



6 Mitsotakis becomes Greece's new PM on vow to end economic crisis



21 How conspiracy theories followed man to the Moon



24 US financier Epstein charged with sex trafficking minors



27 Brazil win Copa America despite Jesus dismissal



Performance of Kuwait bourse fourth best globally this year

Bader Al-Kharafi stresses role of private sector to achieve Amir's vision

KUWAIT: Kuwait's stock exchange (Boursa Kuwait) has emerged as the fourth best in the world in 2019 in terms of performance, while it has surpassed all others in the Gulf region since the start of this year, according to a local investment firm. Boursa Kuwait's performance was worth 14.8 percent in the first half of the year, while Gulf markets had risen by 2.3 percent based on leading index provider Standard and Poor's rankings, read an NBK Capital report.

HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Services Khaled Al-Roudhan, who presented members of the Board of Commissioners of Kuwait Capital Market Authority and the Board of Directors of Kuwait Stock Exchange and Kuwait Clearing Company on the occasion of Kuwait being promoted as an emerging market by Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI). HH the Amir praised efforts exerted by all concerned parties, which resulted in this achievement, which would enhance confidence in the national economy status locally and internationally.

Private sector representative and head of Boursa Kuwait's executive committee Bader Al-Kharafi stressed HH the Amir's vision on empowering the private sector is fully compatible with recent eco-



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives yesterday at Bayan Palace Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Services Khaled Al-Roudhan, members of the Board of Commissioners of Kuwait Capital Market Authority and the Board of Directors of Kuwait Stock Exchange and Kuwait Clearing Company. — KUNA

omic developments achieved through the bourse's privatization. Speaking after being received by HH the Amir, Kharafi stressed that meeting the Amir gave a great deal of moral support to the entire del-

egation, adding HH the Amir is keen on giving the private sector ample chances to play its role in developing the national economy and leading it towards leadership. In addition, following a meeting

with HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Kharafi demanded full support to enlist government firms such as oil and petrochemical companies in the bourse. — Agencies

Tremors in Kuwait as quake hits Iran

KUWAIT/TEHRAN: A 5.7-magnitude earthquake struck southwest Iran near the border with Iraq yesterday, causing one death due to a heart attack and dozens of injuries, the country's relief and rescue organization said. The quake, whose epicenter was in the Masjed Soleiman area of Khuzestan province, hit at 11:30 am (0700 GMT) at a depth of 17 km, the national seismological center reported. The region was rattled by seven aftershocks, the strongest of which measured 4.7 magnitude, it said.

Kuwait yesterday felt the effects of the earthquake, leading to a tremor that did not cause any reported damages. The National Seismic Network, a Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) affiliate, confirmed that a 5.9-magnitude earthquake hit western Iran, causing the tremor felt in Kuwait. The epicenter of the earthquake in Iran was 10 km in depth and occurred 256 km from Kuwait City, it added. The network indicated that several aftershocks were also registered at 4.6 and 5.2 magnitude - however, the general populace did not feel them.

Continued on Page 24

Iran warns to up enrichment, slams seizure of tanker

GENEVA/DUBAI: Iran threatened yesterday to restart deactivated centrifuges and ramp up enrichment of uranium to 20 percent purity as its next potential big moves away from a 2015 nuclear agreement that Washington abandoned last year. The threats, made by Tehran's nuclear agency spokesman, would go far beyond the small steps Iran has taken in the past week to nudge stocks of fissile material just beyond limits in the pact. That could raise serious questions about whether the agreement, intended to block Iran from making a nuclear weapon, is still viable.

The two threats would reverse major achievements of the agreement, although Iran omitted important details about how far it might go to returning to the status quo before the pact, when Western experts believed it could build a bomb within months. In a separate standoff, Iran's foreign minister accused Britain of "piracy" for seizing an Iranian oil tanker last week. Britain says the ship was bound for Syria in violation of European Union sanctions.

Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman for Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, confirmed that Tehran had enriched uranium beyond the deal's limit of 3.67 percent purity, passing 4.5 percent.

Continued on Page 24

MP urges probe into suicide by bedoon denied ID

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Head of the National Assembly's human rights committee MP Adel Al-Damkhi called the suicide of a young stateless or bedoon man as alarming and dangerous and called for a probe to prevent this from happening again. Twenty-year-old Ayed Hamad Medath was found hanging in his room on Sunday after he was reportedly fired from his

UAE cuts troops in Yemen; drawdown agreed with Saudis

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates said yesterday it was redeploying and reducing troops across war-torn Yemen and moving from a "military-first" strategy to a "peace-first" plan. The UAE is a key partner in a Saudi-led military coalition which intervened in Yemen in 2015 to back the internationally recognized government of President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi against Iran-aligned Houthi rebels. "We do have troop levels that are down for reasons that are strategic in (the Red Sea city of) Hodeida and reasons that are tactical" in other parts of the country, a senior UAE official, who requested anonymity, told reporters. "It is very much to do with moving from what I would call a military-first strategy to a peace-first strategy, and this is I think what we are doing."

29 killed as bus plunges off India's 'highway to hell'

AGRA, India: At least 29 people were killed and 18 others injured when a bus careered off a notorious Indian highway after the driver apparently fell asleep at the wheel, officials said yesterday. The bus was carrying more than 50 people along the Yamuna expressway - known as the "highway to hell" because of the number of fatal accidents - when it crashed through a concrete barrier and plunged more than 12 m into a drainage canal. "It appears that the driver was drowsy," said Agra district magistrate N G Ravi Kumar, who provided the number of dead and injured.

The bus was travelling from Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh to Delhi when the accident happened just before dawn, some 20 km near Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. More than 150,000 people a year are killed on

job because the government agency responsible for bedoons refused to renew his special security ID. He was buried yesterday.

His death stirred strong reactions on social media from rights activists and Kuwaiti citizens, who demanded a quick solution for the plight of over 120,000 bedoons living in Kuwait. Damkhi expressed sorrow over the incident, describing the suicide as a "tragedy" and called for probing the issue. The lawmaker said the Assembly's human rights panel discussed the issue of suicide or attempted suicide incidents among bedoons and the panel found it was rising, adding that "we found pain, sufferings and misery" among bedoons in every aspect of life. He added the official body overseeing bedoons had attributed this to reasons other than their plight.

Damkhi recalled that the committee approved a draft law for civil rights for bedoons, but the committee came under fire because of the bill, which was deliberately mixed up with nat-

uralization, adding the draft law only deals with basic human rights. "Even if we accept that the forefathers of the bedoons were wrong, how should we deal with the current generation who should be enjoying humanitarian and civil rights?" Damkhi asked. He strongly criticized the central committee for bedoons for fighting bedoons in every aspect of their lives and depriving them from leading a decent life.

Meanwhile, the court of appeals yesterday upheld a five-year jail term against prominent Shiite cleric Hussein Al-Maatouq and another person for giving shelter illegally to members of a pro-Hezbollah cell which was busted by police. While police were searching for the suspects, who were eventually convicted and sentenced to various jail terms, the defendant along with others provided them with shelter. The verdict is not final as the suspect can appeal to the court of cassation, the highest court in the country.

