and China because I feel confident that those markets will provide us some stability." Brzytwa of ACC said some of chemical producers are reviewing their US investment plans and are considering moving production overseas.

The United States has a large and growing trade surplus in industrial chemicals. The industry's exports were \$140 billion in 2018, accounting for 10 percent of all US goods exports. To grow, Brzytwa says, US chemical makers need China, which is not just their third-largest exports market, but also a vital source for many inputs. "We are worried about our market access closing in other parts of the world," he said.

Policy by tweet

Apart from the flip-flop on tariffs, companies are troubled by how the administration conducts and communicates trade policy. Frequent twists and turns are forcing companies adapt and re-adapt at frequent intervals. Trump's penchant for announcing his decisions on Twitter also leaves them little time to prepare for changes.

Cramer and other company heads said they have little choice but to keep monitoring Trump's tweets to find out the latest news on trade relations with China. In May, Cramer was getting ready to start the hiring process for three new employees in his California and Texas offices when he learnt via Trump's tweets that the trade talks with China had broken down and a new round of tariffs was in the offing. After the administration put his products on the tariff list, the hiring process was put on hold.

He revived the process when Trump in late June declared a truce with China. But as he began interviewing job candidates, Trump tweeted on Aug. 1 that the tariffs were back in play. If all else fails, Cramer may have to consider layoffs but the fluid US trade policy makes it tough to decide.

"I am not motivated to just let people go on a whim, knowing that a tweet on Tuesday can come out and say 'you are fine, don't worry about it,'" Cramer said. "It is outrageous." —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	304.800
Euro	342.750
Sterling Pound	377.490
Canadian dollar	231.350
Turkish lira	54.230
Swiss Franc	316.180
US Dollar Buying	297.500
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.888
Indian Rupees	4.260
Pakistani Rupees	1.944
Srilankan Rupees	1.694
Nepali Rupees	2.643
Singapore Dollar	221.510
Hongkong Dollar	38.866
Bangladesh Taka	3.597
Philippine Peso	5.832
Thai Baht	9.940
Malaysian ringgit	77.954
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.334
Qatari Riyal	83.771
Omani Riyal	792.203
Bahraini Dinar	809.880
UAE Dirham	83.040
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.500
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.389

Yemen Rival/for 1000	1.224
Tunisian Dinar	110.840
Jordanian Dinar	430.720
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.357

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.440
Canadian Dollar	229.442
Sterling Pound	370.530
Euro	338.975
Swiss Frank	300.740
Bahrain Dinar	809.620
UAE Dirhams	83.290
Qatari Riyals	84.530
Saudi Riyals	82.080
Jordanian Dinar	430.680
Egyptian Pound	18.391
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.701
Indian Rupees	4.254
Pakistani Rupees	1.922
Bangladesh Taka	3.605
Philippines Peso	5.818
Cyprus pound	18.110
Japanese Yen	3.860
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.660
Malaysian Ringgit	73.740
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	43.505
Thai Bhat	10.875

Turkish Lira	53.565
Singapore dollars	220.319

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.367847	0.381747
Czech Korune	0.005131	0.014431
Danish Krone	0.041489	0.046489
Euro	0.332680	0.346380
Georgian Lari	0.132217	0.132217
Hungarian Lari	0.001339	
Norwegian Krone	0.030053	0.035253
Romanian Leu	0.065339	0.082189
Russian ruble	0.004653	0.004653
Slovakia	0.009118	0.019118
Swedish Krona	0.027667	0.032667
Swiss Franc	0.306699	0.317699
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.198180	0.210180
New Zealand Dollar	0.189384	0.198884
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.224423	0.233423
US Dollars	0.300700	0.306000
US Dollars Mint	0.301200	0.306000
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.002982	0.003783

Chinese Yuan	0.041819	0.045319
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036987	0.039737
Indian Rupee	0.003711	0.004483
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.000289	0.000289
Korean Won	0.000242	0.000257
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069189	0.075189
Nepalese Rupee	0.002682	0.003022
Pakistan Rupee	0.001343	0.002113
Philippine Peso	0.005798	0.006098
Singapore Dollar	0.214773	0.224773
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001343	0.001923
Taiwan	0.009806	0.009986
Thai Baht	0.009612	0.010162
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.802335	0.810395
Egyptian Pound	0.018663	0.022023
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424997	0.433997
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021054	0.045054
Omani Riyal	0.786557	0.794458
Qatar Riyal	0.083065	0.083899
Saudi Riyal	0.080193	0.081493
Syrian Pound	0.001292	0.001512
Tunisian Dinar	0.102077	0.110077
Turkish Lira	0.046164	0.056009
UAE Dirhams	0.082352	0.083180
Yemeni Riyal	0.000991	0.001071

Business

NBK-Egypt reports KD 18.7 million in net profits in first quarter 2019

Total assets reach EGP 68.55 billion as of June 30, 2019

KUWAIT: NBK-Egypt - a member of NBK Group - reported EGP 1.055 billion in net profits (KD 18.7 million) for 1H2019 up 6.7 percent compared to EGP 988.78 million (KD 16.9 million) for the corresponding period of last year.

Total assets as of June 30, 2019 reached EGP 68.55 billion up 5.26 percent compared to EGP 65.12 billion by the end of June 2018. Total customers deposits grew by 19.24 percent for the same period to reach EGP 56.68 billion, compared to EGP 47.54 billion for the corresponding period of last year.

Shaikhha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO, National Bank of Kuwait and Chairman of NBK-Egypt said that NBK-Egypt's record financial results reflect NBK Group's insightful long-term investments strategies in the Egyptian market. The profit growth in 1H2019, mainly driven by operating income, also reflects the stability of the Egyptian economic environment and its rapid development.

Al-Bahar highlighted that NBK-Egypt is considered one of the most important branches for the Group, as it contributes about third of the reported profits from the Group's international branches. She also stressed that the growth witnessed by the Egyptian economy will create new investment and financing opportunities for the bank, which will in turn improve product integration between the bank and the parent group, thus strengthening its position in the Egyptian market.

"NBK Group is working on transferring its Fintech expertise to the Egyptian market through NBK-Egypt as part of the Group's "digital transformation" strategy. This step was reflected positively on the outstanding and unique banking services offered by NBK-Egypt to its customers, thus position us as a pioneering bank in introducing the latest technological solutions," Shaikhha Al-Bahar commented.

Al-Bahar also added that NBK-Egypt aims to further expand its market share in the Egyptian market, confirming that all indicators support the successful implementation of NBK's strategy focused on the retail sector in addition to corporate finance. "NBK aims to expand and diversify its business scope to increase its geographical footprint and reach more customers throughout all Egyptian governorates," Al-Bahar added.

Al-Bahar stressed that the Egyptian economy is beginning to reap the benefits of its economic reform program, which the government managed to successfully implement over the past three years. That initiative included a wide array of economic and financial

- Al-Bahar: NBK-Egypt's record financial results reflect NBK Group's insightful long-term investments strategies in the Egyptian market
- We aim at expanding our market share through focusing on the retail sector and maintain our leadership in corporate finance
- NBK Group is working on transferring its Fintech expertise to the Egyptian market through NBK-Egypt as part of the Group's "digital transformation" strategy
- Improved indicators and credit rating are testaments to the Egyptian economy's solid growth, thanks to its economic reform program
- Al-Tayeb: NBK-Egypt demonstrated solid performance across all financial indicators
- Assets grew by 5.26% to EGP 68.55 billion, while customer deposits jumped 19.24% to EGP 56.68 billion
- NBK-Egypt enjoys a highly diversified portfolio drawing on the strength of the Egyptian economy

reforms, which led to a substantial improvement in the macroeconomic and financial indicators, as confirmed by the leading international institutions. Most recently, Fitch upgraded Egypt's credit rating to B+ with a stable outlook and Moody's upgraded its credit rating to B2 with a stable outlook.

Meanwhile, Managing Director of NBK-Egypt, Yasser El-Tayeb highlighted that 1H2019 financial results reflect that NBK-Egypt has continued its growth and solid performance across most financial indicators, supported by the Bank's success in overcoming unfavorable market conditions at the beginning of this year, thanks to the prudent policy adopted by the Bank as a member of NBK Group and its business model based on the diversification of its income and credit portfolio while offering flexible financing solutions and providing innovative banking products at the same time to cater to its customers actual needs derived through detailed in-depth market studies. This



is in addition to the bank's solid financial position, strong balance sheets, successful strategy and the experienced and accomplished team that brings comprehensive banking knowledge and expertise.

El-Tayeb added that most of NBK-Egypt's profits are driven by corporate credit services, with a highly diversified portfolio drawing on the diversification of the Egyptian economy itself. He also highlighted that NBK strives to strengthen its position in retail banking as well over the coming period and that it has made huge strides in presenting innovative services and products to its retail clients to fulfill the needs and requirements of various segments.

He further added that NBK-Egypt has a wide network of 50 branches spread over premium locations in various Egyptian governorates and cities including: Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Delta, Sinai, Red Sea and Upper Egypt, in addition to the industrial zones in 6th



of October and 10th of Ramadan cities. The bank is also privileged to be among the elite banks within the Egyptian market that hold an Islamic banking license in addition to its conventional licensing. It has two Islamic branches, one in Cairo and the other in Alexandria, thus enabling the bank to offer a comprehensive selection of Sharia compliant products and services in addition to its traditional offerings.

Moreover, NBK-Egypt has a wide network of ATMs spread across the country to service the bank's clients around the clock. NBK-Egypt also provides a range of e-services that provide its clients with unique banking experiences, enabling them to execute many of their banking transactions anywhere anytime without having to visit the branch.

National Bank of Kuwait was incorporated in 1952 as the first local bank and the first shareholding company in Kuwait and the Gulf region. NBK continues to enjoy collectively one of the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its strong financial indicators, asset quality, high capitalization in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team, as well as strategic vision and stable funding base. NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for the thirteenth consecutive time. NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network exceeding over 150 branches and subsidiaries reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including the United States of America, Europe, GCC, the Middle East, China as well as Singapore.

World needs to end risky reliance on US dollar: BoE's Carney

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming: Bank of England Governor Mark Carney took aim at the US dollar's "destabilizing" role in the world economy on Friday and said central banks might need to join together to create their own replacement reserve currency. The dollar's dominance of the global financial system increased the risks of a liquidity trap of ultra-low interest rates and weak growth, Carney told central bankers from around the world gathered in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in the United States.

"While the world economy is being reordered, the US dollar remains as important as when Bretton Woods collapsed," Carney said, referring to the end of the dollar's peg to gold in the early 1970s.

Emerging economies had increased their share of global activity to 60 percent from around 45 percent before the financial crisis a decade ago, Carney said.

But the dollar was still used for at

least half of international trade invoices - five times more than the United States' share of world goods imports - fuelling demand for US assets and exposing many countries to damaging spillovers from swings in the US economy. Carney - who was considered a candidate to be the next head of the International Monetary Fund but failed to secure backing from Europe's governments - said the problems in financial system were encouraging protectionist and populist policies.

Earlier on Friday, US President Donald Trump said he was ordering US companies to look at ways to close their operations in China, the latest escalation of mounting trade tensions between Washington and Beijing. Carney warned that very low equilibrium interest rates had in the past coincided with wars, financial crises and abrupt changes in the banking system.

As a first step to reorder the world's financial system, countries could triple the resources of the IMF to \$3 trillion as a better alternative to countries protecting themselves by racking up enormous piles of dollar-denominated debt.

"While such concerted efforts can improve the functioning of the current system, ultimately a multi-polar global economy requires a new IMFS (international monetary and financial system) to



Mark Carney

realize its full potential," Carney said. China's yuan represented the most likely candidate to become a reserve currency to match the dollar, but it still had a long way to go before it was ready.

The best solution would be a diversified multi-polar financial system, something that could be provided by technology, Carney said. Facebook's Libra was the most high-profile proposed digital currency to date but it faced a host of fundamental issues that it had yet to address.

"As a consequence, it is an open question whether such a new Synthetic

Hegemonic Currency (SHC) would be best provided by the public sector, perhaps through a network of central bank digital currencies," Carney said. Such a system could dampen the "dominating influence" of the US dollar on global trade.

"Even a passing acquaintance with monetary history suggests that this centre won't hold," Carney said. "We need to recognise the short, medium and long-term challenges this system creates for the institutional frameworks and conduct of monetary policy across the world." —Reuters

Mexican economy stagnates in Q2

MEXICO CITY: Mexico registered zero economic growth in the second quarter, according to revised data released Friday, meaning that Latin America's second-biggest economy dodged a recession even more narrowly than previously thought. "Gross domestic product (GDP)... registered no change in real terms in the second quarter of 2019," Mexico's official statistics institute, INEGI, said in a statement-the latest bleak news for the world economy.

INEGI had initially said in July that Mexican GDP expanded by 0.1 percent in the period from April to June. That puny-but-positive figure at least indicated the economy had returned to growth, after shrinking in the first quarter of the year.

Friday's revised figure, on the other hand, shows that GDP in fact stagnated in the second quarter-a bad sign for Mexico and President

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, an anti-establishment leftist who took office in December promising to kickstart the economy and "transform" the country.

He has not gotten off to an encouraging start, at least on the economy: it shrank by 0.2 percent in the first quarter, raising the specter of a recession-two or more consecutive quarters of economic contraction-just months into his term.

Mexico, whose economy is second only to Brazil's in size in Latin America, is just the latest trouble spot on the global map. With the United States and China locked in a trade war, US data flashing warning lights of a looming recession and Brexit mired in chaos, among other troubling signs, the "R" word is increasingly on people's lips.

INEGI said Mexican industrial activity, which represents nearly one-third of the economy, contracted by 0.2 percent, while the primary sector-farming, mining and production of other raw goods-contracted by 3.4 percent. The services sector and related activities, which represent around 60 percent of the economy, grew by



A shopper counts banknotes while paying a TV during the kick-off of the 'El Buen Fin' (The Good Weekend) holiday shopping season, at a Walmart store in Monterrey, Mexico. —AFP

0.2 percent, INEGI said.

Mexico's central bank cut its key interest rate by a quarter-point on August 15, to eight percent, a move aimed at boosting economic growth. It was the first rate cut since 2014 for the normally hawkish central bank. Lopez Obrador has vowed to deliver economic growth of two percent this year, and an average of four

percent across his six-year term.

"My view hasn't changed: we're doing very well. I don't see things the same way the experts do," Lopez Obrador told a press conference. "I feel that, thanks to everything we're doing, there's a better distribution of wealth (in Mexico), and that's creating economic development and quality of life." —AFP

IMF to hold weekend meetings in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES: The International Monetary Fund said on Friday that a team will meet with the economic advisers to Argentina's main presidential contenders, incumbent Mauricio Macri and opposition candidate Alberto Fernandez, to "exchange views." The "technical staff team" is due to arrive in Argentina on Saturday, the IMF said in a statement, and will discuss the "recent economic and financial developments" and the "government's policy plans."

"We will have work meetings both Saturday and Sunday," a Treasury Ministry source confirmed to Reuters, adding that it would be the first meeting with the IMF for Argentina's new Treasury Minister Hernan Lacunza, who was sworn in on Tuesday. Argentina has a \$57 billion standby agreement with the IMF, negotiated in 2018 by pro-reform Macri.

Macri was trounced in the primary election on Aug. 11 by opposition candidate Alberto Fernandez, who is now the front runner for the October presidential election. Center-left Peronist Fernandez has been critical of Argentina's IMF agreement and pledged to "rework" it if elected. Fernandez's economic advisers met with Lacunza earlier in the week, telling him Fernandez would seek an "alternative economic model" to the current administration's policies.

Fernandez's landslide support in the primary vote prompted the peso currency to fall by nearly 18% last week amid fears of a return to the interventionist economic policies of former President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, who is Fernandez's vice presidential candidate.

The International Monetary Fund's next scheduled review of the country's lending program is on Sept. 15. In its previous review of Argentina in July, the IMF warned there were "elevated" risks to the program, with peso weakness and political uncertainty likely to feed on each other.

The collapse in Argentina's peso currency last week and soaring borrowing costs fueled investors' concern that Latin America's third-largest economy is heading for another debt restructuring.

Macri took office in 2015 promising to bring an end to the cyclical crises that over the last 100 years turned one of the world's strongest economies into a serial defaulter, but an economic recovery failed to materialize. Voters fed up with Macri's IMF-backed austerity measures and crippling inflation of 55% overwhelmingly snubbed Macri, giving a 15-point lead to Fernandez, who promised on Thursday that Argentina has "no possibility" of default if he is elected. —Reuters

Business

The Loft by Brussels Airlines, Lexus at Brussels Airport 'Europe's Leading Airport Lounge 2019'

The 26th annual World Travel Awards



KUWAIT: The World Travel Awards, a prestigious and globally recognized honors program in global travel and tourism, celebrate organizations that are recognized for their commitment to excellence. Votes are not only performed by customers, but also by travel and tourism professionals. The Loft by Brussels Airlines and Lexus is a unique lounge concept, centered on comfort, technology, design and a blend of 'Belgitude' and Japanese hospitality.

The Loft by Brussels Airlines and Lexus opened its doors on June 25, 2018 as a relaxing new space for international travelers inspired by Lexus luxury, design and Omotenashi hospitality. "Since the opening, the

lounge has already welcomed more than 450,000 visitors. It marks a further expansion of Lexus beyond the premium automotive world as a global luxury lifestyle brand. Lounge guests are provided with a wealth of facilities to make their visit comfortable, relaxing and enjoyable, together with opportunities to immerse themselves in the world of Lexus.

Covering an area of 2040 Sq m, The Loft by Brussels Airlines and Lexus offers seating for 500 guests. It is divided into areas with different ambiances and features, including a central bar, seating zones and a break-out space that's ideal for those who need to work while on the move.

A unique blend of premium features are offered to visitors:

- Japanese hospitality values brought by Lexus
- Chocolate experience hosted by a Neuhaus maitre chocolatier
- At home SPA Grohe shower suites
- Individual nap rooms with star lit ceiling
- Lexus LS Shiatsu-effect massage chairs
- Variety of fresh organic dishes and drinks by Foodmaker and Rombouts
- Plastic bottles-free living space - Eco consciousness by banning plastic bottles
- Award winning arts and inspirational sleek design

elements by Lexus

- Dedicated Mark Levinson hi-end audio listening room

The Loft by Brussels Airlines and Lexus is in Pier A of Brussels Airport and open daily from 5am to 9pm. The Lexus zone has been designed by FITCH, a retail and brand consultancy which has also produced a successful design concept for Lexus' European retailer network. It has been able to expand some of the ideas explored in that project and introduce new and exciting features, drawing further inspiration from the INTERSECT by Lexus brand experiential centers in Tokyo, Dubai & New York.