News in brief

Ethiopia to send 50K workers to UAE

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopia will send 50,000 people to work in the UAE, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced yesterday. "Ethiopia is planning short-term measures to reduce unemployment in Ethiopia and to cope with the increasing job demands of our people," Abiy told parliament in the capital Addis Ababa. He said that under the deal, 50,000 workers would be sent to UAE in the 2019/2020 fiscal year, and discussions are being held to send 200,000 over the next three years. — AFP

Ex-minister quits Turkey ruling party

ANKARA: Turkey's former economy minister Ali Babacan resigned from the ruling party yesterday, local media reported, in a blow to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Babacan, a founding member of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), cited "deep differences" over policy and said Turkey was in need of a "new vision", in a statement criticizing the government's direction. There has been fevered speculation that Babacan will set up his own political party. Babacan appeared to confirm the rumors, insisting a "new effort" was "inevitable" for Turkey's future. — AFP

Morocco seizes 27 tons of cannabis

RABAT: Moroccan police seized a "record" 27.3 tons of cannabis resin hidden in trucks bound for Europe, the country's security service said yesterday. The drugs were discovered Sunday evening at the vast Tanger Med port in three vehicles "believed to be transporting industrial equipment", the General Directorate for National Security said in a statement. The "record" quantity of resin was found "divided among 16 containers in the trailers of the three trucks", the statement added. The drivers and their three assistants, all Moroccan, were arrested and taken into police custody. — AFP



KHOKHA, Yemen: In this file photo taken on Jan 20, 2019, Emirati fighters from the Saudi-backed coalition forces board a helicopter at a military base. — AFP

The official however reiterated the UAE's commitment to the Yemeni government and the Saudi-led coalition, saying discussions on redeployment have been ongoing for more than a year. "This is not really a last-minute decision. This is part of the process and naturally a process within the coalition

Continued on Page 24



AGRA, India: Onlookers and Indian police retrieve dead bodies from the crumpled remains of a bus that crashed on the Delhi-Agra expressway yesterday. — AFP

India's roads, which are notorious for design flaws and speeding drivers. The 165-km Yamuna expressway was India's longest and most modern six-lane highway when it opened in 2012, but about 900 people have been killed on the road since, according to authorities. Indian media have dubbed it the "highway to hell".

Continued on Page 24

Local

Amir meets new Competition Protection Authority, Commerce Ministry officials

Commerce and Industry Ministry presents officials to Prime Minister



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Minister of State for Services' Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, and the newly appointed officials. —Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is gifted a book on Kuwaiti folklore from Dr Yaqoub Al-Ghunaim.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Minister of State for Services' Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, and the newly appointed officials.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Minister of State for Services' Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan. The minister presented His Highness with the newly appointed Deputy Chairman of the

Competition Protection Authority Assad Ibrahim Al-Anbaie, as well as board member Hessa Al-Roumi. Also presented to His Highness the Amir were Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Abdullah Al-Afasi, Assistant Undersecretary for Corporations Dr Saleh Al-Aqli

and Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Support and Planning Nasser Al-Muttawa on the occasion of their new posts. Minister Roudhan also presented the newly appointed officials to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His

Highness the Amir received Dr Yaqoub Al-Ghunaim who presented His Highness the Amir with a copy of his book on Kuwaiti folklore. The receptions were attended by Acting Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. —KUNA



JEDDAH: Representative of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Acting Amiri Diwan Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah extends condolences for the passing away of Princess Al-Jawhara bint Abdulaziz bin Musa'ed Al-Saud. —Amiri Diwan photos



Kuwait funds Islamic projects in Montenegro

VIENNA: Kuwait's Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs provided a donation worth KD 70,000 (\$230,000) for the expansion of Islamic projects in Montenegro. Kuwaiti Ambassador to Montenegro Yousif Abdulsamad met with Montenegrin Islamic official and delivered the donation to build an Islamic education center in capital of Podgorica, said Kuwait's Embassy in Serbia in a statement yesterday. Ambassador Abdulsamad also handed over to a Montenegrin official a donation from the Kuwait-based Islamic Heritage Revival Society worth KD 36,700 (\$120,000) to build a mosque in a city north of Montenegro, statement added. Kuwait's humanitarian policy and framework is to support Arab and foreign countries in developmental projects related to culture, education and infrastructure, it noted. Furthermore, Montenegrin official praised Kuwait's contributions and its prominent role in charitable and humanitarian work to help Muslims in Montenegro. —KUNA

Amir's representative condoles Saudi princes over mother's demise

JEDDAH: Representative of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Acting Amiri Diwan Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, extended condolences for Prince Saudi bin Nayef and Prince Mohammad bin Nayef on Sunday for passing away of their mother, Princess Al-Jawhara bint Abdulaziz bin Musa'ed Al-Saud. —KUNA



Zain sponsors KON program in collaboration with LOYAC

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced its sponsorship of KON Social Entrepreneurship Program in collaboration with Babson College in Boston, as part of Zain's Strategic Partnership with LOYAC, a non-profit organization that aims at developing the youth's talents and skills.

Zain's sponsorship of the KON Social Entrepreneurship Program comes as part of its strategic partnership with LOYAC, which continues this year for over 15 consecutive years. The partnership comes in line with the company's corporate sustainability and social responsibility strategy, which centers around the development of the education and youth sectors, especially in regards to nurturing and developing entrepre-

neurial skills within the youth.

KON, one of LOYAC's latest youth development programs, trains youth (12-16 years) in the area of social entrepreneurship throughout 6 weeks at the American University in Kuwait. The program is brought to Kuwait in collaboration with Babson College in Boston, considered the most prestigious entrepreneurship college in the United States and the number one institution in the world for entrepreneurship education.

This year, Zain's support to LOYAC will extend to a great number of educational initiatives and programs that cater to developing the youth's skills and talents, including KON Social Entrepreneurship Program, the LOYAC AC Milan Soccer School, and more.

Through its strategic partnership with LOYAC, Zain also trains hundreds of students as part of the LOYAC Summer Internship Program. The students take part in completing tasks, learning new skills, and go through professional training in the real business world at various departments and divisions within the company. Zain also offers the students financial rewards in recognition of their efforts and as an encouragement to their dedication.

Zain is proud to be one of the strategic partners of LOYAC since its inception, especially that it is considered one of the most prominent national programs that cater to the youth and offers them a healthy and empowering environment to develop their skills and tal-

ents in an educational, fun, and social atmosphere.

Zain believes in the development of the communities in which it operates, and it is a very important part of the company's overall success. The company considers education as a core element in the community development process, and it will continue to support it to contribute to the further progress of the country's youth.

Since its inception in 2002, LOYAC has grown to be the first choice of the youth in Kuwait when it comes to innovative and high quality educational programs. LOYAC runs several programs for the youth to develop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and to help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.



KUWAIT: KON students with Zain and LOYAC officials during the event.

Local

MSCI promotion important step in achieving Amir's vision: Premier

Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak meets Capital Market Authority, Boursa Kuwait officials



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Minister Khaled Al-Roudhan, as well as members of the Board of Commissioners of Kuwait Capital Market Authority, Board of Directors of Kuwait Stock Exchange and Kuwait Clearing Company. — KUNA

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Minister of State for Services' Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, who presented members of the Board of Commissioners of Kuwait Capital Market Authority, Board of Directors of Kuwait Stock

Exchange and Kuwait Clearing Company, on the occasion of Kuwait being promoted as an emerging market by Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI). His Highness the Prime Minister hailed this achievement as an important step in achieving the vision of His Highness the Amir to transform Kuwait into a global financial and commercial center in the region. He also

praised efforts exerted by all concerned parties, which resulted in this achievement, which would enhance confidence in the national economy status locally and internationally. His Highness emphasized the government's constant efforts to regulate securities market activity in a manner that is fair, transparent and in line with international standards. — KUNA

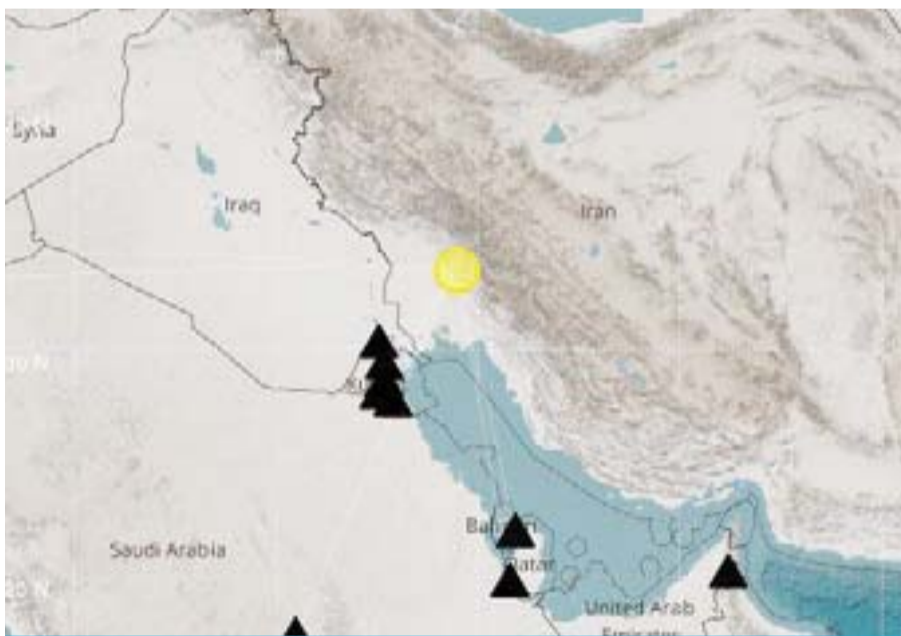
Major tremors felt in Kuwait over the last decade

KUWAIT: Over the last 10 years, Kuwait has been affected by the hundreds tremors following earthquakes that struck neighboring countries, including eight 5-magnitude quakes. The 5.9-magnitude earthquake that hit western Iran yesterday is the most recent tremor that has been felt by people in Kuwait. Kuwait was last hit by a tremor on January 6, 2019, due to a quake measuring 5.9 degrees on the Richter scale that struck the Iranian-Iraqi border.

On November 28, 2018, Kuwait was affected by two aftershocks measuring

5.1 and 4.6 degrees on the Richter scale respectively, following a 6.3-magnitude quake that hit northeast of Baghdad. On April 19, 2018, Kuwaiti people, especially in coastal areas, felt a 5-9-magnitude quake that struck Iran's southern Bushehr Province. On November 12, 2017, a strong quake measuring 7.5 degrees on the Iraqi-Iranian border was felt by Kuwaiti people. Its magnitude was between four and five degrees.

The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) monitored a 5-magnitude tremor on August 18, 2014, having been felt by some people. The epicenter was 590 kilometers north of Kuwait. The National Network for Seismic Monitoring monitored a strong tremor measuring 7.8 degrees on the Richter scale on April 16, 2013. It struck south-east of Iraq near the Iranian-Pakistani border, 605 kilometers northeast of the Omani capital, Muscat. Citizens and residents in Kuwait also felt a 4.1-5.4-magnitude tremor on April 9, 2013, following a 6.3-magnitude quake that struck south Iran. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A map released by Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research showing the epicenter of yesterday's earthquake. — KUNA

Kuwait regrets boycott of Israeli violations' discussion

GENEVA: Kuwait yesterday expressed regret over several countries that decided to boycott the UN's Human Rights Council General Debate over Israeli violations in the occupied Arab lands. This came in a statement by Kuwait's permanent delegate to the UN Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim, saying that this boycott minimizes the importance of this case in the Security Council's agenda, and it can also be seen as support for Israel's hostile policy in violating International Law for Human Rights. Ghunaim noted that Israel is continuing to force Palestinians out of their homeland, point-



Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim

ing out that Kuwait condemns such actions, especially in attempting to deform the Palestinian identity, religion and culture in forcing them out of Jerusalem. The ambassador stressed Kuwait's keenness on respecting legal rights of the Palestinian people, as well as voicing Kuwait's concerns over recent provocative Israeli actions in Palestinian lands after an Israeli government official have broken into Al-Aqsa Mosque. — KUNA



Kuwait Times

Subscribe or renew your subscription & get K.D 50

1 Coupon FREE



P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait | Tel: 24833199 - 24833358 - 24835616/7
Fax: 24835620 - 24835621 | E: info@kuwaittimes.net

Local



KUWAIT: Aerial view of Kuwait City. — Photo by Jassem Al-Motar (KUNA)

Seven in 10 Kuwait professionals want to start their own business, survey finds

Almost three in five entrepreneurs in Kuwait plan to hire within the year: Bayt.com

KUWAIT: Nearly seven in 10 professionals in Kuwait prefer to be self-employed, a recent survey has found. Moreover, 70 percent are currently thinking of starting a business, 15 percent have tried to start their own business in the past, while 8 percent never thought of starting their own business, according to the 'Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa 2019' survey, conducted by Bayt.com, the Middle East's leading career site, and market research agency YouGov.



Omar Tahboub

The survey found that, if given the choice, nearly two-thirds (67 percent) of Kuwait residents aspire to be self-employed/have their own business. When asked about the reasons for this preference, 'personal fulfillment' (44 percent) and 'freedom to choose work-life balance' (48 percent) emerged as the top reasons. 'Being my own boss', 'ability to give back to the community' and 'higher monetary gains' were also cited reasons.

Those who have already started their business seem to have similar reasoning. When asked about the reasons

and challenges of entrepreneurship for the benefit of the sector, we also work closely with startups and new businesses to ensure their talent needs are secured easily and cost-effectively during these critical early stages."

Of those who prefer to seek employment in a company, 61 percent said they prefer employment in order to have a



Finances, profit's uncertainty key challenges

regular income while 41 percent prefer it to learn new skills and 33 percent state the main reason for their preference is lack of finances to start own business.

"Understanding the views of entrepreneurs in the MENA is essential to maximizing impact and drive growth and innovation in the economy," said Omar Tahboub, General Manager, Bayt.com. "Not only does Bayt.com conduct surveys annually and share our learning about the opportuni-

ties and challenges of entrepreneurship for the benefit of the sector, we also work closely with startups and new businesses to ensure their talent needs are secured easily and cost-effectively during these critical early stages."

Kuwait entrepreneurial ecosystem

Entrepreneurship continues to be a growing trend in MENA. Despite the usual challenges of setting up a business, the Bayt.com report indicates that entrepreneurship has become more popular than ever before. Many entrepreneurs are looking to grow their startups and establish business. Over a third of respondents have personal ambitions to grow their business further in their country of residence (35 percent), followed by 23 percent who aim to become an important international player. In fact, with growth in mind, almost three in five respondents (56 percent) are planning to hire for their business in Kuwait within the next year. The top concern of respondents while setting up their own business, would be procuring finances to start (59 percent), the uncertainty of profit/income (48 percent). Likewise, among those who tried to start a business in the past, financial-related obstacles were the main challenge they faced. The most appealing industries for entrepreneurship in Kuwait are considered to be Consumer Goods/FMCG (12 percent) followed by Commerce/ Trade/ Retail (10 percent) and Hospitality/ Recreation/ Entertainment (9 percent).

Mentoring and support

The survey shows even greater benefits of entrepreneurship for societies and the economy. The perceived image of entrepreneurs in the region is very positive - Kuwait respondents perceive entrepreneurs to be opportunity-driven (83 percent) and they help in creating new jobs (83 percent).

The best pieces of advice offered to budding entrepreneurs by respondents in Kuwait is to not be afraid of failure and having a great business plan. Over a quarter of respondents believe that innovation is the 'key to success' as an entrepreneur (28 percent), followed by 'being close to clients or customers' (22 percent).

Kerry McLaren at YouGov said: "Entrepreneurs are the primary source of new job creation. The ideas and innovations born in small companies and startups disrupt industries and create a stronger economy, offering greater opportunities for upward mobility. Therefore, it became imperative for us to explore upcoming entrepreneurs and what challenges they face in a new survey with Bayt.com." Data for the Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa 2019 was collected online from May 16 to 27, 2019. Results are based on a sample of 3,331 respondents from the following countries: UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, and others.

Kuwaiti cartoonists attend Cairo event

CAIRO: Cairo's historical Prince Taz Palace hosted 345 cartoonists from 71 nations, including Kuwait as guest of honor, for the Sixth International Cartoon Gathering on Sunday. Kuwait's attendance was welcomed as an opportunity to showcase its talent on the global stage, Kuwait Cartoon Society's head Mohammad Thallab told attendees in an opening speech. Caricaturists from the country have brought along works focused on the event's theme, culture, along with some of their most notable drawings. Taking part are pioneers on the Kuwaiti cartoonist scene, like Abdulredha Kamal, Jaafar Rejab, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi and Musallam Al-Zamel. Kuwaiti cartoonists, in the last 50 years, have had a profound effect on the development of the art form throughout the Gulf and Arab regions, said Thallab. Since its inception some two years ago, the society has also done its part to encourage the growth of the movement in the country through hosting exhibitions and workshops. The Cairo-held event, as a feature, is showcasing an exhibition of cartoon illustrations left behind by the late Egyptian Nobel laureate, writer Najib Mahfoudh. — KUNA



A work by Kuwaiti cartoonist Mohammad Thallab.