Warba Bank announces winners of Al-Sunbula draws

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, "the Best investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, held its weekly Sunbula draw number 32. The draws announced the 5 lucky winners in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and bank officials.

The bank proudly announced the weekly draw number 32 lucky 5 winners of the KD 1000 prize: Mohammad Jhaid Mohammad Alotaibi, Obaid Mohammad Abdullah Alharbi, Khaznah Reja Jazea Fraih, Meshari Reja Amer Aldaihani and Naser Fahad Obaid Alotaibi.

Al-Sunbula both account and fixed deposits are the perfect choices for customers who wish to save money and achieve steady returns while at the same time have the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year.

In line with the bank's mission to develop and differentiate its offerings, Warba Bank has enhanced its Sunbula campaign for 2019 with more cash and prizes reaching more than KD 1 million.

Warba Bank will continue its weekly draws for 5 winners of KD 1,000 each. What's new in 2019 are the "Mega Draws" which will be held every quarter to reveal five winners, the 1st winner will get KD 100,000! The four winners thereafter will each get the latest Land Cruiser VXR. Furthermore, the final Mega draw held in January 2020 will feature 2 more Land Cruiser VXRs!

As for the chances for winning, each customer is eligible to enter the draw against each KD 10 in the Sunbula Account. Nevertheless, Sunbula Fixed Deposit investors also get chances in the Sunbula draws along with high expected returns that reach up to 3.5 percent distributed either monthly or at maturity upon the customer's preference.

Furthermore, Warba Bank is leveraging on its Customer Onboarding solution, in line with its ambitious five-year strategy that enables non-Warba Bank customers to request the opening of Al-Sunbula account in a simple electronic manner without having to visit the branch, through 5 simple steps in 5 minutes. New customers will be able to request opening the account at anytime, anywhere, through the new and unique electronic system used to implement this service. Representatives will then contact the customer to determine the appropriate time to visit the branch to get required signatures, verify the customer's identity, deliver his/her debit card, and activate the account. —AFP

Cloud gaming faces challenges as Google prepares launch

COLOGNE: Urging fans to plunge into a virtual high-res surround sound universe of extraordinary games, Google hopes its cloud-based Stadia platform will take the world by storm on its November launch. The US digital behemoth unveiled details of its nascent streaming video platform at this week's Gamescom trade fair in Cologne in the hope it can gain massive traction among hardcore gamers to zap past other providers of existing gaming fare.

Gamescom, styling itself the biggest event in the European gaming industry, is a sizeable window on the state of play in a mushrooming market worth an estimated \$135 billion globally last year, according to analysts-with mobile platforms accounting for about half.

Stadia, details on which first publicly emerged in June at E3, the world's premier event for computer and video games, offers as its USP the chance for users to play their favourite game on a range of platforms in high resolution quality on different media from smart TV to console or smart phone. That presages something of a gaming revolution.

"People have been talking about cloud gaming for ten years—we are on the third generation of actors. The signals have not yet turned green but Google has got solid enough guts to try it. We've never been so close," says Laurent Michaud, director of studies at French digital market consultancy Idate.

Gamescom represents a chance for some hands-on experience and the brand's huge logo, plus its battalion of hostesses on its stand are helping to pull in the curious as they compare relative attractions with rivals led by Sony's Playstation and Microsoft's Xbox.

Google chief executive Sundar Pichai explained at E3 in Los Angeles the idea is "to build a game platform for everyone" following an initial rollout in 14 countries using a subscription model after an initial bundled hardware purchase. Some games will be free and others will require payment.

Even so, the Gamescom evidence after Monday's opening suggested interest had yet to hit the heights of neighbouring stands Nintendo or Konami—the latter being the developer of Pro Evolution Soccer's latest gambit PES 2020.

"I find their concept interesting but I have doubts as to their capacity to guarantee good connectivity," commented stand visitor Rishil Kuta, 22. A keen console user he said he would nevertheless be "ready to pay" a premium for a "stable" product.

Not sharing that opinion was Steven Mertes, 28, who said he did not see himself as ready to log off from his PC or close his console "which propose games of much better quality." "I have always been used to playing on a computer—it's much more comfortable."

Whichever way the cloud gaming cards fall the race is on to hook players, especially the hardcore ones, for next-generation gameplay.

Technical constraints

"The most difficult gamers to convince will be the 'hardcore gamers'. They may not be as numerous as occasional players but they are the ones who count. If they don't go to a platform things could be difficult," predicts Michaud.



The hardcore brigade tend to be willing to pay out for the rig and content they want—but are often very attached to their favoured support environment, be it console or PC-based.

Beyond the task of converting gamers to Stadia, Google must address various technical obstacles that go with the territory of developing cloud gaming.

Although Stadia is promising 4K high resolution at 60 frames per second for minimal time lag, it remains to be seen how the platform can persuade players who may not have suitably adapted screens along with fibre optic broadband or 4G connections to subscribe.

"We have a small doubt on the development of cloud gaming," says Wandrille Pruvot, CEO of Xtra Life, a cloud-based apps manager for Apple. "The challenge will notably be technical as the better the resolution the greater the need for a quality internet network."

"The games we are working on are simpler,

more based on gameplay quality and that requires less bandwidth for the graphics," says Pruvot. "One mustn't forget that video games are not just about big productions!"

The bet for cloud gaming is thus to push independent, if not always very visible titles—a means for Google and rival producers to position themselves as a 'Netflix for gaming' by providing original content.

"This type of platform can free the creative aspect from technical constraints," says Fanny Renard, a community manager with independent indie game developer Goblitz.

"A form of Netflix could be a production aid for the smallest independent studios. But this will then raise the question of remuneration, which could be complicated."

Overall, though, just as consoles did not kill off PC gaming, cloud gaming could essentially offer an extra strand of choice for fans of video games. —AFP

AUB announces KD 100,000 Hassad account of Eid grand prize winner

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank announced the lucky winner of Eid Al-Adha prize of Hassad Islamic Program; the first Islamic prize-draw account in Kuwait, which succeeded in redrawing the lives of thousands winners. AUB offers to its customers the largest number of chances to win over the year through over 850 prizes annually. It was a special occasion for Esam H A Jaragh who won the KD 100,000 prize.

The draw was live on Marina FM radio. The event also saw many surprises, shows, entertainment activities and competitions for attendees and participants. On this occasion, AUB congratulates the winner Esam H A Jaragh. In this regard, AUB asserts its pride of the

success of Hassad Islamic Prizes Program in achieving the dreams and aspirations of its valued customers through the largest prize program in Kuwait. AUB also extends its thanks and gratitude to its customers for their growing confidence which doubles the Bank's commitment to providing more outstanding banking products and services, wishing everyone to benefit from the features of Hassad Islamic Program, the first Islamic prize-draw account in Kuwait which has been able to redraw the lives of thousands of lucky winners.

Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents also 4 quarterly mega prizes of KD 250,000 that will help the lucky winners achieve their dreams and aspirations in addition the monthly draw to win a prize of KD 100,000.

One powerful new aspect of the Al-Hassad Islamic Account is the prize draws on the holy occasion of both Eid ul-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha, when the winning customers will receive the eid prizes of KD 100,000 each. May the Eid always bring prosperity and blessings to the Islamic nation.

Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents also 21 weekly prizes comprised of a grand prize of KD 10,000 and 20 prizes of KD 1,000 each. In addition to the highly

attractive package of the prizes, there will be the annual expected profits too, which makes the Al-Hassad account a useful tool; for family and other savings, both for the short term and for the longer term - a fact which well appreciated by a large multitude of new and old customers.

It is worth mentioning that there is possibility to open the account online for non-customers and there is possibility to transfer the salary to Al-Hassad account. In addition Al-Hassad customers can issue an ATM immediately and have the freedom to deposit and withdraw any time.

To be eligible to participate in the draw, the customer should have a minimum balance of KD 100, whereby the customer has two chances to participate, with a maximum of 30,000 chances per draw, in addition to annual profits for all participants. Every KD 50 invested for at least 15 days entitles the customer to one chance in the each draw. The longer the customer keeps his balance the bigger the changes of participation in the draw. Draws are held every Wednesday at AUB Kuwait or AUB Bahrain depending on the draw plan.

What's On

Australian College of Kuwait students visit the oldest Chevrolet showroom in Kuwait

As part of the Strategic Marketing course in the Bachelor of Business (Management) Program at the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK), the College arranged a field visit for its students to Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim & Sons Auto Showroom in the Sharq Industrial Area, which is the oldest Chevrolet showroom in Kuwait. Established in 1932, Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim & Sons is the exclusive dealer in Kuwait for Chevrolet and Cadillac vehicles.

The students listened to Muejeb Adnan, Showroom Manager, present a general definition of the company and its excellence in the Gulf region by providing the best customer service and achieving high levels of customer satisfaction. It won the first Gold Award for General Motors (GM) service in the region and succeeded in the GM Chairman's Challenge, which is an annual award given when reaching perfect achievements in sales and customer service.

Dr Sam Toglaw, Assistant Professor - Marketing at ACK, presented a practical explanation of the competitive environment analysis in Kuwait, known as PESTEL Analysis, in light of the current market changes, stressing ACK's interest in Applied Project-Based Learning (PBL) and its close association with the market, and with the practical reality that students will confront when they graduate.

Within the practical procedures of identifying the points of marketing excellence, the students inspected the new models of Chevrolet cars and compared them with their competitors, most notably the new Silverado and the new SUV Blazer. The audience listened to the recommendations and interventions of the college students regarding the strategic analysis of the influencing factors and market segments in the State of Kuwait.



Rasha Khalid and Khalid Al-Rami

Aqua Park celebrates 24th anniversary

On the occasion of the 24th anniversary of Aqua Park, the management of Al-Jazeera Recreational Projects Company, which owns Aqua Park Kuwait, celebrated with an entertaining exhibition on this occasion. The event took place in the presence of Mrs Rasha Khalid Al-Ghunaim, Vice Chairman and CEO of Future Kid Entertainment and Real Estate, Mr Khalid Al-Rami, Executive Vice President of Future Kid, a number of prominent figures and a crowd of Aqua Park pioneers. Rasha Al-Ghunaim said there were many surprises during the ceremony such as fancy mirrors, LED shows, fireworks and cartoon characters. Al-Ghunaim took the opportunity to thank everyone and cut a celebratory cake at the end of the ceremony.



— Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Why is part of the Amazon burning?

WASHINGTON: The thousands of fires burning in the Amazon don't look like the major forest fires of Europe or North America — instead, they are fueled mainly by branches, vegetation and other byproducts of deforestation in cleared areas, experts say. The dramatic scale of this year's fires is the result of a significant acceleration of deforestation for the lumber industry, for agriculture or for other human activities.

"In the tropics, fire is used extensively in a land-use environment," said Jeffrey Chambers, a scientist at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and a specialist in rainforests. "It's how you get rid of your agricultural waste products... And part of the reason why that works is because those fires don't generally move into the forest," he explained. "A tropical rainforest is generally not flammable" because it's so humid.

California has the opposite problem: burning waste is prohibited because the forests are so dry, they could go up in flames at the smallest spark. But in the Amazon, when an area of forest is cleared, the tree trunks are removed and the rest of the vegetation is burned on the spot during the dry season, which lasts from July to November. For farmland, or for prairies, brush and weeds alike are heaped together, waiting for the dry season. That's what is burning right now.

Even when the fire manages to penetrate the dense forest — called “primary” when it is still untouched — it usually stays in the vegetation at ground level and generally does not reach the treetops, about 100 feet (30 meters) up. The effect is just as devastating, though, because the tree trunks are damaged at ground level, but the overall image differs vastly from the massive fires that Europeans or Americans are used to seeing. Human use of fire to manage land explains the astronomical number of fires — more than 75,000 — recorded by Brazilian authorities since January.

Trend reversal

The fires have made the deforestation visible, according to Paulo Brando, an assistant professor at the University of California, Irvine and a scientist at the Woods Hole Research Center. "You can see the fires as the final phase of deforestation," he said. Amazon deforestation began in earnest in the 1970s, reaching its peak rate at the end of the 1990s and the start of the 2000s.

In 2004, about 11,000 square miles (28,000 square kilometers) of forest had been cleared in Brazil alone (the Amazon spreads over nine countries, but 60 percent of the rainforest is in Brazil). Deforestation then slowed down significantly. It picked up again in 2014, but it never reached the same level as the previous decade. Last year, about 2,900 square miles disappeared, according to Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE). But the trend reversal is worrisome. In July alone, more than 870 square miles were cleared. Additionally, the dry season isn't over.

Will the fires bite into intact forest?

"Right now, we are seeing mostly increases in deforestation-related fires, which may or may not escape into primary forests, depending on how dry it's going to get in the next few months," said Brando.

And how will that affect climate change?

Forests contain carbon, stored in the trees and vegetation — to the tune of 459 tons per hectare in the Amazon, said Diego Navarete, a carbon specialist at the NGO The Nature Conservancy. When a tree is cut, the carbon inside will reenter the atmosphere years later, at the end of its use cycle when it decomposes. When vegetation is burned, as is happening now, the carbon enters the atmosphere immediately. In both cases, the carbon will be released. It just takes some simple math to realize that the total for the past few months has already reached hundreds of millions of tons of carbon. — AFP



PORTO VELHO: Aerial picture showing a fire in a piece of land in the Amazon rainforest, about 65 km from Porto Velho. In the state of Rondonia. In northern Brazil, on August 23, 2019. — AFP

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Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

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

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St.1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B

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

Academic Certificates - Training

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

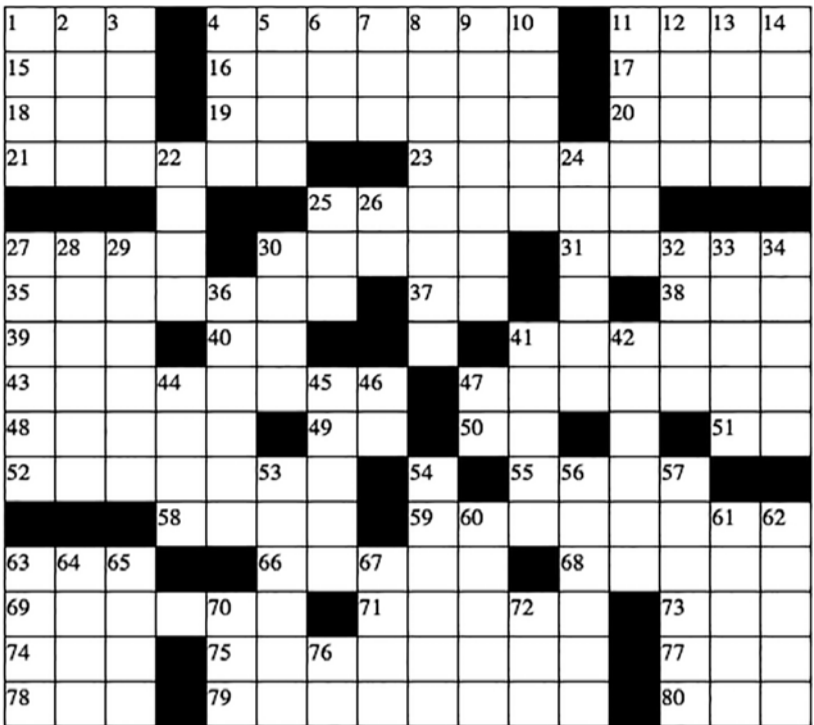
Scope of clinical Practice.

- ◆ 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

CROSSWORD 2289



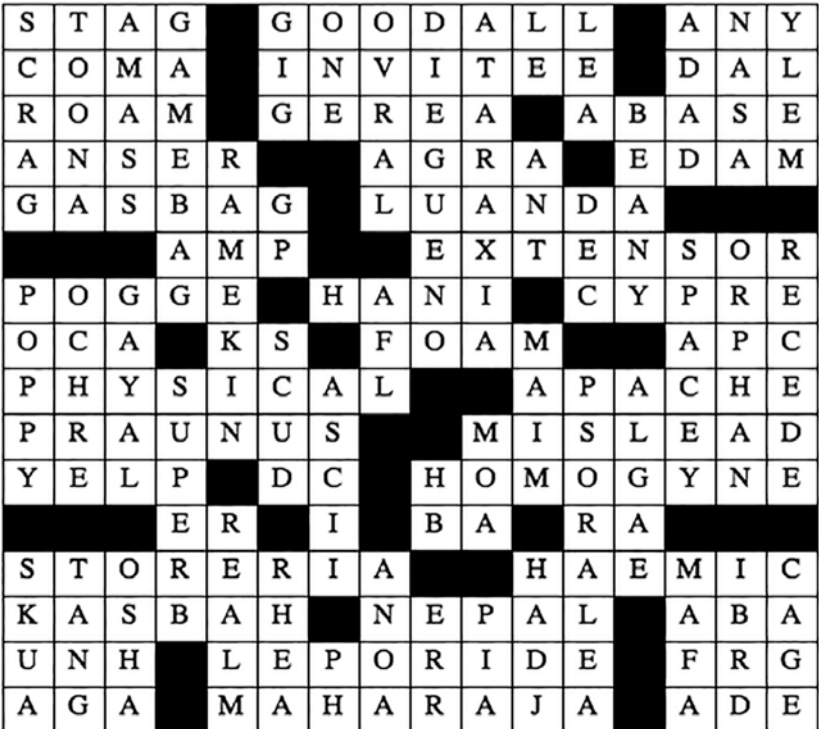
ACROSS

1. A female person who has the same parents as another person.
4. French dramatist (born in Romania) who was a leading exponent of the theater of the absurd (1912-1994).
11. Telephone line (Wide Area Telephone Service).
15. Feline mammal usually having thick soft fur and being unable to roar.
16. A stiff protective garment worn by hockey players or a catcher in baseball to protect the shins.
17. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
18. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
19. Sweetened beverage of lime juice and water.
20. Qualities that attract by seeming to promise some kind of reward.
21. 3rd largest island in the world.
23. The sport of hand-to-hand struggle between unarmed contestants who try to throw each other down.
27. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
31. God of wealth and love.
35. The hard cylindrical core that bears the kernels of an ear of corn.
37. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
38. Roman goddess of night.
39. Tooth on the rim of gear wheel.
40. An associate degree in nursing.
43. Of or relating to or characteristic of Eritrea or its people.
48. Patron saint of Wales (circa 520-600).
49. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
50. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
51. Being nine more than forty.
52. Suggesting an eye or eyes.
55. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
58. Pulled or drawn tight.
59. A native or inhabitant of Spain.
63. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
66. Income from capital investment paid in a series of regular payments.
68. The younger brother of Edwy who became king of Northumbria when it renounced Edwy.
69. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
71. (often plural) A command given by a superior (e.g., a military or law enforcement officer) that must be obeyed.
73. An inflated feeling of pride in your superiority to others.
74. A strong emotion.
75. A city in northeastern China.
77. Not of long duration.
78. Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
79. By an unbroken line of descent.
80. The habitation of wild animals.