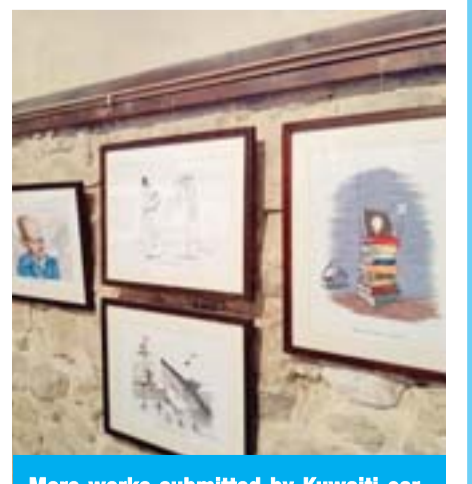
CAIRO: Kuwaiti cartoonists attending the Sixth International Cartoon Gathering in Cairo, Egypt. — KUNA photos



Works submitted by Kuwaiti cartoonists.



A group photo of participants at the Sixth International Cartoon Gathering.



More works submitted by Kuwaiti cartoonists.

Local

Philippines delegation's visit delayed till end of July: Deputy Foreign Minister

Ministry operates 5,000 electricity smart meters around Kuwait

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said a planned visit of a delegation from the Philippines to discuss the final version of labor contracts had been postponed till the end of July due to other commitments of the Philippine delegation. Jarallah also stressed both sides' keenness on drafting the contracts in a way that protects the rights of both the employee and employer. Notably, the foreign ministry had earlier announced that the visit will be made by the beginning of July and that another delegation will simultaneously visit Kuwait to hold political talks.

Female employees

Official statistics declared by Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel on responding to a related parliamentary inquiry showed that the total number of female citizens aged 50-55 is 36,128, of whom 12,693 are employed, 13,189 are retired and 10,246 are housewives. Further, statistics showed that 50-55-year-old female citizens who do not get any social aid or fixed income are 6,927, while those who receive social aid are 2,279. Widows receiving their deceased husbands' pensions are 1,040.

KPC bonuses

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) paid bonuses to 57 expatriates and non-Kuwaiti employees working at its administrative building in the period of 2010-2018, said well-informed oil sources, noting that 90 employees had excellent performance reports in the same period. The sources added that the bonuses paid in the period from 2010 until 2016 were equal to two months' salaries, while excellent performers only received 13 percent of their monthly salary as bonus after changing the regulations of paying the bonus to expats working in the oil sector. KPC explained that it does not implement the 'excellent performance bonus' system and that it gives incentives and special bonuses for extra tasks not included in employees' job descriptions, provided an employee has at least a 'very good' in their performance assessment reports, does not receive a written notice during the same fiscal year and the total of their sick leaves does not exceed six months, adding a maximum of 60 percent of employees get this bonus.

Retirees' loans

The Public Institution for Social Security is currently considering reducing the value of the monthly installment of

retirees' loans to deduct only 10 percent instead of 24 percent of their pensions, well-informed sources said. The sources added that a related study is in its final stages and will be approved after amending the previous deduction stipulated in the new retirement law, which allows retirees to loans equal to seven times their monthly pensions to be paid back in 24 installments equal to 25 percent of the monthly pension. The sources explained that the new amendment will include extending the payment period and number of installments, adding that deduction will still have to be equally paid by heirs in case a retiree passes away.

Munich Technical University

Kuwait Municipality approved a request by the Ministry of Higher Education's private universities secretariat general to allocate a 150,000 sq m piece of land to build the Munich Technical University in the area between the Sixth Ring Road and Sulabiya residential area and to build a roundabout to serve the university's parking lots. The municipality sent a report to the Municipal Council with its conditions, including getting the necessary approvals from relevant ministries, providing a parking lot within the campus area,

providing a traffic study for the location, getting the traffic department's approval and conducting a full environmental study.

Smart meters

The Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) started operating smart electricity consumption meters on June 19 after initially installing 5,000 in various areas, said MEW's assistant undersecretary for consumer affairs Meshaan Al-Otaibi, adding that the ministry is currently working on the second phase by offering a tender to supply 300,000 devices to be followed by another to supply 800,000 devices. Otaibi said 300,000 smart meters will be installed in February, starting with residential houses in Mubarak Al-Kabeer and the investment sector in Salmiya and Hawally.

Otaibi added that smart meters will put an end to manual power consumption assessments, noting that consumption will be automatically assessed by MEW, which will notify consumers of their tariffs through SMS. Responding to a question whether the new power bills will be post-paid, Otaibi said the new meters provide this feature, but the timing of implementing it is up to MEW and that no decision has been made in this regard.

News in brief

Fake employment

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Manpower's national labor sector said 1,500 cases will be filed against Kuwaitis who faked their employment over the past few years and have been unlawfully receiving national labor support allowances, pending referring them to the public prosecution, sources said. The sources added that the national labor sector is currently working on a new mechanism to file complaints and cases to retrieve over KD 34 million unlawfully paid to around 5,700 citizens, noting that this measure is meant to cut the national labor support allowances and protect public funds. The sources explained that Cabinet-related resolutions to freeze the violating companies' assets and stiffen legal penalties to up to 10 years in prison will be activated as well. In addition, the sources explained that going to court will be the last resort to retrieve the unlawfully paid sums, as the suspects will be initially notified and given a grace period to pay those sums back. The sources also noted that the sector will work on collecting allowances paid to citizens who transferred to government jobs. — Al-Jarida

Non-oil exports

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti non-oil exports rose by 10.9 percent in June 2019 compared to the same period last year, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) said in a statement yesterday. The ministry's statement explained that the total value of exports made to Arab and foreign countries was KD 9.1 million in June 2019 compared to KD 8.2 million in June 2018. The statement added that the value of exports to non-GCC Arab states was KD 4.1 million, while those made to foreign countries were estimated at KD 4.9 million and those made to GCC states were estimated at KD 6 million in June 2019. — By Meshaal Al-Enezi
MoCI statistics also showed Iraq topped the list of export destinations followed by Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan, Yemen, Mauritania and Palestine. GCC-wise, Qatar came first, followed by UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain. As for exports to other countries, Belgium came first, followed by Turkey, Italy, Spain, France and Portugal.

Municipality crackdown on 'bachelors' housing

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality workers issued 47 citations for violations of housing 'bachelors' in private residential areas, and placed 320 eviction notice stickers on other properties during a crackdown that was launched last week to evict single expat men from government housing areas. Meanwhile, electricity was disconnected to 43 violating houses and 23 evictions were made during the first week of the 'Be Assured' campaign launched on July 1, Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations Department announced. The campaign will continue in various areas, the municipality added in a statement, explaining that 22 eviction notices were handed in the Capital governorate, 90 in Farwaniya governorate, 124 in Ahmadi governorate, 76 in Jahra governorate, six in Hawally governorate and two in Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorate.



AUK®

OMAR KHALIL
Class of 2019 -
Computer Science
Leader of the 1st
place team in the
NASA Space Apps
Challenge (Kuwait)

Learn
Think
Become

admissions@auk.edu.kw
Tel: 1802040 / (+965) 2224-8399,
Ext: 3148 | www.auk.edu.kw

@AUK_Kuwait @AUKtweets
The American University of Kuwait AUKVideos

The American University of Kuwait received its Institutional Accreditation from the Private Universities Council (PUC), Ministry of Higher Education in the State of Kuwait, and has a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation with Dartmouth College (Hanover, NH - USA).

عمليات الخفجي المشتركة
AL-KHAFJI JOINT OPERATIONS

الشركة الكويتية لتفط الخليج
KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY (K.S.C.)