DOWN

1. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
2. The villain in William Shakespeare's tragedy who tricked Othello into murdering his wife.
3. Indicating the most important performer or role.
4. A small island.
5. A midwestern state in north central United States in the Great Lakes region.
6. Game in which matchsticks are arranged in rows and players alternately remove one or more of them.
7. The compass point midway between northeast and east.
8. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
9. The dead body of a human being.
10. A port city of south central Ukraine on an arm of the Black Sea.
11. (India) Usually in combination.
12. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
13. A mountain lake (especially one formed by glaciers).
14. A brace that extends from the rear of the keel to support the rudderpost.
22. The compass point that is one point north of northeast.
24. A historical region in central and northern Yugoslavia.
25. God of the earth.
26. An organization of independent states to promote international peace and security.
28. A victory cheer.
29. Of or relating to the ancient Greek city of Argos or its people.
30. Not present.
32. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
33. A Dravidian language spoken by the Gond people in south central India.
34. Of or relating to or resembling an axis of rotation.
36. The opening into the stomach and that part of the stomach connected to the esophagus.
41. Any of numerous low-growing cushion-forming plants of the genus Draba having rosette-forming leaves and terminal racemes of small flowers with scapose or leafy stems.
42. Adorned by inlays.
44. A combat between two mounted knights tilting against each other with blunted lances.
45. A sharp narrow ridge found in rugged mountains.
46. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
47. A unit of magnetomotive force equal to 0.7958 ampere-turns.
53. Tropical Asian tree with hard white wood and bark formerly used as a remedy for dysentery and diarrhea.
54. Deciduous monococious trees of Europe and Asia and America.
56. Reduction or lack of an immune response to a specific antigen.
57. Goods (or wreckage) on the sea bed that is attached to a buoy so that it can be recovered.
60. Of or relating to the feet.
61. East Indian cereal grass whose seed yield a somewhat bitter flour, a staple in the Orient.
62. Cover completely or make imperceptible.
64. Capital city of the Apulia region on the Adriatic coast.
65. On or toward the lee.
67. Not at all or in no way.
70. The sign language used in the United States.
72. An inflammatory complication of leprosy that results in painful skin lesions on the arms and legs and face.
76. Half the width of an em.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You could be seen by others as just the person to be put in charge of some project requiring a conservative mind. Work is intense—there is a rush to complete projects. It is important to take your breaks and get some fresh air. This afternoon the focus could be on a change of residence for you or for a friend of yours. This is a good time to consolidate and organize your private affairs. General good feelings and a sense of support and harmony make this a happy time. Take time later this afternoon for relaxation and to also examine what is important and of lasting value in your life—an appreciative attitude.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Perhaps this is a time to think and study, for you have a real appreciation for ideas and thoughts. You may find yourself enjoying a long conversation with co-workers or higher-ups today. Progress is inevitable and now is time to fit progress into your professional life. This could mean new equipment, adjustment to a new environment or scheduling of a new time schedule. There are sudden insights and breakthroughs regarding these new changes. There is also the possibility of new visions or sudden insights into your self-image or into your ideals and dreams—your imagination is at full tilt.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

There is an instinctive imperative to be powerful and in control—pulling the strings. You may think you are in charge, but others have their own ideas and need your listening ear. This may lead to a greater interest or experience in healing and investing and in the great mysteries of life and death. You may be reminded of a few responsibilities you previously volunteered to do for today—at work or home. This is a good time to get down to basics and take care of these responsibilities as well as some of your own business, previously postponed. A meeting with someone older is at hand this afternoon. With a listening and patient attitude, satisfactory agreements can be found. You could find that you are very much appreciated.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

While you may be using your analytical abilities today at work, you will also become involved in conversations about the winter seasonal activities ahead. A plethora of subjects, however, could interest you now. This could include law, politics, education, travel or religion. This afternoon you may find yourself being put to good use by your friends, or it could be that circumstances force you to reorganize and become more conservative. You may find yourself involved in a neighborhood meeting. Perhaps it is time to think about recycling, decorating or helping to clean up the neighborhood.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

In the workplace, self-discipline and a sense of self-worth become important issues in your life as a new phase begins. A fear of asserting yourself can hold you back—as can coming on too strong. Attention to matters of health may come to your attention—perhaps you have plans to help the cook or to cook less fatty foods this season. This is a good time to begin an exercise program—perhaps early morning walks are in order. Today, someone new may come into your living situation or surroundings.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are expressive and outgoing when it comes to your feelings and emotions—you wear your heart on your sleeve. You could successfully work with the arts and theater, in sports, or with the ultimate self-expression: children. Teaching, other than your own professional work, may be where you find yourself today. This could be as a tutor or a private teacher. Creativity and time to create are important to you. You may find yourself leaving things undone around your living area so that you can complete a craft or art project.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Mystery Christmas Carol

The words listed below are from a familiar Christmas Carol. What is it? Find and circle all of the words hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of the Christmas Carol.



- ALL ANCEIENT APPAREL AWAY BEFORE BLAZING BOUGHS CAROL CHORUS DON FAST FOLLOW HAIL HARP HEADLESS JOIN JOLLY JOYOUS LADS LASSES MEASURE MERRY NEW NOW OLD OUR PASSES SEASON SING STRIKE TELL TIDE TIS TOGETHER TREASURE TROLL WEATHER WHILE WIND WITH YEAR YULE



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is a good time for clear deliberation and problem solving. You are in a serious frame of mind and find yourself dealing with matters of much concern and responsibility. This may mean that you will find new ways to clear away old debts or perhaps you find yourself tending to the needs of an elderly person in your family. You may be very persuasive—making clear decisions. Your whole base of knowledge and experience could be changing—your mind and your belief system. This afternoon is a good time to spend with a peer or loved one. Emotions are up and you may even find yourself pondering a bit on the meaning of life. You feel at one with your situation. Music, literature and romance are available this evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This year holds plenty of opportunities for you to expand your financial and personal horizons. Your patience could be tested to the limits, however. Sorting things out and getting organized to the utmost efficiency keeps you busy. You find yourself in a very practical mood and working with, instead of against, yourself. A friend in need or something you believe in that will suffer from a lack of your support may come to your attention before noon. You may be called upon to lend a helping hand. In helping someone else, you may find new ways to make your own dreams come true.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You will learn something new from a mentor today. Take your time and study what is presented. You have some valuable information to assimilate. A young person may need lessons in managing his or her money and you are quick to respond with a plan. You could find yourself teaching several young people about handling money. Careful, do not become too carried away—they will learn about government economy soon enough. This is a great time of the year to plan time with friends and loved ones.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You possess, at the core, an intensity that burns through superficialities, searching for opportunities to face the truth and rendering the events to view. This ceaseless analytical activity, while central to your nature, may be a source of discomfort to others. This is where you may decide to help others in some way. You are sensitive to others and you know the difference between prying and advising. Conversations with distressed individuals will be encouraged by your positive insights. You enjoy the light-bulb effect that long talks promote. On the whole, this can be a great opportunity to widen the scope of understanding.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may appear very tranquil this morning. Everything seems to be working together and you may find yourself expressive and able to communicate well. Interactive conversations find you at your mental best. Your analytical abilities are at a high point. This afternoon you could find yourself in hobby stores buying parts, games or an addition to your favorite pastime. Before you begin to play with those hobbies of yours, clean out or put away some of your collections that do not currently serve a purpose. Some young person may enjoy the items you no longer use.

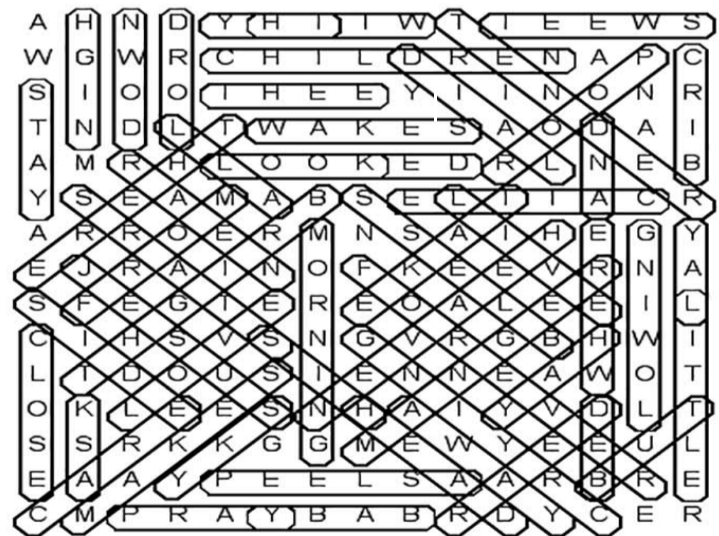


Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is not the best time for career or vocational decisions. Problems, however, are valued for the lessons learned. You do not mind being slowed from your work in order to learn something new. You love your friends, keeping in touch, catching up on their lives, etc. Family, home and the other roots in your life give you a sense of mission at this time. There are growth and gain through these things. Being appreciated and admired for your gifts and talents are powerful needs. Taking chances can bring big rewards. There are many opportunities for self-expression and others are interested in your particular ideas and thoughts. A good conversation with those you love is possible. This is generally a fruitful period for real-estate investments.

Friday's Solution

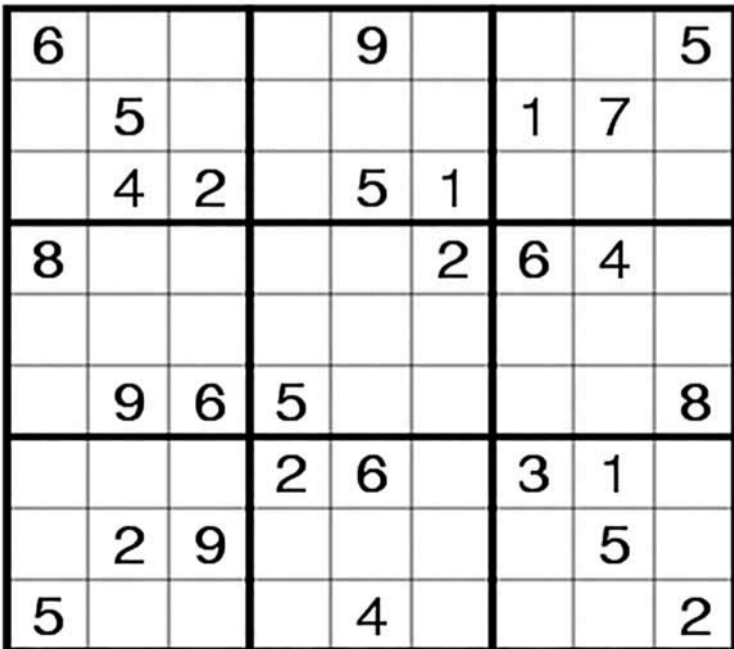
Mystery Christmas Carol #2



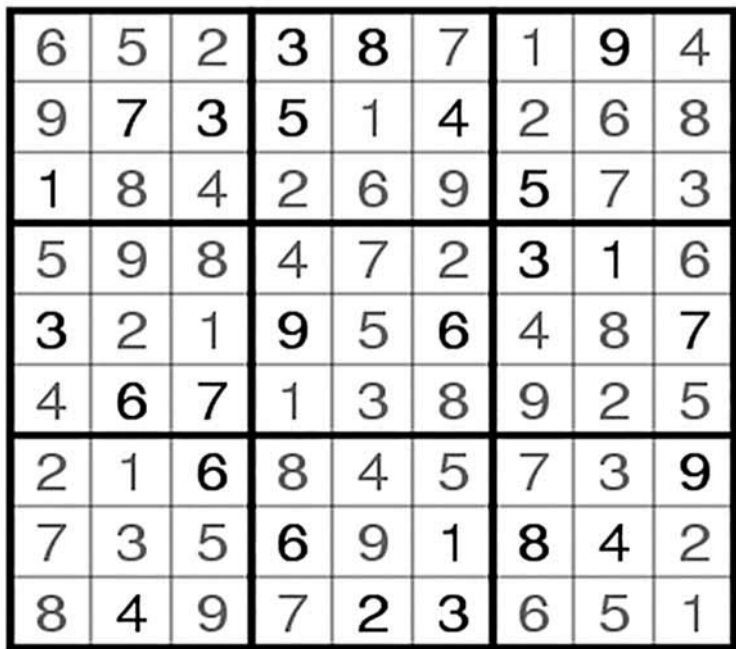
- ALL AND ASK ASLEEP AWAY BABY BED BLESS BRIGHT BUT CARE CATTLE CHILDREN CLOSE CRIB CRYING DEAR DOWN FOREVER FROM HAY HEAD HEAVEN HIS MAKES JESUS LAID LAY LITTLE LIVE LOOK LOOKED LORD LOVE LOWING MAKES MANGER MORNING NEAR NIGH POOR PRAY SIDE SKY STARS STAY SWEET TAKE TENDER THEE THERE THY WAKES WHERE WITH

The Mystery Christmas Carol is: AWAY IN A MANGER

Daily Sudoku



Friday's Solution



Lifestyle

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2019



A couple sits in a crop of sunflowers at Burnside Farms' Nokesville flower field in Nokesville, Virginia. — AFP

STAR WARS AND MARVEL TV SHOWS LEAD VAST DISNEY STREAMING LINEUP

Disney lifted the lid on three live-action Star Wars series for its much-hyped new television streaming service Friday, including Ewan McGregor's return as Obi-Wan Kenobi, as the company revealed a vast line-up for its Netflix rival. Previously unannounced series set in Marvel's wildly popular superhero universe and a live-action "Lady and the Tramp" film were among the shows teased at the biennial D23 fan convention in California, to whooping cheers from Disney devotees dressed as their favorite characters.

But the loudest ovation was saved for the Star Wars presentation, with the first official trailer for Disney+ launch series "The Mandalorian" showing a dark, lawless universe populated by murderous bounty hunters. Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy said the TV shows would be "identical" in quality to the record-grossing Star Wars films, describing it as "exhilarating and liberating" to tell stories that expand beyond two hours.

The online streaming service Disney+ featuring film and television shows will launch November 12 in the US as well as Canada and the Netherlands, before rolling out worldwide. Chief Executive Bob Iger told investors on a recent earnings call that "nothing is more important to us" than the platform, which will compete in a crowded

marketplace with Netflix, Amazon Prime, Apple TV+, HBO Max and more.

As well as offering Disney's enormous back catalog, including all animated films and Pixar movies within its first year, it will feature a plethora of newly commissioned shows. It will cost \$6.99 a month in the US. Friday's sweeping presentation in a packed 6,800-seater hall in Anaheim lasted nearly two hours, and set out titles from across Disney-owned brands including Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars, the Disney Channel and National Geographic.

Dangerous world

McGregor joined Kennedy on stage to confirm rumors that he would return as the Jedi master who was first portrayed by Alec Guinness in the 1977 original "Star Wars." Few details were given for the series, except that it has been written and will begin shooting next year. Introducing the first trailer for the separate "Mandalorian" series, which will be available at launch, showrunner Jon Favreau said the show would take place after "Return of the Jedi" in a world where celebrations about the end of the evil Empire had given way to chaos.

It will be set in a "world where like the old samurai movies and the old Westerns, where the gunfighters are

rolling and people are fighting for their own safety," he said. "It's a dangerous world." New footage showed battered Stormtrooper helmets mounted on spikes and crumbling in the desert dust, with cowering mothers and children fleeing from armed villains. Also announced was a "spy series" inspired by critically acclaimed Star Wars film "Rogue One," with Diego Luna and Alan Tudyk to reprise their roles in a prequel storyline.

Marvel Studios boss Kevin Feige revealed three previously unannounced shows which will overlap with the most successful film franchise of all time—"Ms Marvel," "Moon Knight" and "She-Hulk." More details emerged for further Marvel superhero shows "What If...?"—an animated series imagining different outcomes for each of the 23 Marvel films to date—and "WandaVision," which was intriguingly described as a "half classic sitcom, half full [Marvel Cinematic Universe] spectacular" inspired by Dick Van Dyke.

Also appearing on a bumper lineup were an "unscripted" Muppets show, a grown-up "Lizzie McGuire" reboot starring Hilary Duff, a series of shorts featuring "Forky" from "Toy Story 4," and a mockumentary based on "High School Musical."—AFP

Scarlett Johansson tops Forbes best-paid actress list for second year

Superhero Black Widow is a woman at the top of her game, and so is the actress who plays her—Scarlett Johansson is the world's highest paid actress for the second year in a row, according to Forbes's annual ranking published Friday. Johansson, 34, earned \$15.5 million more than she did in 2018, primarily due to the immense global success of "Avengers: Endgame"—the final chapter of the saga—for which she earned \$35 million.

The actress will take up the Black Widow mantle again in 2020 for an eponymous spinoff film. But even though Johansson and her cohorts on the list all earned more than \$20 million, pay inequality is alive and well in Hollywood. Johansson earned \$56 million total over the past year, but that amount lands her at only eighth place for the combined list of highest-paid actors and actresses.



In this file photo US actress Scarlett Johansson arrives on stage for the Marvel panel in Hall H of the Convention Center during Comic Con in San Diego, California. — AFP



Attendees visit the Marvel Studios booth at the D23 Expo, billed as the 'largest Disney fan event in the world,' at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California. — AFP

For comparison, Robert Downey Jr, Johansson's "Avengers" costar, earned about \$55 million for his turn as Iron Man in "Endgame." According to the Forbes ranking of highest-paid actors in the world, published Wednesday, Downey Jr. comes in at third place with \$66 million total, behind fellow Avenger Chris Hemsworth (\$76.4 million) and Dwayne Johnson (\$89.4 million).

For the women, second place goes to Sofia Vergara, an industry veteran but a newcomer to the list. The "Modern Family" sitcom star earned \$44.1 million between June 1, 2018 and June 1, 2019. She is followed by Reese Witherspoon (\$35 million) and Nicole Kidman (\$34 million), costars on the series "Big Little Lies." Jennifer Aniston, who came in third in 2018 mainly due to advertising campaigns for major brands, has been relegated to fifth place with a mere \$28 million for the year.