ارامكو للعمليات الخليج
ARAMCO GULF OPERATIONS

TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

Aramco Gulf Operations Company Limited ("AGOC") and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (K.S.C.) ("KGOC"), (Al Khafji Joint Operations) invites intending bidders to participate for the **Tender No.: BT538PC18-Installation of Passenger Lift for Terminal and Merine Control Tower at Office Park Building**

Each intending bidder may purchase the tender documents upon payment of **Saudi Riyals Three Hundred (SR 300) or Kuwaiti Dinars Twenty Four (KD 24) only** which is non-refundable by visiting our Contracts Department at Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia, or KGOC's Kuwait Office located in Al-Ahmadi, Tender & Contracts Section. The bidder may visit our KJO website: www.kjo.com.sa and follows the path; E- Services 0 Tendering 0 Contractors 0 Ongoing Tenders to review part of tender documents, before purchasing.

The sale of Tender Documents will be effective from **July 10, 2019 until 12:00 Noon, July 30, 2019.**

Attending the Pre-Tender Meeting and Site Visit are Mandatory.

A Pre-Tender meeting shall be held for interested bidders at Auditorium Hall, Office Park Building, at Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Saudi Arabia, **at 11:00 AM local time on July 30, 2019.** A site visit shall be held soon after the pre-tender Meeting.

The bid proposal shall be delivered by hand-delivery or thru courier service to the Contracts Department in Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia on or before the closing date **14:00 Hours, Monday, September 2, 2019** of the time stipulated in the tender document.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT THE FOLLOWING NOS.

Tel No: +966(13)765 4483
E-Mail: ctdtenders@kjo.com.sa

Fax No: +966(13)765 5148
Website: www.kjo.com.sa



Britain hunts for leaker of cables calling Trump 'inept'

'Black box' reveals last moments of doomed Himalayan climbers



ATHENS: Newly-appointed Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, center, walks with his wife Mareva, right, to the Presidential palace in Athens. —AFP

Mitsotakis becomes Greece's new PM

New PM vows to end economic crisis, pledges to create jobs

ATHENS: Greece's new conservative prime minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis was sworn in yesterday after a sweeping election victory put him in charge of the EU's most indebted member with promises to end a decade of economic crisis. "The Greek people gave us a strong mandate to change Greece. We will honor it to the full," the 51-year-old Harvard graduate and former McKinsey consultant said after taking his oath of office in a televised ceremony, his wife and three children close by. "Hard work begins today. I am completely confident that we will prove equal to the challenge."

A new cabinet will be sworn in on Tuesday and meet on Wednesday, he said. Outgoing European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker and Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan were the first to congratulate Mitsotakis on Sunday. Yesterday, Russian president Vladimir Putin cabled in, and a spokesman for German chancellor Angela Merkel said Berlin looked forward to working with the new Greek leader. Merkel also thanked outgoing leftist PM Alexis Tsipras for his cooperation "with mutual confidence and trust during very demanding years," the German spokesman said.

The US-educated conservative faces a hefty chal-

lenge as he takes over from Tsipras, who imposed austerity measures required under a bailout to keep Greece in the eurozone. The country's public debt last year stood at 335 billion euros, or 180 percent of GDP. The debt load is forecast to fall to 168 percent of GDP this year, but only under belt-tightening brought in under Tsipras's Syriza party—something Mitsotakis's New Democracy party says is stifling growth.

The tricky job of keeping Greece's international creditors outside while easing the hardship on Greeks—by lowering taxes and renegotiating fiscal targets—could result in a short honeymoon phase for Mitsotakis. A Eurogroup finance meeting on Monday will discuss the state of Greece's economy after tax cuts rolled out by Tsipras in a last-ditch attempt to win over voters.

Message for change

Former banker Mitsotakis has pledged to create jobs and "steamroll" obstacles to business. Those pledges wooed Greek voters, who handed him nearly 40 percent of the vote in Sunday's election, well ahead of the 31.5 percent given to Tsipras. "It's a strong message for change in Greece," Mitsotakis told reporters

on Sunday. Last week he told AFP his mission was "to make sure we restart the economy" with "ambitious growth driven by private investments, exports and innovation".

He predicted he could persuade Greece's creditors to accept the easing of tight fiscal targets with "a comprehensive reforms package". Tsipras, for his part, warned that Mitsotakis would do away with the social spending he brought in to help Greece's vulnerable groups. He portrayed the Mitsotakis family—one of Greece's leading political dynasties—as part of a failed system that bankrupted the country in 2010.

Son of a PM

Mitsotakis is the son of former prime minister Constantine Mitsotakis, one of the country's longest-serving parliamentarians. His sister Dora Bakoyannis is a former minister and Athens's first female mayor. And in a first even for a country accustomed to family links in politics, the recently-elected mayor of Athens is the incoming prime minister's nephew. Mitsotakis took charge of New Democracy three years ago. Following the election, his party will have a majority of 158 seats

in the 300-member parliament.

New Democracy was last in power in 2014, in coalition with the Greek socialists. Syriza's parliamentary presence will shrink from 144 seats to 86. Tsipras has promised to remain an "active" voice in opposition in defense of labor rights. Sunday's election was Greece's third in as many months. In May, New Democracy beat Syriza by nearly 9.5 points in European parliament elections. A week later, it completed a near-sweep of Greek regions in local elections. After that, Tsipras was forced to call an early general vote.

Entering parliament for the first time are Greek Solution, a nationalist party formed by TV salesman Kyriakos Velopoulos, and MeRA25, an anti-austerity party founded by maverick economist and Tsipras' former finance minister Yanis Varoufakis. Neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn was shut out of parliament for the first time since 2012. Golden Dawn, until recently Greece's third-ranking party, is in steep decline amid an ongoing trial for the 2013 murder of an anti-fascist rapper, allegedly carried out with the knowledge of senior Golden Dawn members.—AFP

'Terminator' warlord guilty of Congo atrocities

THE HAGUE: International Criminal Court judges yesterday convicted a Congolese rebel chief nicknamed "Terminator" of war crimes including massacring civilians and sexual enslavement, in a badly-needed victory for prosecutors in The Hague. Bosco Ntaganda's forces carried out horrific attacks including one in a banana field that left babies and children disemboweled or with their heads smashed in, judges said. The 45-year-old was a "key leader" who recruited child soldiers and gave "direct orders to target and kill" non-combatants in Democratic Republic of Congo's Ituri region in 2002 and 2003. Ntaganda was found guilty of 18 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, directing attacks against civilians, displacing civilians, rape, sexual slavery and enlisting children under the age of 15. "Mr Ntaganda rallied the troops prior to battle, he gave direct orders to the troops during operations, and he debriefed them afterwards," head judge Robert Fremr said.

Rwandan-born Ntaganda will be sentenced at a later date after judges hear submissions from victims. Judges can give a life sentence. Human Rights Watch director Kenneth Roth hailed the verdict as "big win for the survivors", while the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) said it

was a "day of joy for Ituri victims." Ntaganda-known for his pencil moustache and a penchant for fine dining—proclaimed his innocence throughout the trial, insisting that he was "soldier not a criminal" and that the "Terminator" nickname did not apply to him.

Prosecutors portrayed him as the ruthless leader of ethnic Tutsi revolts amid the civil wars that wracked the DRC after the 1994 genocide of Tutsis in neighboring Rwanda. Judges said Ntaganda "fulfilled a very important military function" as a leader of the Union of Congolese Patriots rebels and its military wing, the Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (FPLC). The FPLC killed at least 800 people as it fought rival militias in Ituri for control of valuable minerals. More than 60,000 people have been killed since violence erupted there in 1999.

Bodies were disemboweled

In one attack directed by Ntaganda, judges said that soldiers killed at least 49 captives in a banana field behind a village, using "sticks and batons as well as knives and machetes." "Men, women and children and babies were found in the field. Some bodies were found naked, some had hands tied up, some had their heads crushed. Several bodies were disemboweled or otherwise mutilated," Fremr said. In other attacks women were "killed either while resisting rape or after being raped" while people were forced to dig mass graves that they were later killed and thrown into.

Ntaganda was found guilty of personally shooting dead a Catholic priest and as an "indirect perpetrator" for the other crimes by giving "direct orders to target and kill civilians" and other crimes. These included recruiting child soldiers who "wore uniforms that were often too large for them" but

nevertheless were "punished and suffered physical violence" in the same way as adult soldiers," the judgment said. The judges said it was "common for female members to be raped", including three girls under the age of 15.

Formerly a Congolese army general, Ntaganda then became a founding member of the M23 rebel group, which was eventually defeated by Congolese government forces in 2013. Later that year he became the first-ever suspect to voluntarily surrender to the ICC, when he walked into the US embassy in the Rwandan capital Kigali and asked to be sent to the court, based in the Netherlands. Ntaganda is one of five Congolese warlords brought before the ICC, which was set up in 2002 as an independent international body to prosecute those accused of the world's worst crimes.

Ntaganda's former FPLC commander Thomas Lubanga was sentenced to 14 years in jail in 2012. But it has suffered a string of setbacks over recent years with some of its most high-profile suspects walking free, including Ivorian former leader Laurent Gbagbo earlier this year. It has also been criticized for mainly trying African suspects so far. The US administration of President Donald Trump has also attacked the court after warning it against prosecuting US service members over war crimes in Afghanistan.—AFP



Rwandan-born Congolese warlord Bosco Ntaganda

19 die in Nigeria road accident

KANO, Nigeria: Nineteen people were killed when four vehicles collided on a busy road in northern Nigeria's Kano state, a road safety official said yesterday. The accident occurred late Sunday at Dinyar Madiga village, 85 kilometers from Kano, the state capital, said Zubairu Mato of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC). "A total of 19 people died in the accident involving four vehicles, including two buses and two cars," Mato said, adding that seven others were seriously injured. "The speeding vehicles collided while trying to dodge potholes," he said. Accidents are common on Nigeria's poorly-maintained roads, caused by reckless driving, speeding and disregard for traffic rules. In April, 19 wedding guests were killed in nearby Jigawa state when their overloaded bus skidded off the road and crashed after a tire burst.—AFP

International

UN blasts India, Pakistan over Kashmir inaction

Report to investigate human rights violations in Kashmir

GENEVA: The UN rights office hammered India and Pakistan yesterday for failing to improve the situation in Kashmir, while renewing calls for an international probe into violations in the disputed Himalayan region. Kashmir, ruled in part but claimed in full by both countries, has suffered decades of unrest with rebel groups fighting for independence from Indian rule or a merger of Kashmir with Pakistan, in bloodshed that has left tens of thousands dead, mostly civilians.

Last year, the Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights released its first-ever report on Kashmir, documenting wrongdoing by both sides and urging action to reduce long-standing tensions. In a follow up report, the rights office said "neither India nor Pakistan have taken any concrete steps to address the numerous concerns raised." "In Indian-Administered Kashmir, accountability for violations committed by members of the Indian security forces remains virtually non-existent," the report said.

The groundbreaking 2018 findings were particularly hard on India, highlighting "chronic impunity" for misconduct by troops. Pakistan welcomed the 2018 findings even though the UN said obtaining information about Pakistan-administered Kashmir was difficult given restrictions on freedom of expression and information.

"No steps have been taken to resolve the main issues, including a number of highly problematic legal restrictions," the rights office said yesterday. It also

noted that four major armed groups in Kashmir "are believed to be based on the Pakistan side of the Line of Control," and that civil society organizations blame Pakistani security forces for a series of "enforced disappearances," in the region.

New probe call

Given the failure of both states to address the issues raised, the report calls on the UN Human Rights Council to again consider creating "a comprehensive independent international investigation into allegations of human rights violations in Kashmir". The rights office shared the report with both countries last month. According to the UN, India requested the report not be published and dismissed the findings as "fallacious, tendentious and [politically] motivated"-similar wording to New Delhi's rejection of the 2018 report.

Pakistan again "welcomed the report," the rights office said. Kashmir has been divided since the end of British colonial rule in 1947 and both New Delhi and Islamabad claim the former Himalayan kingdom in full. The arch-rivals barely escaped a war in February when they launched cross-border air strikes at each other, sending tensions to the highest they have been since both gained nuclear weapons. Since then they have stepped back from the brink, with Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and his Indian rival Narendra Modi exchanging warm messages after Modi's hawkish party won a new term in May. — AFP



SRINAGAR: Indian paramilitary troopers stand guard as a Kashmiri girl rides a bicycle after authorities imposed restrictions on movement in Srinagar. — AFP

Afghan rivals resume talks for peace

DOHA: Dozens of powerful Afghans resumed talks with the Taliban yesterday in Doha, where a possible ceasefire is on the table along with key issues such as women's rights. Stakes are high for the talks which follow a week of US-Taliban negotiations with both sides eyeing a resolution to the bloody 18-year conflict. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted that the Afghan gathering "has been a long time coming" and praised the country's "government, civil society, women, and Taliban" for coming together.

Washington has said it wants to seal a political deal with the Taliban ahead of Afghan presidential polls due in September to allow foreign forces to begin to withdraw. Around 70 delegates are attending the two-day gathering which has been organized by Germany and Qatar. "History will remember those who were able to set their differences aside for the sake of the country" said Germany envoy Markus Potzel as he opened the gathering Sunday.

A German source confirmed the second day of talks got underway just before 0600 GMT. Delegate Asila Wardak, a member of the High Peace Council established by former president Hamid Karzai to engage with Taliban elements, said "everybody is emphasizing on a ceasefire" during Sunday's session. The Taliban spoke about "women's role, economic development, (and) the role of minorities" in a future settlement, she added.

Qatari Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said on Twitter that he looked "forward to a constructive dialogue". The so-called intra-Afghan meetings follow six days of direct US-Taliban talks that have been put on hold for the two day Afghan conference and are set to resume Tuesday, according to both sides.



DOHA: Markus Potzel, front, Germany's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, attends the Intra Afghan Dialogue talks in the Qatari capital Doha. — AFP

Most productive

US lead negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad said Saturday that the latest round of US-Taliban talks "have been the most productive of the rounds we've had with the Talibs". The Taliban said they were "happy with progress". The United States is not participating directly in the two-day Afghan summit, which is being attended by political heavyweights, government officials and at least six women.

The Taliban, who have steadfastly refused to negotiate with the government of President Ashraf Ghani, have stressed that those attending are only doing so in a "personal capacity". Ghani's administration, which the Taliban consider a puppet regime, has also been excluded from the direct US-Taliban talks. Sunday and Monday's gathering is the third such meeting following landmark summits in Moscow in February and May.

An agreement with the Taliban is expected to have two main pillars—a US withdrawal from Afghanistan and a commitment by the militants not to offer sanctuary to jihadists. The Taliban's relationship with Al-Qaeda was the main reason for the US invasion nearly 18 years ago. But the thorny issues of power-sharing with the Taliban, the role of regional powers including Pakistan and India, and the fate of Ghani's administration remain unresolved. — AFP

Tajikistan probes poisoning deaths of 14 prisoners

DUSHANBE: Tajikistan has opened a criminal investigation after 14 prisoners were fatally poisoned while they were being transported between jails, the justice ministry said yesterday, suggesting that another inmate may have given them contaminated bread. The incident happened on Sunday as more than a hundred prisoners, including eight women, were being transferred in a convoy from prisons in the north of the Central Asian country to jails in the south.

The justice ministry said in a statement that a prisoner handed around bread to a group of 16 inmates travelling in one of the vehicles during a stop on the journey. It said that "16 prisoners, who were in the back of one of the cars, experienced nausea, dizziness, vomiting" half an hour after consuming the bread. Medical staff were only able to save the lives of two of the prisoners, according to the statement, which was relayed by the Khovar state information agency.

The state prosecutor had opened a criminal case into the incident, the ministry said. It comes after a riot inside a prison close to the country's capital Dushanbe in May left 32 people dead including three guards, sparking fears over the security of prisons in the country. Authorities blamed the Islamic State group for the riot. In November 2018, another riot claimed by IS left 26 people dead in Khujand, a city in the northeast of the country.