The former "Friends" star—a show which also featured a guest appearance from Witherspoon—stars in a new series for Apple's on-demand web television service. Other new list arrivals include Elisabeth Moss, boosted by the series "The Handmaid's Tale," and Australian actress Margot Robbie. Angelina Jolie, who was number two on the list in 2018, did not make the cut this year, along with Julia Roberts, Cate Blanchett and Jennifer Lawrence.

The top 10:

1. Scarlett Johansson (\$56 million)
2. Sofia Vergara (\$44.1 million)
3. Reese Witherspoon (\$35 million)
4. Nicole Kidman (\$34 million)
5. Jennifer Aniston (\$28 million)
6. Kaley Cuoco (\$25 million)
7. Elisabeth Moss (\$24 million)
8. Margot Robbie (\$23.5 million)
9. Charlize Theron (\$23 million)
10. Ellen Pompeo (\$22 million)—AFP

Taylor Swift sings ode to love on new album, the first that she owns

Taylor Swift's highly anticipated seventh album has arrived in all its lovestruck, honeyed glory—a clear shift from the vengeful goth lite of her previous record. But the 18-track “Lover” is not just an ode to matters of the heart—it's the pop star's first studio album that she actually owns, under the terms of the multi-album deal she struck last year with Universal Music Group/Republic Records.

“This album is very much a celebration of love, in all its complexity, coziness, and chaos,” Swift tweeted upon Friday's midnight release of her latest project. “It's the first album of mine that I've ever owned, and I couldn't be more proud.” “Lover” sees Swift, no stranger to catty celebrity feuds and lyrical dissers, set a mood of moving on—with a touch of snarky self-care—in her opener, “I Forgot That You Existed.”

It's a break from 2017's “Reputation,” when Swift momentarily tossed her princess tiara to try on the hardened snake skin of Dark Taylor. In classic Swift form, the new album includes a streak of reflection on her past romantic woes but maintains an ebullient optimism, particularly concerning her current relationship with British actor Joe Alwyn, with several songs hinting at marriage. “Swear to be overdramatic and true,” she sings with a self-aware wink in the album's title track.

Political baby steps

In “Miss Americana and the Heartbreak Prince,” she

appears to take a stab at political content—Swift has faced scorn in the past for shying away from social issues—voicing disillusionment in the American mythos. “American story burning before me / I'm feeling helpless / The damsels are depressed / Boys will be boys then / Where are the wise men?” she sings. And in “The Man,” she contemplates the double standards faced by women, both in work and in romance.

“I'd be a fearless leader / I'd be an alpha type / When everyone believes you / What's that like?” Swift asks. In that track, she name-checks Leonardo DiCaprio, known for his revolving door of 20-something girlfriends, implying that her own past serial dating habits would be less maligned if she were a man: “And they would toast to me or let the players play / I'd be just like Leo in Saint Tropez.”

Trumpian autocracy

The besotted earnestness returns on “London Boy”—which features a cameo from Idris Elba—an ode to all things English like high tea, watching rugby at the pub and her beau's accent. Her newfound romance with Britain is perhaps why the superstar chose The Guardian to discuss her disenchantment with the current state of the United States, telling the paper Donald Trump is treating his White House tenure like an “autocracy.”

The superstar faced criticism in 2016 when she opted against using her enormous platform to endorse a candi-



In this file photo singer Taylor Swift accepts the Teen Choice Icon Award during FOX's Teen Choice Awards 2019 in Hermosa Beach, California. — AFP

date in the pivotal presidential vote that resulted in Trump's election. She told the British paper, which will publish the full interview Saturday, that she feels “remorseful” for not speaking up, saying in hindsight that she would have backed Hillary Clinton.

Swift said at the time that her row with Kanye West and Kim Kardashian, along with her mother's cancer diagnosis, had her hiding from the public eye. “I just knew what I could handle and I knew what I couldn't. I

was literally about to break,” she said. Swift vowed to “do everything I can for 2020,” pointing in particular to ongoing battles that could result in more limited access to abortion services.

Owning it

“Lover” marks a new era for Swift in that she holds the keys to its future distribution. Earlier this year, the star began publicly feuding with industry mogul Scooter Braun over his purchase of her former label, the Nashville-based Big Machine, which gave him a majority stake in the master recordings of her first six albums. The owner of coveted masters—one-of-a-kind source material used to create vinyls, CDs and digital copies—is able to dictate how songs are reproduced and sold.

Always determined to have the last word, in the media blitz promoting “Lover,” Swift said she would begin re-recording her early albums to create copies she owns herself. She told ABC's “Good Morning America” that her contract allows her to begin redoing albums one through five in November 2020, and she plans to be back in the studio doing just that. “I think that artists deserve to own their work,” she said. “I just feel very passionately about that.”—AFP



The winner Rob Messel The Marquis from US performs during the Air Guitar World Championships final in Oulu. — AFP

America's ‘Marquis’ snares air guitar championship title

Twenty hopefuls from around the world donned glitter, make-up and outrageous costumes to face off in an epic, virtuoso guitar battle onstage on Friday—but without an instrument in sight. The Air Guitar World Championships have been held in the small Finnish town of Oulu, not far from the Arctic circle, for 24 years, and the competition has become an institution in the country which prides itself on organizing wacky competitions in anything from wife carrying to sitting naked on ant hills.

But although the idea of strutting around a stage dressed as a wizard, caveman or gorilla while noodling furiously on an imaginary guitar might seem silly to some, the competitors vying for the world title take their preparation extremely seriously. “I've played different instruments over the years, but I'm limited by my technical ability,” this year's winner, Rob “the Marquis” Messel from the US said. “But the air guitar, it's a blank page and you can do anything.”

Messel dazzled this year's judges with his intricate fret-work and majestic gliding around the stage, snatching the title from two-time champion Namami “Seven Seas” Nagura of Japan, whose gymnastic, power chord-studded routine nonetheless delighted the crowd of a few hundred, who turned out despite the rain.

Elsewhere there was ample ripping off of trousers mid-set, while other performers poured ketchup over themselves, and Frederic “French Kiss” Reau even found time in his routine to take an (also imaginary) call from his mum. In the end it was expert axeman-ship that the judges were looking for.

“As a guitar player you think about first if their fingering movements are at all accurate, or if they're doing things that would be completely ridiculous if you were trying to play an actual song on the guitar,” judge Douglas Blair told AFP.

Blair, who is better known as the guitarist in the veteran US metal band W.A.S.P., said he is not surprised that the competition has endured for nearly a quarter of a century. “It's as old as the rindance when someone is playing the drums and the rest of the tribe is dancing round the circle,” he said. “They don't need to know how to play the drums, they're feeling the rhythm. Air guitar is the guitar version of that.”—AFP

Meghan Markle offers glimpse of UK clothing line

Meghan Markle has made a surprise appearance at a fashion shoot for her new clothing line with the London charity Smart Works, which helps long-term unemployed women look for jobs. The American former actress, who is married to Britain's Prince Harry, is a patron of the charity that provides high-quality interview clothes and interview training. Earlier this year, it was revealed she would oversee a clothing line in collaboration with the charity, to be sold in British stores.

A video clip posted on the royal couple's Instagram account on Wednesday showed the 38-year-old meeting the models as they arrived for the shoot of the new workwear range - offering a sneak preview of the clothing. Markle, who became the Duchess of Sussex when she married Prince Harry, is already widely recognized as a champion of women's equality and empowerment. A self-declared feminist who has previously campaigned for the United Nations on gender equality, she promised last year that women's rights would be a focus of her charity work as she joined Britain's royal family.

She has also won praise for her own fashion sense - People magazine named her the best dressed woman of 2018. Women are still at a disadvantage in the workplace and a study by the Young Women's Trust this week showed that one in 10 employers would be reluctant to hire a woman who they thought might get pregnant.

Smart Works, which operates in six cities, helps women referred from prisons, care homes, homeless shelters, mental health charities and job centres. A third of the women have been turned down from more than 50 jobs. Markle, who starred in television legal drama Suits, has helped pick outfits for women who had just secured jobs and needed a basic wardrobe to see them through to their first paycheck. — Reuters



Missy Elliott's iconic stage outfits on display at pop up museum

The 48-year-old rapper will receive the Video Vanguard Award at this year's MTV Video Music Awards (VMAs) on Monday, and to celebrate, the VMAs and Pepsi are creating a pop-up museum showcasing elements from Missy's career. The Museum of Missy Elliott is located at 632 Broadway in New York and will open the weekend before the awards ceremony.

Fans will get an inside look at some of the backdrops and outfits from her most famous music videos, including ‘Gossip Folks’, ‘Lose Control’ and ‘Sock It 2 Me’ and they will also have the chance to try on her iconic trash bag dress, designed by June Ambrose, which featured in ‘The Rain’ music video.

In addition, the pop-up museum will also feature a nail bar. Meanwhile, Missy is set to pick up the Video Vanguard Award - for her music video contributions over the years - at this year's VMAs, which takes place at the Prudential Center in New Jersey.

Bruce Gillmer, head of music and music talent at Viacom and co-brand head at MTV International, said: “Missy's impact on the music landscape is indelible. “Her creative vision across production, performance and song-writing is unmatched.” Missy will follow in the footsteps of the likes of Rihanna, Madonna, Beyonce, Justin Timberlake, Britney Spears, and Kanye West when she collects the prize.



In this file photo US singer Miley Cyrus and husband Australian actor Liam Hemsworth arrive for the Saint Laurent Men's Spring-Summer 2020 runway show in Malibu, California. — AFP

Miley Cyrus slams rumors she cheated on husband Liam

Pop star Miley Cyrus clapped back at her social media haters Thursday over her recent split with longtime partner Liam Hemsworth, an Australian actor, to deny allegations that she cheated on him. “I can accept that the life I've chosen means I must live completely open and transparent with my fans who I love, and the public, 100 percent of the time. What I cannot accept is being told I'm lying to cover up a crime I haven't committed. I have nothing to hide,” the 26-year-old superstar tweeted.

She then detailed a laundry list of her youthful exploits, including “I lost a massive Walmart deal at 17 for ripping a bong” and “I got kicked off hotel Transylvania for buying Liam a penis cake for his birthday and licking it.” “I swung on a wrecking ball naked,” referring to the video for her 2013 hit that saw her image grow decidedly more provocative than her days as a teen idol thanks to the hit show “Hannah Montana.”

“But the truth is, once Liam and I reconciled, I meant it, and I was committed. There are NO secrets to uncover here,” she continued. “I can admit to a lot of things but I refuse to admit that my marriage ended because of cheating. Liam and I have been together for a decade. I've said it before and it remains true, I love Liam and always will.”

“BUT at this point I had to make a healthy decision for myself to leave a previous life behind. I am the healthiest and happiest I have been in a long time. You can say I am a twerking, pot smoking, foul mouthed hillbilly but I am not a liar.” The couple married in December in a private ceremony after a decade-long on-again, off-again relationship.

Hemsworth on August 12 released a statement to confirm the separation and “wish her nothing but health and happiness going forward.” In an interview for Elle magazine's July issue, Cyrus said she did not “fit into a stereotypical wife role” and that she was “very sexually attracted to women.” Cyrus reportedly declared as a young teen that she was “pansexual.”—AFP

Rolling Stones have space rock named after them

The Rolling Stones have rocked stages around the world in their more than 50-year career. But now their influence has gone into space after NASA's Mars InSight Mission named a rock on the planet after the band. Slightly larger than a golf ball, the “Rolling Stones Rock” is said to have rolled some 3 feet (1 metre), spurred by the InSight spacecraft's thrusters during touchdown on Mars in November, NASA said.

“In images taken by InSight the next day, several divots in the orange-red soil can be seen trailing Rolling Stones Rock,” it said. “It's the farthest NASA has seen a rock roll while landing a spacecraft on another planet.” Hollywood actor Robert Downey Jr. announced the name as Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Ronnie Wood and Charlie Watts were about to perform on Thursday night at Pasadena's Rose Bowl Stadium, close to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.—Reuters

Bollywood to make movie on air strikes

Bollywood is to make a movie on the “true story” of Indian air strikes on Pakistan this year, its producer said Friday, the latest patriotic film to hit the silver screen. The February 26 attack took place after a suicide bombing claimed by a militant group based in Pakistan killed 40 Indian troops on February 14 in Indian-controlled Kashmir. Pakistan then carried out its own raid over the de-facto border in Kashmir before the two nuclear-armed countries stepped back from the brink of another conflict.

India said that in the raid, its aircraft successfully attacked a training camp at Balakot and killed “a very large number” of “terrorists”, but doubts have been raised about its efficacy. The new movie is set to be produced by Vivek Oberoi, who starred in a flattering biopic of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the release of which was delayed so as not to interfere with this year's election. It will also tell the story of handlebar-moustached Abhinandan Varthaman, an Indian pilot who was shot down in the raid and then handed over by Pakistan,

becoming a national hero.

“As a proud Indian, a patriot, and a member of the film fraternity, it's my duty to highlight what our armed forces are truly capable of,” Oberoi was quoted as saying by Indian media. “This film is a powerful tool to underline the achievements of brave officers like Wing Commander Abhinandan, who went behind the enemy lines and did what makes every Indian proud of them,” said Vivek. Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since the end of British colonial rule in 1947. Both claim the Himalayan territory in full and have fought two wars over it. Earlier this month India stripped its part of the region's autonomy, sending tens of thousands of extra troops and imposing a lockdown and a communications blackout that on Friday entered its 19th day.—AFP



Visitors play retro games at the Video games trade fair Gamescom in Cologne, western Germany. — AFP photos

IN PRAISE OF THE BIG PIXEL: GAMING IS HAVING A RETRO MOMENT

Clunky games consoles with blobby pixels might not be the latest thing—but they’re still cool even if you’re no longer at school. Video games producers plying their wares at Gamescom this week in Cologne may primarily be out to push the frontiers of hi-tech and virtual reality as they eye a bigger slice of a booming market. But their commercial antennae are sufficiently honed to realize numerous hands on the joystick belong to gamers for whom retro hasn’t so much come back as never gone away.

That much was evident from the interest shown towards those who brought along vintage hardware which the uninitiated might have thought had long been left to gather dust in the attic. So-called “retrogaming”—digging out favorite classic games of yesteryear to be played on equally ageing hardware—is right on trend at Gamescom, Europe’s gaming fair. That much is clear from seeing a sea of enraptured faces as visitors drool over machines from right back in the early days—including the kind of machines once a staple in cafes and arcades where you could play sitting down or standing as you wished.

For some old school gamers, it’s a welcome blast from the past. For others the past is their present, be it indulging original vintage passions on old machines, ‘emulating’ a game simulated on a new machine or ‘porting’ to enjoy old content on new hardware. “It reminds me of my childhood and today I realize that the games in those days could also be complex,” laughs Jackye Mueller, a 21-year-old female student trying to snaffle virtual bananas while playing old favorite Donkey Kong on a Super Nintendo.

Nearby, a father is waxing lyrical on the attractions of another classic game, “Pong,” to his young son. The early arcade game, launched in 1972, involves each player manipulating a virtual cursor-like tennis ‘racquet’ to ping

the ball back across a screen of simple 2D graphics to win the ‘point’.

Prehistoric pixel paradise

“Retro is everywhere—in films, music, cars, clothes. So why not games?” asks Christian Gleinser, creator of a cohort of new games which work on computers ‘boasting’ 1980s graphics. “People like to have fun among friends and appreciate the ease of use, the short charging times and even the old pixels,” says Gleinser against the fair’s musical backdrop of the likes of Sonic, Mario Kart or Pokemon.

Beyond actual collectors some dyed-in-the-wool gamers have kept faithful to the old games even if some emulator programs which allow adaptation across platforms are not always technically quite legal. What is striking is how the rising retro trend has lifted the average gamer age as veterans who got the bug in the 1980s and 1990s pass on their memories and old-time



savvy to youngsters, often their own, even as the latter more often than not are coming to the genre via shiny and new hardware.

“We see there is a return to VHS tapes or vinyl and retrogaming is adding itself to that trend—there’s no reason why video games wouldn’t,” notes Fanny Renard, a community manager at independent studio Goblinz.

Durable trend?

Given the trend many console makers are retooling their old machines and dusting off catalogues boasting dozens of the top hit games of times past. An example is Japanese group Sega, which had found itself unable to stand its ground in the face of new-fangled competition from the likes of Sony’s PlayStation and Microsoft’s Xbox. For retro fans Sega is now proposing its Mega Drive Mini, replete with 42 games.

Nintendo has meanwhile revamped its NES and SuperNES consoles while the first edition of PlayStation is also back on the market. “The fact that each maker is retooling its consoles with sizeable catalogues shows there really is a market out there,” says Laurent Michaud, director of studies for Idate. “The cost of the retooling is pretty low and has already long been paid off—it’s just a bit of supplementary layout for these groups,” says Michaud.

How long the business can surf the retro wave is not clear, however. “Augmented reality is the market of the future” for video games. “Retrogaming is a bit different,” Michaud suggests. “This has the potential to become a real market, albeit not a very big one and not for very long,” predicts Andrew Kitson, analyst with Fitch Solutions.—AFP

Azerbaijan: The new wedding destination

From its cool climate to its ethereal mountain slopes, Azerbaijan’s natural beauty is a true romantic backdrop for destination weddings. With developed infrastructure, experienced wedding planners, picture-perfect weather, beautiful locations and luxurious hospitality chains, Azerbaijan is the perfect option for a destination wedding. Known as the ‘Pearl of the Caucasus’, Azerbaijan combines modern architecture with an old-world charm. An Eastern city with a Western outlook, Baku is an exceptional combination of antiquity and novelty with several sites of interest. Azerbaijan has transformed into a haven for the quintessential Indian bride, with bespoke hospitality venues opening their doors to host the most lavish celebrations.

For the wedding guests who want to make a holiday out of the festivities, Azerbaijan is a hotpot of cultural and adventurous excursions. From Baku’s modern Flame Towers, to the depths of the medieval UNESCO World Heritage site, there’s something for everyone in Azerbaijan. Our picks for the cultural icons include the UNESCO site Gobustan, that delves into the Palaeolithic past and the eclectic Heydar Aliyev Centre, which showcases the most coveted art pieces. For the daring traveler you can find hiking trails up the picturesque mountains, a haven for golfing enthusiasts and kite surfing for those who prefer to live on the edge.

With Azeri artists and performers, mystic calligraphers, creative carpet weavers and a plethora of gourmet options to delight food connoisseurs, the couple can immerse their guests into the culture of Azerbaijan at their wedding. The capital is a constantly evolving tapestry of life that weaves energy and romance – making it a perfect destination for new age couples. Florian Sengstschmid, CEO of Azerbaijan Tourism Board, said, “Weddings are becoming larger than

life events and we are seeing a huge increase in destination weddings. Azerbaijan has an amazing landscape which provides the perfect backdrop for any celebration and it also boasts a diverse climate. Thanks to our easy visa policy of three working days (and visa on arrival for a majority), traveling to Baku is completely hassle free.”

“Azerbaijan is still undiscovered by many, making it the perfect location not only for wedding celebrations but also for a wonderful honeymoon. Couples can celebrate their love and romance in a beautiful and unconventional way,” he added. Azerbaijan has an array of venues, from luxury and mid-range hotels, to en-suite bungalows, provincial motels and even private homestays for a dream wedding. While resorts in Baku are known to be state of the art, one of our top picks to host weddings outside of hotels is at Ateshgah, otherwise known as the “Fire Temple.” This Hindu-Zoroastrian temple dates from the 19th century and features 16 inscriptions in Sanskrit or Punjabi that harbour century-old secrets.

Another experiential hotel pick would be the Sheki Palace Hotel, just 50 meters away from the heritage site of



the summer Palace of Shaki Khans. This private property allows guests to immerse themselves in the romantic and epic history of the city and is an ethereal backdrop for any couple tying the knot.

Other venue options that can host a magical wedding in Azerbaijan, include:

Fairmont Baku - the perfect wedding setting with its grand ballroom and spectacular poolside terrace views overlooking the Bay of Baku. Best of all, your Fairmont Baku wedding specialist will be available to arrange every detail – allowing you to spend precious time with your guests. It boasts ballrooms that host almost 1000 people, 299 guest rooms and suites and 19 service apartments.

Boulevard Hotel Baku - set in the heart of Baku White City district along the main routes, connecting the city centre with Heydar Aliyev International Airport. With 818 comfortable guestrooms and suites and a banquet for 1300 people; it provides perfect accessibility to all major business and cultural sites of the city.

For a wedding rich in romantic glamour, Four Seasons Hotel Baku invites you to the city’s most high-profile setting on the Caspian Sea. Ascend the lobby’s dramatic curving staircase to the two first-floor venues: The Grand Ballroom and Banquet Room. Creative cuisine and attentive service are sure to impress every guest, and passionate Four Seasons care promises an occasion of unforgettable beauty. A Four Seasons Baku on-site expert will work with you or your wedding consultant to reserve your dates, plan the schedule of events, coordinate all food and beverage details from menu design to linens, and assist with other aspects of your wedding experience at the Hotel. It offers 142 comfortable guestrooms and 29 suites and banquets that accommodates 500 people.

Whether you are visiting Azerbaijan for business or leisure, you will marvel at the 5-star luxury of JW Marriott Absheron Baku. Ideally located in the city centre, hotel guests are near Port Baku Mall, Fountain Square, Shirvanshah Palace and the Central Botanical Garden. Every hotel room and suite features a generous layout with views of Baku’s skyline or the Caspian Sea. You can rely on their team of expert wedding planners to bring your dreams to life, working closely with a team of culinary experts, who will help you create your ideal menu. It offers 176 comfortable guestrooms and suites and 13 banquets for 1000 people.



‘Rock star’ Gaggan

hungry for new
Bangkok venture
after restaurant closure

In a Nirvana T-shirt, self-styled “culinary rock star” Gaggan Anand expresses no regrets about killing his golden goose—a two-Michelin-starred Bangkok restaurant ranked among the best in the world. “Sudden things in life are not planned, like a hurricane, like a typhoon. It just comes, you deal with it,” the 41-year-old told AFP in his loft-style apartment in the Thai capital, with fridges covering an entire wall, a long dining table, and a bookshelf-size pantry.

The imminent closure Saturday of “Gaggan”, where a 25-course meal in a colonial villa costs 8,000 baht (\$270), stunned the culinary scene. Gaggan’s shock move sent foodies in a spin as reservations were cancelled. To some it was a puzzling act of self-sabotage, but to the mercurial and blunt Gaggan the move was hastened by creative necessity after a dispute over shares with business partners. “I am tired. I am laughing. I am crying. I AM JUST A HUMAN,” he said this week in an emoji-laden Instagram post in which he apologized to customers and said “64 rebels” had walked out with him.



This picture shows chef Gaggan Anand speaking during an interview with AFP in his home in Bangkok.



This picture shows chef Gaggan Anand tasting a dish in his home in Bangkok.— AFP photos

“At the age of 41 the biggest lesson I learned was never leave anyone behind!” he wrote, admitting he gets “too emotional sometimes”. He told AFP that his new, more intimate space likely opening in October will host 40 diners per evening, but his ambition remains expansive. “In ten years I will be one of the greatest chefs of the 21st century. A world star,” he said, looking through big black glasses. “Every year, at least 20,000 tourists already make the trip to Bangkok to try my cooking.”

Lick It Up

A disciple of the Catalan master of molecular cuisine Ferran Adria, Gaggan opened his eponymous restaurant in 2010 in Bangkok’s glitzy business district. Five years later it catapulted into Asia’s fifty best restaurants. In Thailand’s 2018 edition of the Michelin guide—the first for a country where cheap street food is famous—it nabbed two stars, and this year was fourth-ranked globally in the World’s 50 Best, a list that received criticism in the past for not being more inclusive.

The hit Netflix show “Chef’s Table” followed Gaggan around the city as he shopped in local markets or prepped meals in the kitchen. His secret for success: serving up molecular—or what he calls “progressive”—gastronomy in Asia and revolutionizing Indian cuisine by introducing Japanese and even South American influences. Among his creations are foie gras with goat’s brains, spherical yogurt served on a spoon, and an oyster topped with horseradish cream, a dish he calls “Viagra”. For one course customers are also encouraged to lick their plates as the “Kiss” song “Lick It Up” blares out over speakers.

Share squabble

He hopes to bring the same unexpected flair to his new venture this time using his full name Gaggan Anand. A former drummer and rock lover, Gaggan likes to listen to Nirvana or Red Hot Chili Peppers in the kitchen. “I’m a culinary rock star, an anti-conformist,” he said smiling. Born in 1978 in an underprivileged part of Calcutta, he began cooking with his mother “who made simple but incredible dishes”. At 18 he enrolled in a hotel school, then set up a meal delivery business.

In 2007, separated from his first wife, he decided to start afresh and came to Thailand with only “a few hundred dollars”. After working at several restaurants, he made a snap decision to set up his own after a booze-fuelled evening with friends. He convinced the team at the then-number one restaurant in the world—Adria’s El Bulli in Spain—to take him on as an intern. “I discovered the emotional experience of cooking: mixes of flavors, textures and incredible techniques, I wanted to apply his revolutionary methods in Asia.”

Gaggan’s project was ascendant for almost 10 years. But the disagreement with business partners spelled the end. “I wanted to own more shares in the establishment, to have more control, but my partners have refused,” he told AFP. He said on Instagram post he owned a 25 percent minority stake. But in the coming restaurant, he wrote, his daughter will be the biggest shareholder, “so you can be sure, my next venture will be driven from love and pure passion.”—AFP



Models present creation by designer Ambika Lal during the Lakme Fashion Week (LFW) Winter/Festive 2019 in Mumbai. — AFP photos

Bollywood actress Adah Sharma presents a creation by designer Pinkey Agarwal.

For years, tourists enjoying the picturesque boardwalk in Ocean City, New Jersey have had to deal with some unwelcome visitors: marauding seagulls intent on stealing their lunch. "It's not that pleasurable to have to guard your food," said Hilary Larkin, who has been vacationing at the seaside resort for 36 years. "But that's what you do because you know that there will be a bird there to have a little bite to eat," she added.

Well, not anymore, thanks to the introduction of Ozzy, Sage, Hank, Gabriela, OC and Blackberry-six hawkeyed birds of prey sent to keep hungry seagulls at bay. The group of raptors-which includes falcons, Harris's hawks and a Eurasian eagle-owl-have been patrolling Ocean City night and day this month as part of a new initiative to scare away pesky gulls. "Multiple raptors constantly on the boardwalk creates an environment for seagulls where it is just not worth trying to steal a fry," falconer PJ Simonis told AFP.

Ocean City, about 130 miles south of New York, welcomes 150,000 vacationers every summer. They come for the beaches, Atlantic Ocean views, and countless snack bars and ice cream stands. Thousands upon thousands of seagulls follow them, though, regularly swooping down to pluck French fries or funnel cake from the hands of unsuspecting tourists, sometimes leaving children in tears.

The city's government decided enough was enough and tasked East Coast Falcons-a group of falconers more used to protecting airports, farmland and landfill sites against invading birds-to do something about them. Although the raptors could easily kill the seagulls, they have been trained not to.

Happy tourists

Blackberry, a three-year-old peregrine falcon does the morning shift, performing a wide sweep of the skies before returning to Simonis's hand. The Harris Hawks, native to the desert, work the afternoon when temperatures are high. Ozzy, the Eurasian eagle-owl, is from the Arctic and doesn't like heat so he spends most of the day being

HAWKEYED: Raptors liberate US beach town from hungry gulls

Seagulls search for food near the boardwalk in Ocean City, New Jersey. — AFP photos



cooled by air-conditioning before undertaking a few laps after dark before the falconers head home at 11:00 pm.

In just three short weeks, most seagulls have got the message, heading back out to their natural habitat to scavenge for clams, crabs and mussels. Mayor Jay Gillian said in a post on his website this month that the scheme, which costs \$2,100 a day, appeared to be working and could be renewed next summer. The raptors have also become a tourist attraction in their own right. "Just about everybody has had positive things to say," said Simonis. "People have had tears in their eyes, so happy that they could eat on the beach and boardwalk again without being attacked by seagulls."—AFP



PJ Simonis walks the boardwalk with one of his harris hawks.



Blackberry, a peregrine-prairie falcon, lands on a post.



Classifieds

Sunday, August 25, 2019

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas with light to moderate north westerly wind changing to south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Hot to relatively hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind to south westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART
KUWAIT CITY	44 °C	32 °C	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	43 °C	32 °C	
ABDALY	43 °C	28 °C	
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C	
JAHRA	44 °C	33 °C	
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C	
SALMIYAH	40 °C	31 °C	
AHMADI	38 °C	33 °C	
NUWAISIB	39 °C	28 °C	
WAFRA	43 °C	29 °C	
SALMY	42 °C	29 °C	

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	08/25	Hot and Humid over coastal areas	45 °C	29 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 28 km/h
Monday	08/26	Very hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	47 °C	31 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h
Tuesday	08/27	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	46 °C	30 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h
Wednesday	08/28	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	46 °C	31 °C	SE-VRB	08 - 30 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:57
Sunrise	05:21
Zuhr	11:50
Asr	15:24
Sunset	18:20
Isha	19:40

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	48 °C
MIN. Temp.	33 °C
MAX. RH	36 %
MIN. RH	05 %
MAX. Wind	N 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

Faiza Abdul Karim holder of Passport No. K7914117, I am changing my name to Faiza Abdul Karim Rajiwate with immediate effect. (C 5668) 23-08-2019

I, Kiran Kandathil Radhakrishnan holder of Indian Passport No. J7085559, issued on 30/05/2011 at Bangalore and permanent address being, No. 207, Parway Apts, Tarang near WOC road, Shivanagar, Bangalore - 560010, Karnataka, India hereby correct my given name as Kiran and surname as Kandathil Radhakrishnan, P.O.Box - 8766, Salmiya - 22058, block 10, lane 18, flat no. 1, floor no. 1, Kuwait. (C 5580) 22-8-2019

I, Mookan Kumar Kannan S/O Mookan holder of Indian Passport No. J0976988 having permanent address 173-68 A, Melapidavoor, Manamadurai, Sivagangai-Dist, Tamilnadu - 630606, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as given name: KUMAR KANNAN, surname: MOOKKAN, S/O: MOOKKAN. (C 5573)

I, JOSEPH MEPURATHU VARUGHESE holder of Indian Passport No: N1869225, issued on 20-01-2016 at Kuwait and permanent address being, Mepurathu House, Kottathoor P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta, Kerala hereby correct my son's given name as JOSEPH VARUGHESE and surname as JOSEPH in his Passport No. N9724089 issued on 19-05-2016 at Kuwait. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no. 86. (C 5579) 20-8-2019

and surname as VARUGHESE. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no. 86. (C 5579)

I, RITA PHILIP, holder of Indian Passport No. K7924609, issued on 11-11-2012 at Kuwait and permanent address being, Mepurathu House, Kottathoor P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta, Kerala hereby correct my given name as RITA and surname as PHILIP. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no. 86. (C 5579)

I, JOSEPH MEPURATHU VARUGHESE, holder of Indian Passport No. N1869225, issued on 20-01-2016 at Kuwait and permanent address being, Mepurathu House, Kottathoor P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta, Kerala hereby correct my son's given name as REUBEN VARUGHESE and surname as JOSEPH in his Passport No. N9724089 issued on 19-05-2016 at Kuwait. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no. 86. (C 5579)

I, JOSEPH MEPURATHU VARUGHESE, holder of Indian Passport No. N1869225, issued on 20-01-2016 at Kuwait and permanent address being, Mepurathu House, Kottathoor P.O., Ayroor, Pathanamthitta, Kerala hereby correct my son's given name as REJOY VARUGHESE and surname as JOSEPH in his Passport No. R8273659 issued on 27-08-2017 at Kuwait. Jleeb Al Shouyouk block 4, building no. 144 flat no. 86. (C 5579) 20-8-2019

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is

1889988

Websaite: <https://www.paci.gov.kw>

EMERGENCY ☎ 112



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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 25/8/2019					Departure Flights on Sunday 25/8/2019					SAW					Damascus				
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	ETH	3620	Addis Ababa	12:30	JZR	309	BJV	11:40								
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55				
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:10	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00				
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	MSR	610	Cairo	12:45	JZR	713	Sohag	00:10	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05				
JZR	130D	Dubai	00:20	KAC	742	Dammam	12:55	JZR	707	Luxor	00:20	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10				
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30	JZR	735	Cairo	12:30				
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	KAC	774	Riyadh	13:35	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:40	IGO	1756	CNN	12:30				
KAC	102	Dammam	00:50	KAC	877	Dubai	14:00	MEA	8962	Madinah	00:45	JZR	123	Dubai	13:10				
AHY	119	London	00:55	KAC	672	Dubai	14:00	JZR	723	Alexandria	01:05	JZR	115	Doha	13:25				
JZR	722	Baku	01:00	KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10	FEG	342	Sohag	01:05	KAC	541	Cairo	13:30				
KAC	504	Alexandria	01:00	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	JZR	409	Delhi	01:10	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30				
JZR	734	Beirut	01:00	QTR	1078	Doha	14:25	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10	ETH	3621	Addis Ababa	13:30				
UAE	853	Cairo	01:00	KAC	792	Madinah	14:40	KAC	677	Dubai	01:40	MSR	611	Cairo	13:45				
KLM	446	Dubai	01:40	KAC	562	Amman	14:40	KAC	2707	Madinah	01:45	KAC	515	Tehran	13:55				
PGT	858	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	304	Mumbai	14:45	THY	773	Istanbul	01:50	THY	767	Istanbul	14:00				
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	JZR	222	Riyadh	14:45	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10				
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45	AHY	120	Baku	01:55	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15				
JZR	726	Istanbul	01:55	KAC	618	Doha	14:50	KAC	417	Manila	02:00	KAC	197	Baku	15:00				
JZR	262	Alexandria	01:55	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:55	JZR	111	Doha	02:10	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00				
ETH	620	Beirut	02:05	JZR	602	Baku	15:00	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50	KNE	382	Taif	15:00				
MSR	3035	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	118	New York	15:00	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:50	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00				
QTR	1086	Sohag	02:25	KAC	692	Muscat	15:00	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55	JZR	103	Bahrain	15:05				
KAC	414	Doha	02:40	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05	UAE	878	Dubai	15:30				
GFA	211	Bangkok	02:40	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30				
PGT	860	Bahrain	02:50	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	MSR	3036	Cairo	03:25	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45				
THY	768	Istanbul	02:50	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30	JZR	405	Kochi	16:00				
OMA	643	Istanbul	02:55	KAC	546	Cairo	15:50	THY	769	Istanbul	03:50	KAC	563	Amman	16:00				
ETD	305	Muscat	03:05	FEG	341	Sohag	16:00	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:10				
RJA	648	Abu Dhabi	03:05	FDB	051	Dubai	16:10	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15				
PGT	856	Amman	03:05	JZR	732	Cairo	16:10	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:20				
MSR	612	Istanbul	03:10	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20				
KAC	418	Cairo	03:15	KAC	502	Beirut	16:15	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:20	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20				
QTR	1076	Manila	03:20	FEG	241	Alexandria	16:45	PGT	857	Istanbul	04:20	KAC	619	Doha	16:25				
OHY	352	Doha	03:30	SAW	705	Damascus	17:00	JZR	1735	Cairo	04:40	FEG	442	Asyut	16:55				
LMU	510	Istanbul	04:00	JZR	116	Doha	17:05	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00				
KAC	382	Cairo	04:00	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:10	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00	FDB	052	Dubai	17:10				
IGO	1751	Delhi	04:05	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	OHY	351	Istanbul	05:00	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25				
KAC	784	Chennai	04:10	IRA	665	Shiraz	17:35	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10	KAC	503	Beirut	17:40				
JZR	1738	Jeddah	04:25	JZR	214	Jeddah	17:35	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:15	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:40				
JZR	404	Cairo	04:45	JZR	124	Dubai	17:40	KAC	103	London	05:20	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40				
THY	1414	Hyderabad	04:50	JZR	104	Bahrain	18:00	JZR	703	Asyut	05:30	FEG	242	Alexandria	17:45				
DHX	170	Trabzon	05:05	QTR	1080	Doha	18:10	JZR	737	Cairo	05:55	KAC	621	Doha	17:50				
FDB	069	Bahrain	05:05	KAC	516	Tehran	18:20	JZR	737	Dubai	06:00	KAC	343	Chennai	17:50				
IGO	1759	Dubai	05:10	JZR	302	Istanbul	18:20	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00	KAC	381	Delhi	17:55				
JZR	770	Delhi	05:05	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	IGO	1760	Delhi	06:10	SAW	706	Damascus	18:00				
JZR	402	Istanbul	05:20	JZR	736	Cairo	18:55	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:10				
KAC	344	Mumbai	05:25	FDB	063	Dubai	19:05	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15				
JZR	112	Chennai	05:30	RJA	640	Amman	19:05	RJA	649	Amman	07:00	JZR	127	Dubai	18:20				
KAC	552	Doha	05:50	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	JZR	251	Amman	07:10	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20				
BAW	157	Cairo	05:50	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	JZR	121	Dubai	07:15	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:25				
JZR	708	London	06:10	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	JZR	113	Doha	07:30	JZR	501	Lahore	18:35				
KAC	284	Luxor	06:15	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:25	RBG	550	Alexandria	07:30	JZR	733	Cairo	18:35				
JZR	714	Dhaka	06:15	KAC	616	Bahrain	19:40	KAC	165	Rome	08:00	IRA	664	Shiraz	18:35				
KAC	678	Sohag	06:20	RBG	555	Alexandria	19:40	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00	JZR	261	Beirut	19:10				
KAC	204	Dubai	06:40	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45	BAW	156	London	08:00	JZR	253	Amman	19:10				
RBG	559	Lahore	06:45	KAC	178	Vienna	19:50	IGO	1767	Mumbai	08:10	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20				
KAC	302	Alexandria	06:50	JZR	310	BJV	19:50	KAC	177	Vienna	08:45	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20				
IGO	1766	Mumbai	07:05	KAC	158	Istanbul	19:55	KAC	545	Cairo	08:50	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30				
QTR	8511	Doha	07:10	KAC	166	Rome	20:00	KAC	501	Beirut	08:50	FDB	064	Dubai	19:45				
KAC	2708	Istanbul	07:10	KAC	104	London	20:00	KAC	561	Amman	08:55	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50				
KAC	358	Madinah	07:15	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05	KAC	117	New York	09:05	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00				
JZR	724	Kochi	07:25	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:10	KAC	791	Madinah	09:10	RJA	641	Amman	20:05				
QTR	1084	Alexandria	07:50	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	QTR	8512	Doha	09:10	SVA	556	Alexandria	20:20				
KAC	332	Doha	08:00	KAC	542	Cairo	20:15	QTR	1085	Doha	09:10	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:30				
KAC	384	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	620	Doha	20:30	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35				
UAE	855	Delhi	08:10	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40	KAC	161	Geneva	09:15	KAC	351	Kochi	20:45				
ETD	301	Dubai	08:25	KAC	172	Frankfurt	21:00	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15	DLH	624	Dammam	20:55				
OMA	641	Abu Dhabi	08:50	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00	JZR	601	Baku	09:20	KAC	333	Trivandrum	21:05				
ABY	125	Muscat	09:00	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:10	KAC	691	Muscat	09:20	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05				
QTR	1070	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	198	Baku	21:10	KAC	741	Dammam	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15				
FDB	055	Doha	09:20	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:25				
IGO	1753	Dubai	09:40	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50				
JZR	410	Ahmedabad	09:40	THY	764	Istanbul	21:30	JZR	731	Cairo	09:45	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50				
SAW	703	Delhi	09:50	KAC	676	Dubai	21:45	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00				
SVA	512	Damascus	10:00	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50	JZR	301	Istanbul	09:55	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10				
GFA	213	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	622	Doha	21:50	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15				
SAW	707	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	564	Amman	21:55	OMA	642	Muscat	10:00	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20				
MEA	404	Damascus	10:40	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	KAC	101	London	10:05	THY	1403	AYT	22:25				
SYR	341	Beirut	10:55	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15	KAC	107	Doha	10:30	QTR	860	Delhi	22:35				
QTR	1074	Damascus	11:00	KAC	786	Geneva	22:15	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:40	GFA	220	Dubai	22:35				
JZR	1736	Doha	11:00	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:20	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:40	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50				
JZR	114	Cairo	11:05	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55				
IGO	1755	Doha	11:10	JZR	128	Dubai	22:50	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40	KAC	551	Cairo	23:00				
JZR	122	CNN	11:30	KNE	233	Riyadh	22:55	SVA	513	Riyadh	10:55	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:00				
JZR	704	Dubai	11:45	MSC	405</														