That riot was initiated by a former IS member seeking to spark a mass escape, authorities said. Tajikistan, the poorest country to claim independence from the Soviet Union, endured a five-year civil war that claimed tens of thousands of lives shortly after the bloc's collapse. Rights groups regularly criticize the reign of 66-year-old President Emomali Rakhmon, who has led Muslim-majority country since 1992, tolerating little opposition. — AFP

Moscow fumes at obscene anti-Putin rant by Georgian TV host

MOSCOW: Russia yesterday fumed after a presenter in Georgia launched into a live-TV expletive-laden tirade against President Vladimir Putin, sparking the latest row between the neighboring countries. Protesters in Georgian capital Tbilisi have rallied over the past weeks after a Russian lawmaker spoke in the Georgian parliament, with Moscow responding by tightening restrictions on wine imports and suspending flights to Georgia.

Risking further strain on relations, a presenter with opposition Georgian

channel Rustavi-2, Giorgi Gabunia, began his program late Sunday by addressing Putin with a string of expletives in Russian. The channel issued an apology, and Georgia's Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze called the outburst a "categorically unacceptable" provocation that could threaten peace in the nation. The obscenities directed at Putin provoked a furious reaction from the Kremlin. Spokesman Dmitry Peskov called it "absolutely unacceptable" and a "disgrace for Georgians".

The disturbance feeds into tensions that have seen lawmakers in the Russian parliament discussing curbed imports of Georgian wine and mineral water, and banning money transfers between the two countries. "There is constant provoking of a conflict with Russia," said parliamentary speaker Vyacheslav Volodin. A ban on flights between the two countries decreed by Putin last month went into effect Monday. It was bound to affect the summer flow of tourists to Georgia's Black Sea resorts, traditionally popular among Russians seeking seaside sun. — AFP



ROME: Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks during a joint press conference with Italy's prime minister following their meeting at palazzo Chigi in Rome. — AFP



RECORD HOLDER

Largest prize-linked bank account payout
18-01-2019

Reviewed by
Deloitte 

CONGRATULATIONS!

Mohammad Abdulaziz Mohammad Abdulaziz

500,000

Kuwaiti Dinar

Open Al-Najma account and be the Winner of the Biggest Prize in the World for
1,500,000 K.D.

التجاري
Al-Tijari





AlTijariCBK Commercial Bank of Kuwait 50888225

1 888 225 cbk.com

Al-Tijari... My Choice

International

Britain hunts for leaker of cables calling Trump 'inept'

London distances itself from ambassador Darroch's views

LONDON: Britain scrambled yesterday to stem damage to its relations with Washington by finding the leaker of diplomatic cables in which the UK ambassador called US President Donald Trump "inept". The confidential telegrams from ambassador Kim Darroch created a political firestorm in London after their publication in the Mail on Sunday newspaper. One of them called the Trump administration "uniquely dysfunctional" while another characterized the US leader as "incompetent" and "insecure".

Their release came just a month after Trump visibly enjoyed himself during a state visit that included a 41-gun salute welcome at Buckingham Palace and dinner with the queen. They also threatened to complicate London's efforts to strike a new US trade agreement that could help mitigate potential damage from Britain's withdrawal from the European Union. Trump fired back by saying that people in his administration were "not big fans" of London's man in Washington. "We are not big fans of that man and he has not served the UK well. So I can understand it, and I can say things about him but I won't bother," Trump told reporters.

Very serious consequences

UK officials defended Darroch as a professional who was carrying out his duties by pro-

viding "frank" assessments of the latest developments in the White House. "Our ambassadors provide honest, unvarnished assessments of politics in their country," a Downing Street spokesman said. "As you'd expect, contact has been made with the Trump administration setting out our view that we believe the leak is unacceptable."

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said the culprit would face "very serious consequences if and when we find out who was responsible." The British parliament's foreign affairs committee chairman Tom Tugendhat called the leak a "betrayal" that was "deeply damaging to the integrity of the UK". The Daily Telegraph newspaper said such memos are seen by up to 100 people working in the Foreign Office and other government departments.

"But it would require a single official or minister to have access to the whole cache, inevitably casting the spotlight on senior ministers," it wrote. The immediate suspicion of the London papers fell on Brexit-backing players in a power struggle within the governing Conservative Party.

Coveted job

British politics are in for a major revamp once Prime Minister Theresa May ends her three-year spell in power later this month.

Brexititeer former foreign minister Boris Johnson is the favorite to replace her in a leadership contest against Hunt. The winner will get to appoint his own US envoy by the time Darroch's term expires at the end of the year.

Commentators note that the official widely tipped for the Washington job was less enthusiastic about Brexit than Johnson or some members of his team. "There have been reports that Mark Sedwill, the current cabinet secretary, is being lined up for the position." The Guardian's diplomatic editor Patrick Wintour wrote. But Trump "may be suspicious of Sedwill, and would prefer a true Brexiter".

Wintour wrote that Sedwill "may not fill that bill, but Nigel Farage—who pretty openly campaigned for the job before Darroch's appointment in 2016 — does". Farage has met Trump on several occasions and has brandished his anti-European credentials by leading his brand new Brexit Party to victory in European election in May. Farage yesterday called Darroch's memos "pretty irresponsible" but played down interest in taking the ambassadorial job in Washington.

"I'm not a diplomat, and I think that's quite an understatement," he told BBC radio. But Farage added that he "could be very useful" in forging a better relationship "with an administration that contains friends of mine". —AFP



WASHINGTON: In this file photo British Ambassador Kim Darroch speaks at an Afternoon Tea hosted by the British Embassy to mark the US. — AFP

BA fined over computer theft of passenger data

LONDON: The UK's data privacy watchdog has fined British Airways more than £183 million after computer hackers last year stole bank details from hundreds of thousands of passengers, the pair said yesterday. The UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) said it had issued a notice of its intention to fine BA £183.39 million for infringements of EU data protection rules, or GDPR. "People's personal data is just that—personal," Information Commissioner Elizabeth Denham said in a statement. "When an organization fails to protect it from loss, damage or theft it is more than an inconvenience. That's why the law is clear—when you are entrusted with personal data you must look after it," she added.

In a separate statement, BA's parent group IAG said the fine was equivalent to 1.5 percent of British Airways' turnover in 2017. Companies can be fined up to four percent of annual global turnover for breaching EU data protection rules. The fine is equivalent to more than 9 percent of IAG's net profit last year. IAG chief executive Willie Walsh said it would consider appealing the penalty as it seeks "to take all appropriate steps to defend the airline's position vigorously".

BA's CEO Alex Cruz said the airline was "surprised and disappointed" by the punishment. "British Airways responded quickly to a criminal act to steal customers' data," he said in the statement. "We have found no evidence of fraud/fraudulent activity on accounts linked to the theft. We apologize to our customers for any inconvenience this event caused," Cruz added. Shares in IAG were down 1.0 percent following the announcement and in early trading on London's benchmark FTSE 100 index, which was down 0.25 percent overall.

Personal data of approximately 500,000 customers were compromised, beginning in June 2018, the ICO said Monday. This was shortly after the European Union introduced its tighter data protection law, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). BA meanwhile publicly revealed the hack in September. The stolen data comprised customer names, postal addresses, email addresses and credit card information.

However the 15-day breach, which was fixed on discovery, did not involve travel or passport details. Following disclosure of the hack, BA promised to compensate affected customers and took out full-page adverts in the UK newspapers to apologize to passengers. It had meanwhile described the mass theft as "a very sophisticated, malicious, criminal attack on our website". — AFP

China blames US 'bullying' for Iran nuclear crisis

BEIJING: China yesterday said "unilateral bullying" by the United States was the cause behind the escalating Iran nuclear crisis, after Tehran announced it was set to breach its uranium enrichment cap. "The facts show that unilateral bullying has already become a worsening tumor," said Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang at a press briefing in Beijing. "The maximum pressure exerted by the US on Iran is the root cause of the Iranian nuclear crisis," he said.