A drawing in the sand made by Sam Dougados of the GNO One depicting leaders of the world's seven richest democracies - Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States - is seen on the beach of Biarritz in southwestern France yesterday, on the eve of the annual G7 Summit. — AFP

Macron, Trump break ice with surprise pre-G7 lunch

BIARRITZ, France: French President Emmanuel Macron hosted his US counterpart Donald Trump for a previously unscheduled lunch yesterday ahead of the official opening of the G7 summit in southwest France. The two leaders sat on a terrace at the ornate Hotel du Palais in the Atlantic resort of Biarritz, the G7 venue, just a day after Trump reiterated his threat of tariffs against French wine in retaliation for a new tax on major US tech companies.

The surprise lunch appeared to be an attempt by Macron to get the summit off on a good footing after a tense build-up in which Trump and EU leaders traded threats of trade war. Speaking to reporters in fluent English, Macron called Trump “a very special guest”. He said that they would be discussing a raft of pressing international issues, including the standoff with Iran

over its alleged nuclear weapon ambitions, and stressed that “strong coordination” was needed.

Trump met that appeal for unity with a somewhat softer approach of his own, having left the United States on Friday with a dire warning about taxing French wines “like they’ve never seen before”. “We actually have a lot in common,” Trump said across the table to Macron, adding that they had “been friends for a long time.” Trump said that at times they “go at each other a little bit” but had a “special relationship”. The setting for the G7 summit in the French seaside resort clearly pleased the US president. “So far so good. The weather is perfect. Everybody’s getting along. I think we will accomplish a lot this weekend,” he said.

So did Trump have lunch with someone impersonating Macron? No – but the US president did accidental-

ly tweet that he had. “Just had lunch with French President @EmanuelMacrone. Many good things are happening for both of our countries. Big weekend with other world leaders!” Trump posted after the meal in Biarritz.

That Twitter handle, however, is for a little-followed and now dormant parody account of someone who proclaims, in a faux French flourish: “It is my English langage twiterre for directe communication withe my American and English friends.” Shortly after, the US president – one of Twitter’s biggest fans and stars – corrected his message to read @EmmanuelMacron.

The mangled lunch report was one of a string of tweets sent out by the US president as he took a break before joining other G7 leaders for the evening. Among them was a repetition of his justification, first made

Friday, for an earlier comment that he is the “chosen one” to take on China in a trade war. The suggestion that he had been handpicked by God, made outside the White House and accompanied by a theatrical glance at the heavens, was a joke, Trump repeated.

“Little did I realize that the media would claim that I had a ‘Messiah complex.’ They knew I was kidding, being sarcastic, and just having fun,” he said in the tweet. Trump also addressed local political issues in the US, giving no further clue to his plans for the G7, where leaders are discussing a series of pressing global concerns. His Twitter account, followed by more than 60 million people, is closely watched around the world for breaking news, which Trump routinely announces himself rather than go through his mostly neglected press office. — AFP

‘Polypill’ halves cardiac arrests...

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only, while the other also got a daily polypill from 2011 to 2013. Doctors monitored compliance with the drug regimen, and then tallied the number of strokes and heart attacks across each cohort over the next five years. Crucially, adherence was significantly higher with the all-in-one pill. “Drugs do not work if they are not taken,” noted Amitava Banerjee, a consultant cardiologist at University College London. Compared with the lifestyle group, the polypill cohort had 34 percent fewer adverse events. Results were similar for men and women.

Blood pressure did not differ much, but “bad” (LDL) cholesterol levels were lower in the group taking meds. “Now we know that a fixed-dose polypill can achieve clinical benefits in practice,” Malekzadeh said in a statement. “But the polypill is not an alternative to a healthy lifestyle and should be combined with physical activity, a healthy diet, and smoking cessation.”

Other researchers not involved in the study said the findings could be a game changer, especially in developing nations. “Given the polypill’s affordability, there is considerable potential to improve cardiovascular health and to prevent the world’s leading cause of death,” noted co-author Nizal Sarrafzadegan, a researcher at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences. “Over three-quarters of the people of the 18 million people who die from cardiovascular diseases each year live in low and middle-income countries.” — AFP

Bashir defence asks court for...

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sums of money,” said one demonstrator who gave his name as Yasser Mohamed. Another smaller group turned out in support of the deposed Islamist leader, who was forced from power by relentless protests in April after 30 years in power. “We came here to support the legitimate president of the country,” said Abdel Rahman Omar, one of the pro-Bashir demonstrators.

While the sight of Bashir sitting inside a cage in a courtroom was unthinkable only months ago, many in

Sudan and abroad have warned that the graft trial should not distract from the more serious indictments he faces. The former Sudanese leader is wanted by the International Criminal Court in The Hague over his role in mass killings in the western region of Darfur. A landmark deal was signed on Aug 17, setting a roadmap for Sudan’s transition to civilian rule and democratic elections in 2022.

In the interim, the country will be led by a Sovereign Council that includes six civilians and five members of the military. While the generals in the transitional bodies eventually sided with the protests that brought down Bashir, they rose up the ranks in Bashir’s regime and many Sudanese are wary of their commitment to the transition. The next hearing in Bashir’s corruption trial was set for Aug 31. — AFP

Fears of recession rising in Kuwait...

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or 2.4 percent, to 25,628.90, pushing the blue-chip index into the red for the fourth straight week. European stocks also had a rocky day, turning sharply downward. The escalation of the trade war comes amid rising recession fears, with Britain and Germany both reporting negative growth in the second quarter and China’s economy slowing.

China announced Friday new tariffs on \$75 billion in US products and Trump lashed out with threats of further retaliation, meaning the trade uncertainty that Powell said is exacerbating the global slowdown is unlikely to go away soon. Trump lost no time in criticizing Powell – and swiping at Beijing. In a furious flurry of tweets, Trump attacked the Fed’s stewardship of the world’s biggest economy and vowed a quick response to China.

“As usual, the Fed did NOTHING! It is incredible that they can ‘speak’ without knowing or asking what I am doing, which will be announced shortly. We have a very strong dollar and a very weak Fed,” Trump tweeted after Powell’s comments. “My only question is, who is our bigger enemy, Jay Powell or Chairman Xi?” Trump said, misspelling the Fed chief’s name in an unprecedented attack on the independent central bank.

The Fed cut the benchmark interest rate last month for the first time in more than a decade, partly as insurance against the impact of trade uncertainties on the economy. But in his hotly anticipated speech to an annual central banking conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Powell cautioned that the Fed has no “rule-book” for dealing with the trade war fallout. “The three weeks since our July FOMC meeting have been eventful, beginning with the announcement of new tariffs on imports from China,” he said.

“The global growth outlook has been deteriorating

since the middle of last year. Trade policy uncertainty seems to be playing a role in the global slowdown and in weak manufacturing and capital spending in the United States.” While Powell said the US economy “is now in a favorable place,” it faces “significant risks” and he again pledged that the Fed “will act as appropriate to sustain the expansion.” However, he warned that there is no “settled rulebook for international trade ... no recent precedents to guide any policy response to the current situation.”

Stock markets seemed to like the speech, regaining some ground after sinking on news of Chinese tariff retaliation, but they fell after Trump’s outburst and the Dow closed with a loss of more than 600 points, or 2.4 percent. Markets swung when he added that “our great American companies are hereby ordered to immediately start looking for an alternative to China”.

“Powell is rather more diplomatic in his language than the president – a low bar, admittedly – but it is clear from his speech that the single biggest factor driving both market volatility, the actual global slowdown, and fears of a US slowdown, is trade policy,” said Ian Shepherdson of Pantheon Macroeconomics. The Fed chief has had some communication misfires as he walks the tightrope between competing views on the correct policy and defending the institution’s independence from political interference.

Powell seemed to be making an economic case for some further stimulus – possibly to ward off concerns he is bowing to the relentless pressure from Trump to drastically cut rates – but he also noted the generally healthy state of the US economy, a possible signal he does not foresee a series of cuts. Those favoring a lower interest rate face opposition within the Fed, but Powell tried to lay those concerns to rest as well, saying he does not see any buildup of financial risks or price pressures.

“Low inflation seems to be the problem of this era, not high inflation,” he said. “In the unlikely event that signs of too-high inflation return, we have proven tools to address such a situation,” he added. Shepherdson said the inflation “hawks have been vocal recently, but they seem still to be outnumbered”. — Agencies

Hundreds of new Amazon fires as...

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to make way for crops or grazing has aggravated the problem. More than half of the fires are in the Amazon, where more than 20 million people live. Some 1,663 new fires were ignited between Thursday and Friday, according to Brazil’s National Institute for Space Research (INPE). The new data came a day after Bolsonaro authorized the deployment of the military to fight the fires and crack down on criminal activity in the region.

US President Donald Trump and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, both attending the G7 summit, have offered their countries’ assistance in fighting the fires. “Any help is welcome in respect to the fires,” Brazil’s Defense Minister Fernando Azevedo e Silva told reporters yesterday. The blazes have stirred outrage globally, with thousands of people protesting in Brazil and Europe on Friday. More demonstrations are planned in Brazil today.

Earlier this week, Bolsonaro blamed the fires on non-governmental organizations, suggesting they deliberately started them after their funding was cut. The growing crisis threatens to torpedo a blockbuster trade deal between the European Union and South American countries, including Brazil, that took 20 years to negotiate. EU Council president Donald Tusk told reporters at the G7 yesterday that it was hard to imagine European countries ratifying a trade pact with the Mercosur bloc as long as Brazil fails to curb the fires ravaging the Amazon, which is known as the “lungs of the planet” because of its crucial role in mitigating climate change.

French President Emmanuel Macron, who has taken the lead in pressing his Brazilian counterpart over the fires, had earlier accused Bolsonaro of lying to him about Brazil’s stance on climate change. Environmental specialists say the fires are coming amid increasing deforestation in the Amazon region, which in July took place at a rate four times that of the same month in 2018, according to data from INPE. Bolsonaro has previously attacked the institute, describing its data as lies and engineering the sacking of its



NOVO PROGRESSO, Brazil: Handout aerial picture released by Greenpeace showing smoke billowing from a fire in the forest in the Amazon biome in the municipality of Altamira, Para State, Brazil — AFP

head. On Friday, he insisted that the fires should not be used as an excuse to punish Brazil. “There are forest fires all over the world, and this cannot be used as a pretext for possible international sanctions,” Bolsonaro said.

Brazil’s powerful agriculture sector – which strongly supports Bolsonaro – has expressed concerns over the president’s rhetoric, fearing boycotts of their products in key markets. In an editorial yesterday, the respected Folha de S.Paulo newspaper warned that Bolsonaro’s “bravado” had worsened the crisis caused by accelerating deforestation. “The damage to (Brazil’s) image is done and it could have important trade repercussions,” it said. “Nationalistic bravado will not win the game this time.” — AFP

Flaherty shuts down Rockies as Cardinals get offensive

Mariners stay hot while Jays lose 6th straight

AT LOUIS: Jack Flaherty struck out nine in six shutout innings and the host St. Louis Cardinals beat the Colorado Rockies 8-3 on Friday night. Marcell Ozuna homered and drove in three runs, Yadier Molina went 3-for-5, and three other St. Louis batters had two hits each. The Cardinals moved a half-game ahead of the Chicago Cubs for first place in the National League Central. Nolan Arenado had two hits and reached all four times he came to the plate for Colorado, which has lost four of five since sweeping a home series against Miami. Flaherty (8-6) didn't allow a hit until Yonathan Daza led off the fifth inning with a single. Before that, the Rockies only had three baserunners — a walk and two hit batsmen.

MARINERS 7, BLUE JAYS 4

Omar Narvaez and J.P. Crawford hit home runs as Seattle defeated visiting Toronto. The Mariners won for the fifth time in their past six games while the Blue Jays dropped their sixth in a row. The Mariners broke a 4-4 tie with three runs in the sixth inning against Sam Gaviglio (4-2). Matt Wisler (3-2) was credited with the victory after pitching two-thirds of an inning, giving up one hit and striking out one. Matt Magill pitched the ninth for his third save. Seattle's Dee Gordon and Toronto's Bo Bichette finished with three hits apiece.

RED SOX 11, PADRES 0

J.D. Martinez hit two homers and drove in a career-high seven runs, and Eduardo Rodriguez blanked San Diego on five hits over seven innings as visiting Boston won in a rout. Rodriguez (15-5) entered the game with the highest run-support average in the major leagues at 7.85 runs per game. The Red Sox scored three runs in each of the first two innings, one in the fourth and four in the sixth. Martinez hit a three-run homer in the first off Padres starter Chris Paddack, a sacrifice fly in the fourth and a three-run homer in the sixth off Eric Yardley. He finished the night 3-for-4.

NATIONALS 9, CUBS 3

Anibal Sanchez held Chicago to one hit in 8 1/3 innings, and Adam Eaton and Juan Soto homered to lead visiting Washington to victory. The sizzling Nationals have won 10 of 12 and kept their hold on the top wild-card spot in the NL. Chicago's five-game winning streak came to an end. Sanchez (8-6) struck out six and allowed a single earned run in his longest outing of the season, and he also logged his second career two-hit game. He hasn't taken a loss since May 10.

YANKEES 10, DODGERS 2

Didi Gregorius hit two home runs, including a grand slam, while Aaron Judge, Gary Sanchez and Gleyber Torres also went deep as visiting New York took the opener of a showdown series by crushing Los Angeles. In an interleague battle between the teams with the

best records in the majors, Gregorius followed an intentional walk to Sanchez in the fifth inning with his fifth career slam. He hit a solo shot in the ninth inning. Three of the home runs, including one by Gregorius, came against Dodgers left-hander Hyun-Jin Ryu, who entered with a National League-leading 1.64 ERA that increased to 2.00. Yankees starter James Paxton (10-6) gave up two runs on five hits over 6 2/3 innings, with 11 strikeouts, including three against NL MVP candidate Cody Bellinger.

BRAVES 2, METS 1 (14 INNINGS)

Billy Hamilton laced the tiebreaking single in the 14th inning night to cap a taut pitchers' duel and lift visiting Atlanta to a win over New York in the opener of a three-game series. The Braves have won six straight. The Mets had their five-game winning streak snapped. Tyler Flowers led off the 14th by drawing a walk against Jeurys Familia (4-2), the Mets' eighth pitcher. Adeiny Hechavarria, who was designated for assignment by the Mets on Aug. 9 and signed by the Braves seven days later, followed with a ground-rule double to center field that got wedged in the bottom of the fence. After Rafael Ortega struck out, Hamilton followed with his single past a drawn-in infield.

BREWERS 6, DIAMONDBACKS 1

Jordan Lyles pitched six no-hit innings, and Eric Thames and Keston Hiura homered to help Milwaukee cruise past visiting Arizona. Lyles (8-8) struck out five and walked two before being pulled after 99 pitches. Three relievers followed Lyles and finished a combined two-hitter. Lyles, who also had an RBI single, is 3-1 in five starts since being acquired from the Pittsburgh Pirates at the trade deadline. Arizona's first hit came with two outs in the seventh inning when Christian Walker blooped a single to center off Devin Williams.

ASTROS 5, ANGELS 4

Zack Greinke remained unbeaten over his four starts since joining Houston at the trade deadline despite pitching in and out of trouble in a victory over visiting Los Angeles. After falling into a 2-0 hole in the second inning, Greinke (14-4) wound up departing with two outs in the seventh inning holding a one-run lead despite allowing 10 hits and recording only one strikeout. Greinke induced an inning-ending double play in the third, worked around leadoff doubles from Kole Calhoun in the fourth and Matt Thaiss in the fifth, and initiated another inning-ending double play in the sixth after the Angels scratched across an unearned run in the inning that cut the deficit to 4-3. Greinke helped his own cause by not allowing a walk.

TIGERS 9, TWINS 6

Ronny Rodriguez hit a grand slam to highlight a five-



ST LOUIS: Nolan Arenado #28 of the Colorado Rockies hits a single in the ninth inning against the St Louis Cardinals at Busch Stadium in St Louis, Missouri. Teams are wearing special color schemed uniforms with players choosing nicknames to display for Players' Weekend. — AFP

run sixth inning, and Dawel Lugo and Harold Castro each had two doubles and a single to lead Detroit over Minnesota in Minneapolis. Rodriguez went 3-for-5 with two runs and a stolen base, and Miguel Cabrera, Jordy Mercer and Travis Demeritte each had two of Detroit's 17 hits. Drew VerHagen (4-2), making just his fourth start of the season and the eighth of his six-year career, held the Twins to three runs on five hits while striking out a career-high 11. He fanned five in a row during the third and fourth innings.

RAYS 7, ORIOLES 1

Austin Meadows belted a grand slam, the key hit in a seven-run second inning that helped visiting Tampa Bay defeat Baltimore. Meadows also homered Thursday in the Rays' come-from-behind 5-2 win over the Orioles, but that was a solo shot. This game was a different story, as Meadows' first career grand slam broke things open pretty quickly and gave the Rays command. Tampa Bay received a strong effort from starter Trevor Richards (4-12). This was just his second game — and start — since coming to the Rays from Miami in a July 31 deal, and he threw six shutout innings, giving up only two hits while striking out five and walking one.

MARLINS 19, PHILLIES 11

Starlin Castro came off the bench to slug two homers and drive in five runs as host Miami rallied from a seven-run deficit with 19 hits to set a season high in runs and defeat Philadelphia. The Marlins, who have the worst record in the National League, rallied from a 7-0 deficit, tied the score with a seven-run third, fell behind again and then produced a five-run fifth. The 19 runs were the second most the Marlins have ever scored at home. Not all news was good for the Marlins, however, as Brian Anderson was hit by a pitch and sustained a broken left hand, likely ending his season.

INDIANS 4, ROYALS 1

Francisco Lindor belted a two-run homer to highlight a four-run second inning as host Cleveland beat Kansas City. Tyler Naquin also drove in two runs, and Carlos Santana had two singles to post his seventh multi-hit performance in 12 contests. The offense proved to be enough for the Indians, who snapped a three-game losing skid overall and improved to 11-6 against the Royals this season. Rookie Zach Plesac (7-4) allowed one run on four hits in 5 2/3 innings to pick up the win. The 24-year-old improved to 3-0 in four starts against Kansas City this year. — Reuters

Kuwait national table tennis team to partake in Budapest Intl Open

By Abdellatif Shara'a

KUWAIT: Kuwait National Table Tennis Team of various age groups continues its training camp in Hungary, and those U13 and U15 players will participate in the Budapest International Open to be held Wednesday and Thursday, in which many European teams will participate.

The team held several friendlies while at the camp, and had good results in most matches under the guidance of coach Sabri Jamaan.

Meanwhile Deputy Chairman of Kuwait Table Tennis Federation Head of the delegation Khalid, Al-Khudhari lauded the players' total compliance with the technical program and administrative instructions. He said the camp achieved the goals it was held for.

Al-Khudhari said camps will be held periodically and the team will regularly participate in regional and international events in order to develop and advance table tennis in Kuwait.

Kuwaiti triathlete champion AlRefaie joins KFH strategic partners team



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti triathlete champion Abdullah Najib AlRefaie joined Kuwait Finance House (KFH) strategic partners team as part of a strategic partnership that confirms the Bank's continued support for sports and athletes and its interest in youth and champions who raise Kuwait's flag high.

AlRefaie completed the race (Full Ironman) that was held in Kalmar, Sweden with a record time of

10:58:44 to become the fastest player in the history of the competition (3.8 km swimming, 180 km cycling, 42 km running).

AlRefaie praised the support and keenness of KFH towards him, indicating the appreciation from the bank constitutes a greater incentive for him to stand on the international podiums representing Kuwait. He praised the support KFH provides to

youth, talents and distinguished competencies, which reflects the bank's commitment towards achieving social responsibility and the interest in developing society.

Such initiatives confirm KFH's commitment to support youth and honor outstanding athletes, with the aim of encouraging and enriching the sports and intellectual movement among the community.



Late birdie lifts Koepka to Tour Championship lead

WASHINGTON: World number one Brooks Koepka birdied the 18th hole Friday, capping a three-under-par 67 to take a one-shot lead over Justin Thomas and Rory McIlroy in the US PGA Tour Championship.

Koepka posted his second straight 67 at East Lake in Atlanta, Georgia. Under the "staggered start" format by which players were spotted strokes based on their position in the playoff standings, that put him on 13-under par — one stroke in front of American Thomas and Northern Ireland star McIlroy.

McIlroy capped his 67 with back-to-back birdies, including a bravura finish at 18 where he was in the trees off the tee. He used a five-wood to fire out and ended up with a good lie in the rough between two bunkers near the green.

"I felt comfortable doing it," McIlroy said. "I made a four off a bad tee shot, so I'm not complaining." Thomas — who went into the tournament as the top seed, awarded a two-stroke edge after his win in the BMW Championship — was alone atop the leaderboard at 13- under through 16 holes but slipped back with a bogey at 17 and finished with a two-under 68.

Koepka who started the week three shots off the lead, couldn't get his eight-foot eagle putt to drop at the last, but he tapped in for his fourth birdie of the day.

"I mean, the lead's always nice, so I'll take that," Koepka said. "I played good today. I putted really good. Short game was pretty solid."

Koepka had three straight birdies at the sixth, seventh and eighth, but like most he struggled on a tough back nine after a weather delay.

"The rain delay kind of killed any momentum I had," he said. "I didn't feel like I had any good golf shots after the rain delay, but that's part of golf. Everybody's got to deal with the same thing. I just didn't execute."

Thomas also had three front-nine birdies, but he was one-over on the back. He, too, said he "kind of had a hard time getting back into it" after the delay.

"But if I continue to drive it like I did today, I feel like I can really do some damage this weekend," Thomas said. "I just have to realize that I played really well today."

American Xander Schauffele was alone in fourth, his eagle at 18 giving him a 69 that put him two shots off the lead.

Thomas said the day "felt more normal" after the oddity of arriving at the first tee of the tournament on Thursday already credited with a two-shot lead.

The new format is designed to ensure that whoever wins the season finale will also claim the cumulative FedEx Cup playoff title and its \$15 million top prize. — AFP

Root and Denly keep Australia at bay on day three of third Test

Marnus Labuschagne missed out on a maiden Test hundred

LEEDS: England captain Joe Root and Joe Denly were fighting hard to prevent a three-day defeat in the third Test after Australia threatened another Ashes rout at Headingley yesterday. When Australia took two wickets for no runs in four balls to leave England 15-2, it looked like another dramatic collapse was on the cards following the hosts' woeful 67 — their lowest Ashes total since 1948 — in the first innings.

But at tea on the third day, England had recovered to 90-2. Root, in on a pair, was 41 not out and Denly 30 not out with their third-wicket stand so far worth 75

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at the close of Australia's second innings on the third day of the third Ashes Test against England at Headingley yesterday:

Australia 1st innings 179 (M Labuschagne 74, D Warner 61; J Archer 6-45)
England 1st innings 67 (J Hazlewood 5-30, P Cummins 3-23)
Australia 2nd innings (overnight 171-6)

M. Harris b Leach	19
D. Warner lbw b Broad	0
U. Khawaja c Roy b Woakes	23
M. Labuschagne run out (Denly/Bairstow)	80
T. Head b Stokes	25
M. Wade c Bairstow b Stokes	33
T. Paine c Denly b Broad	0
J. Pattinson c Root b Archer	20
P. Cummins c Burns b Stokes	6
N. Lyon b Archer	9
J. Hazlewood not out	4
Extras (b5, lb13, nb7, w2)	27
Total (all out, 75.2 overs, 355 mins)	246
Fall of wickets: 1-10 (Warner), 2-36 (Harris), 3-52 (Khawaja), 4-97 (Head), 5-163 (Wade), 6-164 (Paine), 7-215 (Pattinson), 8-226 (Cummins), 9-237 (Labuschagne), 10-246 (Lyon)	
Bowling: Archer 14-2-40-2 (3nb, 1w); Broad 16-2-52-2 (1w); Woakes 10-1-34-1; Leach 11-0-46-1; Stokes 24.2-7-56-3 (4nb)	
England: Rory Burns, Jason Roy, Joe Root (capt), Joe Denly, Ben Stokes, Jonny Bairstow (wkt), Jos Buttler, Chris Woakes, Jofra Archer, Stuart Broad, Jack Leach	
Match position: England set 359 to win.	

runs. England still needed a further 269 runs to reach an unlikely target of 359 and with 39 overs left in the day there was time for them to be bowled out before stumps. But they were at least making Australia work for a win that would see them retain the Ashes at 2-0 up with two to play in a five-match series. Surrey openers Rory Burns and Jason Roy both fell cheaply shortly after lunch.

Left-hander Burns (seven) edged a lifting Pat Cummins delivery to David Warner at first slip before Roy, yet to convince as a Test match opener, played down the wrong line to Josh Hazlewood, who took 5-30 in the first innings, and was bowled.

Root, in on a pair, got off the mark with a three off fast bowler Hazlewood to the delight of his home Yorkshire fans in a capacity, sun-drenched crowd.

Denly, the only England batsman to reach double figures in the first innings with 12, repeatedly played and missed either side of being hit on the head by a Cummins bouncer.

But both he and Root applied themselves on an increasingly slow pitch that was making life tough for Australia's pace attack. And there was a huge cheer from the crowd when Root's controlled hook off Hazlewood raised a fifty partnership with Denly.

ODDS IN AUSTRALIA'S FAVOUR

The odds were still hugely in Australia's favour, given only three sides have made more than 300 to win in the fourth innings of a Test at Headingley — Australia (404-3 in 1948), England (315-4 against Australia, 2001) and the West Indies with 322-5 two years ago.

Earlier, Marnus Labuschagne missed out on a maiden Test hundred as he top-scored with 80 in Australia's second-innings 246. It was his third successive fifty since becoming world cricket's inaugural concussion substitute in place of star batsman Steve Smith during the drawn second Test at Lord's.

Australia resumed on 171-6 with Labuschagne 53 not out after making 74 — seven more than England managed between them — in the first innings.



LEEDS: England's Jason Roy (L) looks back at his stumps as he gets bowled out by Australia's Pat Cummins (R) on the third day of the third Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia at Headingley in Leeds, northern England, yesterday. — AFP

Labuschagne drove Stuart Broad for a textbook four through extra cover to go to 60 only to be dropped next ball when diving wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow floored a one-handed chance heading towards Root at first slip — the third time Labuschagne was reprieved in his innings. Labuschagne had moved on to 70 when, as happened with his second ball at Lord's, he was hit on the helmet grille by a Jofra Archer bouncer.

But after being examined by the Australia team doc-

tor, Labuschagne uppercut an 88 mph (141 kph) Archer bouncer for four. Labuschagne was 74 not out when Cummins's dismissal left Australia 226-8. But rather than being denied a century in his seventh Test by a lack of partners, the South Africa-born batsman ran himself out. Labuschagne ignored the old rule of 'never run on a mis-field' when Denly fumbled at third man and then failed to beat a throw to Bairstow as his valuable 187-ball innings featuring eight fours came to an end. — AFP

Sharma grabs five wickets as India take control of first Test

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: A late burst by senior fast bowler Ishant Sharma earned him a five-wicket haul and reduced the West Indies to 189 for eight in reply to India's first innings total of 297 at the close of the second day of the first Test at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Friday.

Ten days away from his 31st birthday, the gangling Sharma ended the day with five for 42 off 12 overs, figures which were enhanced considerably in the final half-hour of a long day when he was single-handedly responsible for the home side losing three wickets for five runs to tilt a fairly even contest very much in favour of the tourists.

He dismissed Shai Hope, Shimron Hetmyer and Kemar Roach in the space of

13 deliveries to change the complexion of the West Indies innings from the relative comfort of 174 for five.

Captain Jason Holder will therefore only have Miguel Cummins and last man Shannon Gabriel potentially for company on the third morning with India pressing for what could be a significant first innings advantage. Sharma and Mohammed Shami were the first to strike at the start of the West Indies innings after lunch, removing openers John Campbell and Kraigg Brathwaite after a deceptively bright start before Ravindra Jadeja added to what was already an excellent day for the all-rounder when he claimed the wicket of debutant Shamarrh Brooks.

Jadeja had played the key role in extend-



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: Ishant Sharma of India takes the catch to dismiss Shimron Hetmyer of West Indies during day 2 of the 1st Test between West Indies and India at Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium in North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda. ñ— AFP

ing India's first innings as they were eventually dismissed on the stroke of lunch, the left-hander playing the dominant role as India added another 94 runs from their overnight position of 203 for six.

IDEAL START

He was last out for 58, top-edging an attempted pull off Holder to give wicket-keeper Hope his fifth catch of the innings. Roach was the best of the West Indies bowlers with figures of four for 66 while fellow fast bowler Gabriel claimed three for 71. It was Roach who gave the West Indies an ideal start to the day when he removed Rishabh Pant for 24. However any hopes the hosts entertained of quickly polishing off the tourists' innings were frustrated by Sharma, who defied the West Indies for over an hour in contributing 19 to a 60-run eighth-wicket partnership with Jadeja.

Sharma's admirable defiance was eventually ended though by a slower delivery from Gabriel and Shami lasted just one delivery, being caught and bowled by Chase. Jadeja was still able to get to the half-century mark though, his 11th in Test cricket. His three-hour effort spanned 112 deliveries and was highlighted by six fours and one six. Campbell stroked a succession of boundaries at the start of the West Indies reply only to be yorked in the first over from first-change bowler Shami.

Brathwaite's typically phlegmatic occupation of the crease ended when Sharma held on to a catch off his own bowling and Brooks, taking on the challenge of batting at number three in his first Test innings, edged an attempted cut at Jadeja for Ajinkya Rahane to take the comfortable catch on the rebound off wicketkeeper Pant. — AFP

Labuschagne joins elite Test batting club

LEEDS: Australia's Marnus Labuschagne joined an exclusive club while making 80 against England in the second innings of the third Ashes Test at Headingley yesterday.

In the process, Labuschagne became just the fifth batsman and fourth Australian — a list that includes head coach Justin Langer — in Test history to make two scores in a match higher than a total posted by an opposing team in one innings.

Labuschagne made 74 in the first innings at Headingley, the Leeds headquarters of Yorkshire. England were dismissed for just 67, their lowest Ashes total in 71 years. The only batsman from outside Australia to achieve the feat is outstanding West Indies opener Gordon Greenidge, who hit two hundreds in a 1976 Test at Old Trafford, Manchester, where England collapsed to 71 all out in their first innings.

Two scores in a Test match higher than an opponent's total (player, scores, team, opponents, total, venue, year):

Don Bradman	132/127 no	AUS v IND (125) Melbourne 1948
Gordon Greenidge	134/101	WIS v ENG (71) Manchester 1976
Matthew Hayden	197/103	AUS v ENG (79) Brisbane 2002
Justin Langer	191/97	AUS v PAK (72) Perth 2004
Marnus Labuschagne	74/80	AUS v ENG (67) Leeds 2019

no = not out. — AFP

Latham ton drives New Zealand's reply against Sri Lanka

COLOMBO: A sparkling century by Tom Latham powered New Zealand's first innings reply after Sri Lanka posted 244 on day three of the rain-hit second Test in Colombo yesterday. Latham, on 111, put together an unbeaten 70-run stand with B.J. Watling, on 25, to thwart the Sri Lankan bowling attack that had made early inroads into the Kiwi batting.

The tourists were 196 for four at stumps, still trailing Sri Lanka by 48 runs. Earlier Dhananjaya de Silva made 109 to lift Sri Lanka after they resumed the day on 144 for six following their decision to bat first.

But Latham made the day his own as he

registered his 10th Test hundred — fourth against Sri Lanka — to hold the New Zealand innings after they lost key wickets including skipper Kane Williamson for 20.

Latham combined the right dose of caution and aggression as he hit 10 boundaries in his 184-ball stay at the wicket so far. "Tom is getting better and better every season. He had a great summer back home," New Zealand paceman Tim Southee, who claimed four wickets in the Sri Lankan innings, told reporters.

"Great to see him kick on and continue that form overseas especially to come here and play the way he has played on conditions that are tough." Off-spinner Dilruwan Perera opened the bowling for Sri Lanka and claimed two wickets, dismissing opener Jeet Raval, for nought, and Henry Nicholls, for 15.

Paceman Suranga Lakmal sent Williamson trudging back to the pavilion after the batsman edged an away-going delivery to be caught at second slip. Latham and Ross Taylor, who made 23, tried to steady the innings by putting together 50 runs before

left-arm spinner Lasith Embuldeniya broke the partnership.

Embuldeniya drew Taylor out of his crease only for the batsman to edge the ball to slip. Sri Lanka's wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella had to leave the field after damaging the little finger of his left hand while attempting a catch off a Kumara delivery.

In the morning session, De Silva moved from his overnight 32 to complete his fifth Test century. Southee returned figures of 4-63 while pace partner Trent Boult got three wickets. De Silva, who was dropped on nine by paceman Boult off his own bowling on day two, put on crucial partnerships including a 43-run stand for the eighth wicket with Suranga Lakmal. The middle-order batsman, who hit 16 fours and two sixes in his 148-ball stay, reached his century with a boundary to third man off Southee as he raised his bat to the applauding dressing room. "We were in a bit of a tough situation and the idea was to try and get to 230. Great support from Dilruwan and the lower-order guys to help us to get where we are," said de Silva. — AFP



COLOMBO: New Zealand's cricketer Tom Latham (R) raises his bat and helmet in celebration after scoring a century (100 runs) as his teammate B.J. Watling (L) looks on during the third day of the final cricket Test match between Sri Lanka and New Zealand at P. Sara Oval cricket stadium in Colombo yesterday. — AFP

Serena chases record 24th Slam as Osaka, Halep eye US Open

Halep enters with confidence after beating Williams at Wimbledon

NEW YORK: Serena Williams has the US Open spotlight as she chases tennis history, but a host of Grand Slam winners and high-ranked rivals are also taking aim at the title. The 37-year-old American will be the focus of attention when the Flushing Meadows fortnight begins Monday with her first-round night match against Russian Maria Sharapova the most anticipated of the women's openers.

"Of course I'm going to watch it," said top-seeded defending champion Naomi Osaka, who beat Williams in last year's US Open final. "I think everyone in New York is going to watch it. 'I'm not that surprised that that happened, because at every Grand Slam there's always some sort of drama. Like a first round. Like, Oh my God. So this match just happens to be that for this tournament."

Williams will try to capture her 24th Grand Slam singles title to match the all-time record set by Margaret Court. Eighth-seeded Williams, who could meet second-seeded French Open champion Ashleigh Barty of Australia in the quarter-finals, has not won a Slam since the 2017 Australian Open when she was pregnant, losing the US Open final to Osaka last year amid controversy and the past two Wimbledon finals — including last month to Romania's Simona Halep.

Barty, Osaka, Halep and Czech third seed

Karolina Pliskova, seeking her first Slam title, are among the foes trying to deny Williams yet again in a quest she insists doesn't dominate her thoughts.

"I think it's definitely meaningful, but at this point in my career, I just try to think of different things and even bigger goals — so it's just like 24 is just a thing," Williams said earlier this month.

"There are so much more important things in my life. And obviously tennis is super important to me... but yeah there are always other things in life, I feel, that are really big on my plate too." Williams has not played since retiring from the WTA Toronto final with back spasms, handing Canada's Bianca Andreescu the title.

"Definitely if she manages physically, then I think she can do really well here," Andreescu said. "She'll do great, as she always does," added 2017 US Open winner Sloane Stephens.

OSAKA 'VERY CONFIDENT'

Osaka won last year's final after Williams was given a game penalty by umpire Carlos Ramos, who US Open officials have decided will not work on any match with Serena or Venus Williams at this year's US Open.

This time, Osaka has had a better run-up to the Open despite a first-round Wimbledon crash out. "Last year I lost

three matches in a row before I came here, so I just wanted to get one match. Then it just kept building on from that," she said.

"This year I went to two quarter-finals back to back and I feel very confident about how I am right now." While it's Osaka's first time defending a Slam, she had her first taste of defending a title this year at Indian Wells.

"Going to Indian Wells and learning how defending champion pressure feels, I think it definitely helped me out going into this tournament," Osaka said. "Because I just feel more loose and comfortable here.

"I'm not sure if it's because the last couple of months have been kind of turbulent but definitely I feel really comfortable and I know that, despite everything, I play well here every year. So I'm not too worried about that."

And she's much better after pulling out in Cincinnati with a left knee injury. "It's getting better. I've been playing more, longer every day," she said. "Luckily I'm a fast healer so I think it's looking good."

HALEP'S CONFIDENCE HIGH

Halep, who has crashed out of the US Open in the first round the past two years, enters with confidence after beating Williams at Wimbledon. "It cannot be worse than the last two years, to lose in the first



NEW YORK: Simona Halep of Romania fields questions during a press conference at media day prior to the US Open at USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York City. — AFP

round," Halep said. "I'm really good. I'm feeling healthy. I'm feeling fresh.

"The pressure of doing something special, it's off. Now what comes, comes as a bonus. I'm still working, I'm still motivated to win titles. I've started to feel more and more that I'm capable to do that so my

confidence is very high."

Barty says "nothing has really changed for me" since her title at Roland Garros. "I just come here to play and do the best that I can," Barty said. "I'm focused on my first round on Monday and that's all I'm worried about for the moment." — AFP

Nishikori ponders mixed doubles with Osaka at Tokyo Olympics

NEW YORK: A Japanese dream duo of Naomi Osaka and Kei Nishikori could come together for mixed doubles at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. World number one Osaka, the reigning US and Australian Open champion, and Nishikori, the 2014 US Open runner-up ranked seventh in the world, could be a formidable combination in the fight for gold next year.

But Nishikori, who addressed the idea Friday as he prepared for the start of the US Open, worried that adding the event to singles and men's doubles might be too much in the Tokyo summer heat.

"I will play men's doubles, for sure. With that condition — very hot, very humid — playing singles and two doubles, I don't know if I can," Nishikori said. "I haven't (had to) think too much yet honestly. I don't know. I will talk to Naomi later."

Nishikori, 29, said it was understandable that 21-year-old Osaka has said this has been a tough year for her. She followed her US Open triumph with an Australian Open win, attained number one then lost and regained — enduring early exits at the French Open and Wimbledon along the way.

"I'm sure it's going to be OK. I think time will help her to get back to normal,"

Nishikori said. "I think it's normal to have that feeling. She suddenly gets number one, winning two Grand Slams, be number one like straightaway. She's still young.

"I'm sure she will think a lot of things — some things she doesn't have to think. But if she can try hard practicing and play every match hard, I think she's going to be OK." Osaka said a recent break from tennis helped revive her outlook on the game and her place in it.

"It has definitely changed for me," Osaka said. "I took a break sort of and relaxed my mind and realized that you have to have fun doing what you love. "For me, I love tennis. Sometimes I feel like I don't, but I wake up every morning and if I don't play, I feel like I've done nothing during the day.

"I just go out now every day trying to learn something new, trying to just do the best that I can." Osaka resisted the notion her life is a dream made real, even with two Grand Slams and a top ranking before her 22nd birthday.

"I'm really blessed to be in this position, and then there are bad things that come with that," Osaka said. "I would never say anything negative about what's going on in my life right now. "For me, when you say is it a dream, it's like some-



NEW YORK: Naomi Osaka of Japan fields questions during a press conference at media day prior to the US Open at USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York City. — AFP

thing fluffy, like you're on the beach somewhere sipping a pina colada. I'm right here right now."

Nishikori pondered his own growth and fan base in Japan, wondering if he could have produced the same success under the attention and pressure of living in Japan. "I have to say, if I lived in Japan, I think I was going to have a different life," he said. "There's too much attention. I feel like I'm a star there. But I think it's good thing that I live in States." Nishikori

says the US Open always brings excitement and nerve. He produced his best Grand Slam result here five years ago, losing the final to Marin Cilic, and reached the semi-finals in 2016 and 2018.

"I feel a lot of confidence from that memory, playing final first time in Grand Slam. But also I always think that I could play a little better in a final. I lost straight sets. I didn't do well. I hope I can come back to that stage again. I hope I can play differently." — AFP

PSG coach coy over Neymar

PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain coach Thomas Tuchel said Neymar is "ready" for today's Ligue 1 game but whether he plays depends on developments in the Brazilian's bid to leave the club. The 27-year-old is angling for a return to Spain but reports this week suggest PSG have rejected an offer from Real Madrid of 100 million euros (\$111 million) plus players. Neymar arrived amid deafening fanfare from Barcelona two years ago as the world's most expensive player in a 222 million euros deal.

Barca's own attempt to bring him back to the Camp Nou on loan with an obligation to buy for 160 million euros at the end of the season has also been reportedly rejected in Paris. Tuchel toyed with reporters on Saturday when asked if his wantaway forward would figure for the first time since injuring his ankle at the end of May.

"He can play (against Toulouse) if the situation between him and the club is clear....today it's not clear, perhaps tomorrow it will be." Pressed, the German added that Neymar was "ready to play" but that the final decision rested with the club's sporting director.

"Perhaps you have to speak to Leonardo," he suggested. "Neymar's had a good week (training) with all the squad, a week with a lot of work and intensity." The transfer window closes in France, Spain and Italy on September 2, meaning time is fast running out for a deal to be done. —AFP

Mills shoots Australia to first-ever win over world champions USA

MELBOURNE: San Antonio Spurs' guard Patty Mills sank a game-high 30 points as Australia beat the United States for the first time ever yesterday, stunning the basketball world champions 98-94 in a huge upset.

Andrew Bogut added 16 points with nine rebounds and four assists while Joe Ingles scored 15 and seven assists in front of 52,079 fans in Melbourne — the biggest ever crowd to watch a game of hoops in Australia.

Boston's Kemba Walker led USA with 22 points off the bench, but it wasn't enough to prevent a rare defeat for Gregg Popovich's world number one team in a massive wake-up call ahead of the World Cup in China, which tips off on August 31.

"The support has been amazing. We're very proud to represent these fans and in the right way. We're doing it as a team, as a group," said veteran Mills, who was electric in the fourth quarter. "This is a building block for us, we are just taking it step-by-step. It's just nice to see our progress."

Popovich's squad lacks a host of top NBA stars with the likes of LeBron James, James Harden, Anthony Davis and Kawhi Leonard all opting out of the World Cup. But it still boasts plenty of young talent and they comfortably beat Australia 102-86 in a warm-up game on Thursday, on the back of a 90-81 victory over second-ranked Spain in California this month.

"We need to congratulate the Boomers, they were really great tonight," said Popovich, who referred to Mills, who he coaches at the Spurs, as "a pain in the arse". "We looked discombobulated at times, made some poor decisions," he added of his team, who gave up a 10-point third-quarter lead.

"Some of it is expected with a new group, trying to learn new systems so it's not surprising. But the Aussies gave us a great lesson in far as where you want to be and how you want to play in this type of



MELBOURNE: Patty Mills #5 of the Australian Boomers reacts to a play during the game against Team USA yesterday at Marvel Stadium in Melbourne, Australia. — AFP

competition. We're getting used to that and hopefully learning." Skipper Walker explained the loss by saying: "They wanted it more than us tonight. Lesson learned."

The USA tinkered with their line-up, with only two starters from the first game — Donovan Mitchell and Myles Turner. Los Angeles Lakers' Kyle Kuzma was ruled out with a sore ankle. In contrast, Australia stuck with the same experienced five, led by Mills, Bogut, Ingles, Aron Baynes and Jock Landale.

The five-time world champion Americans hit their first points within 20 seconds and with good offence and finishing hung on to the lead, ending the first quarter with a 26-23 advantage. But quick points at the restart from veteran Bogut drew Australia level and in a

seesawing second quarter they traded buckets before a late two-pointer from San Antonio Spurs' Derrick White gave the visitors a 49-48 first-half lead.

As they did in their match on Thursday, the USA lifted in the third quarter and raced 10 points clear. But back-to-back threes from Mills closed the gap and two late free throws from Chris Goulding remarkably sent the Boomers into the final quarter with a 78-76 lead.

With the record crowd roaring them on, Australia took control as the clock ticked down to close an epic victory in their final game before heading to China. Team USA have one more warm-up left, against Canada in Sydney tomorrow. — AFP

Live	Matches on TV (Local Timings)
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
Bournemouth FC v Manchester City	16:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Wolverhampton Wanderers FC v Burnley FC	18:00
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Tottenham Hotspur v Newcastle United FC	18:30
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
SPANISH LEAGUE	
Deportivo Alaves v RCD Espanyol	18:00
beIN SPORTS HD 7	
Real Mallorca v Real Sociedad	20:00
beIN SPORTS HD 9	
CD Leganes v Atletico de Madrid	20:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
FC Barcelona v Real Betis	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE	
Udinese Calcio v AC Milan	19:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
AS Roma v Genoa CFC	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
Hellas Verona FC v Bologna FC	21:45
Eleven Sports 4 HD	
Torino FC v US Sassuolo Calcio	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 7	
UC Sampdoria v SS Lazio	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Cagliari Calcio v Brescia	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 8	
Spal v Atalanta	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA	
RB Leipzig v Eintracht Frankfurt	16:30
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
Hertha Berlin v VfL Wolfsburg	19:00
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
FRENCH LEAGUE	
AS Monaco FC v Nimes Olympique	16:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
RC Strasbourg v Stade Rennais	18:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
Paris Saint-Germain v Toulouse FC	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	

25 Flaherty shuts down Rockies as Cardinals get offensive



26 Root and Denly keep Australia at bay on day three of third Test



27 Serena chases record 24th Slam as Osaka, Halep eye US Open



MANCHESTER: Manchester United's English midfielder Scott McTominay (C) is fouled in the penalty area during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Crystal Palace at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. Crystal Palace won the game 2-1. — AFP

More penalty woe for Man United

Lampard off the mark as Chelsea enjoy first win of the season

LONDON: Manchester United suffered more woe from the penalty spot as they went down to a shock home defeat to Crystal Palace on an eventful Premier League yesterday which saw Frank Lampard celebrate his first win as Chelsea manager.

On another dramatic day in England's top-flight, United's hopes of continuing a promising unbeaten start to the campaign were undone by Palace's 93rd-minute strike from Patrick van Aanholt in a 2-1 victory for Roy Hodgson's strugglers.

Daniel James thought he had earned United a point by cancelling out Jordan Ayew's first-half goal in the 89th minute but United were left to rue their second missed penalty of the week. After Paul Pogba had missed on Monday against Wolverhampton Wanderers, this time it was Marcus Rashford who spurned the opportunity, his shot hitting the inside of the post.

Once again, it seemed bound to call into question United's wisdom of having no designated penalty taker but just a pair who decide between them who should take the spot kicks. In the lunchtime match, Lampard was relieved to celebrate his first managerial victory for the Blues at the fourth attempt as Tammy Abraham's double inspired a thrilling 3-2 win at Norwich City for his youthful side.

Lampard, back at the club he graced for 13 years as a player, fielded the youngest Chelsea side in a league match for 25 years with an average age of 24. He was left delighted to see one of those young guns, 21-year-old Abraham, score his first goals for the club.

Abraham struck in just the third minute, and after Norwich had twice fought back from a goal down, he also proved the match-winner at Carrow Road with another superb strike in the 68th minute.

Another of Lampard's starlets, Mason Mount, also scored a fine goal while Teemu Pukki continued his dazzling start to the season for Norwich by netting a league-leading fifth goal.

The Finn's equaliser to make it 2-2 eventually proved in vain as Lampard got off the mark after a loss at Manchester United, defeat to Liverpool in the UEFA Super Cup and a draw with Leicester City.

"Our performances haven't given us what we deserved so far — but today it did," said Lampard. Abraham, who became the youngest player to score twice in a Premier League match for Chelsea for 21 years, added: "It is something I have always dreamed about doing, to score for my childhood club."

Manchester United and Norwich were among those sides who missed out on the chance to temporarily take top spot before the League's top two clubs, Liverpool

and Arsenal, put their perfect six-point records on the line in Saturday's late match.

Leicester City moved up to third place on five points after a first-half goal from Jamie Vardy and a thunderously struck winner from Harvey Barnes repelled the fightback from Sheffield United, for whom record signing Ollie McBurnie scored his first goal.

Brighton & Hove Albion's encouraging start under Graham Potter also hit the buffers after the 30th-minute sending off of Florin Andone allowed Southampton to take control and win 2-0 on the road with second-half goals from substitute Moussa Djenepo and Nathan Redmond.

Watford saw their painful, pointless start to the season continue with a 3-1 defeat at Vicarage Road to West Ham United, for whom new record French signing Sebastien Haller scored a second-half double. — AFP

Salah stars as Liverpool surge past Arsenal

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool soared clear at the top of the Premier League by sweeping aside Arsenal 3-1 at Anfield thanks to a Mohamed Salah double yesterday. Both sides started with the only 100 percent records left in England's top-flight, but Jurgen Klopp's men demonstrated the chasm that exists behind them and reigning champions Manchester City with a dominant display.

Joel Matip's towering header opened the floodgates just before half-time and Salah killed the game from the penalty spot before adding his second with a wonderful run and finish. Liverpool open up a three-point lead at the top with Arsenal still in second, but City and Tottenham can move to within two points when they are in action today.

Arsenal have now lost their last three visits to Anfield by a combined score of 12-2 and early season optimism they could pose a threat to Liverpool and City in the title race was snuffed out despite promising signs from club record signing Nicolas Pepe.

The Ivorian was handed his first start since a £72 million (\$87 million) move from Lille and showed why he was so coveted by posing a constant threat on the counter-attack. Liverpool were camped in the Gunners' half for the opening 10 minutes, but the visitors were

nearly gifted the lead when Adrian, deputising for the injured Alisson Becker in goal, got in Virgil van Dijk's way as he dealt with a hopeful long ball for Pepe.

The Spanish stopper was at fault for Southampton's consolation in a 2-1 Liverpool win last weekend but escaped this time as the ball fell to Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and his chipped effort drifted inches wide.

Pepe then became the first player to dribble past Van Dijk in the Premier League for nearly 18 months as he showed his blistering pace and sent a curling effort from outside the area just wide.

At the other end Liverpool's high press was often forcing mistakes as Arsenal tried to play their way out from the back and Dani Ceballos's careless pass across his own box was intercepted by Sadio Mane, whose shot was just too close to Bernd Leno.

Arsenal's big chance to try and end a miserable run without a win away to top six opposition now stretching back 23 games came when Pepe skillfully dribbled past Andy Robertson to burst clear on goal, but his shot was weak and easily saved by Adrian.

Instead, Liverpool cranked up the pressure before the break and got the breakthrough on 41 minutes when Trent Alexander-Arnold's corner was met powerfully by Matip's head.

Once in front, the European champions showed their class to roll through the gears in the second-half and hand Arsenal another Anfield beating. Questions will be asked of the imbalance in the Gunners' recruitment strategy as they spent big on Pepe for an already fearsome forward line including Aubameyang and Alexandre Lacazette, who started on the bench, but waited until deadline day to sign a much-needed cen-



ANFIELD: Arsenal's German goalkeeper Bernd Leno (L) dives to save a shot from Liverpool's Senegalese striker Sadio Mane (R) during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Arsenal at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. — AFP

tre-back in David Luiz.

The Brazilian showed why Chelsea were not desperate to keep hold on him as he hauled back Salah to concede a soft penalty, which the Egyptian emphatically converted. Nine minutes later, Arsenal's new centre-back was embarrassed once more as Salah raced onto Fabinho's pass, beyond Luiz who did not want to dive in

and see a second yellow card, before curling clinically into the far corner.

With still half an hour to play, Unai Emery's men could have folded but, to their credit, they stayed in the game and got their reward six minutes from time when substitute Lucas Torreira fired home at the second attempt from Aubameyang's cut-back. — AFP