Iran threatened on Sunday to abandon more commitments to an endangered 2015 nuclear deal unless a solution is found with the remaining parties after the US pulled out. The 2015 deal was reached between Iran and six world powers—Britain, China, France, Germany, the United States and Russia—and saw Tehran agree to drastically scale down its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

Washington began reimposing sanctions on Iran in August 2018 and has targeted crucial sectors including oil exports and the banking system, fuelling a deep recession. Tehran's move to start enriching uranium above the maximum purification level has already drawn opposition from countries backing the nuclear deal, with Germany urging it to "stop and reverse all activities inconsistent with its commitments." Geng said China has expressed "regret" for Tehran's decision to reduce its fulfillment of the Iran nuclear deal. — AFP

Brazil justice minister considered leak to harm Maduro

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian justice minister Sergio Moro considered releasing construction giant Odebrecht's confession to paying bribes in Venezuela to harm the country's president Nicolas Maduro, The Intercept investigative website reported on Sunday. The report came after The Intercept last month began publishing excerpts from leaked chats with Moro, causing a scandal for the former anti-corruption judge who became attorney general under far-right president Jair Bolsonaro.

The Intercept's most explosive report purportedly showed Moro conspiring with prosecutors in a sprawling corruption probe known as Car Wash to keep popular leftist ex-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva out of the 2018 presidential race. On Sunday, The Intercept published chats in which Moro considers whether to use information gathered about Odebrecht during the Car Wash



RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil's Minister of Justice Sergio Moro waits for the start of the Copa America football tournament final match against Peru at Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. — AFP

investigation against socialist leader Maduro, who has presided over a political and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. "Maybe we should reveal Odebrecht's confessions about bribes in Venezuela?" Moro said to chief prosecutor Deltan Dallagnol via the encrypted Telegram

messaging app in August 2017. Earlier in the conversation, Dallagnol had told Moro, "There will be criticism and a price (to be paid), but it's worth exposing oneself to help the Venezuelans." It remains unclear if the confessions were ever leaked, but Odebrecht has admitted to paying bribes across Latin America, including \$98 million in Venezuela—its biggest payoff outside Brazil.

In a statement, the prosecutor's office in the city of Curitiba, which handled some of the most publicized aspects of the probe, rejected The Intercept's report. The office said it didn't recognize "the messages attributed to its members in recent weeks. The origin and veracity of the messages, obtained via cybercriminals, cannot be confirmed." The corruption scandal surrounding Odebrecht, Latin America's biggest construction firm, has stretched across a dozen countries in Latin America and two in Africa, with the company implicated in handing out cash to win lucrative public contracts.

The revelations regarding Moro have led to calls for his resignation along with demonstrations in support of the justice minister. On Sunday, DataFolha Institute of Research released a poll in which 58 percent of respondents said that Moro's decisions in the Car Wash probe should be reviewed if the claims against him are proven to be true. — AFP



WASHINGTON: Anti-abortion activists protest during the National Independence Day Parade in Washington, DC. — AFP

US states become 'ground zero' in battle over abortion rights

NEW YORK: US states have enacted a record number of new laws on abortion this year, making them the major battleground in the contentious issue, a reproductive rights group said yesterday. The 50 states passed more than 90 bills on abortion access and other reproductive health matters in the first half of 2019, a third more than the same period last year, according to a mid-year report by the National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH).

Nine US states moved to limit the procedure with laws such as those banning abortions once a fetal heartbeat can be detected, while others increased access, the NIRH said. The anti-abortion measures are seen as a concerted effort to get the US Supreme Court - more conservative with members appointed by President Donald Trump - to revisit its 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling giving women a constitutional right to abortion.

The states are "ground zero" in the fight over abortion, said Andrea Miller, NIRH president. "We are seeing states moving in widely divergent directions," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "We have a set of states that are among the most conservative ... and then a host of states that are rapidly, increasingly moving in the other direction." While Roe v. Wade guarantees the right to abortion, states have introduced restrictions as requiring women to undergo ultrasound testing, requiring parental notification for minors or requir-

ing multiple visits and counseling. Abortion opponents believe one of the restrictive laws could become the subject of a legal fight that could potentially wend through court challenges until it reaches the Supreme Court, where a decision could reverse the 1973 ruling. Some states have expanded insurance coverage, created a state-level version of Roe v. Wade or defined abortion as a healthcare issue. The NIRH tally also included other measures involving reproductive health care and contraception.

"We have never had this many laws that protect abortion rights and expand access to abortion enacted in a single year since Roe v. Wade," Miller said. "There was such a rapid fire number of bans on abortion," she said. "People suddenly saw just how real the threat is and just how clear the ultimate agenda is." Mark Lee Dickson of Right to Life of East Texas, an anti-abortion group, said not only does the issue of abortion belong in the states but that the high court's Roe v. Wade ruling should be disregarded.

"I would love to see things thrown back to the states," said Dickson. "The Supreme Court has too much power. Everyone is passing the buck to the Supreme Court." Dickson recently spearheaded a movement by the Texas town of Waskom to declare itself a "sanctuary city for the unborn." The Waskom City Council last month declared the 1973 US Supreme Court ruling "null and void." — Reuters

Guaido says talks with Venezuela govt to resume

CARACAS: Dialogue between Venezuela's opposition and President Nicolas Maduro's government will resume in Barbados, self-declared interim president Juan Guaido said on Sunday, after previous negotiations in Norway petered out. "In response to the mediation of the Kingdom of Norway (the opposition) will attend a meeting with representatives of the usurper regime in Barbados, to establish a negotiation on the end of the dictatorship," Guaido said in a statement, without giving a date for talks to resume.

Maduro's government suggested talks would resume this week. Delegations representing the Venezuelan rivals met face-to-face in Oslo for the first time in late May, in a process begun two weeks earlier under Norwegian auspices to find a solution to the South American country's economic and political crises. Oil-rich Venezuela has been ravaged by five years of recession marked by shortages of food, medicine and other basic necessities.

It plunged deeper into political turmoil in January when National Assembly speaker Guaido declared himself acting president in a direct challenge to Maduro's authority. On Sunday Guaido also announced that he would push for Caracas to rejoin the Inter-American Defense Treaty, which Venezuela left in 2012. Some opposition lawmakers believe the treaty, from which Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua have also withdrawn, could legally allow foreign military intervention to overthrow Maduro.

"We have the legitimate right to build the international capacities and alliances necessary to protect and defend our people and our sovereignty," Guaido said on Twitter. Guaido is recognized by the United States and more than 50 other countries but has been unable to dislodge Maduro, who is backed by Cuba, Russia and China. Last Tuesday Guaido had said there were no plans to re-open talks with the "murderous dictatorship" of Maduro, following the death of an officer in custody over an alleged coup plot. The suspicious death of retired naval officer Rafael Acosta Arevalo sparked



CARACAS: Handout photo shows Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro during a military parade at the Los Proceres boulevard in the framework of the celebrations for the Independence Day in Caracas, Venezuela. — AFP

international condemnation. Guaido said at that time, though, that if fresh talks aimed at "facilitating the cessation of the usurpation" of Maduro were announced, "we will officially communicate."

To move forward

In a tweet, Maduro's Communications Minister Jorge Rodriguez implicitly corroborated Guaido's announcement by reproducing a Norwegian Foreign Ministry statement. "The two parties will meet this week in Barbados to move forward in the search for a negotiated and constitutional solution," the statement said. The Barbados talks will be the third round since May. Guaido wants them to lead towards Maduro's departure from the presidency he has held since 2013, to a transitional government, and then "free elections with international observers."

Some in the opposition criticize dialogue as a way for Maduro to "buy time," but Guaido responds it is a means to "put an end to the suffering of Venezuelans." Political scientist Jesus Castillo-Molleda told AFP "the opposition cannot defeat the government, neither alone nor with the help of the United States government." This means it has to look for other ways to reach agreements in favor of elections, the analyst said. Maduro has repeatedly said that the dialogue "will continue" with the opposition, "for peace in Venezuela."

During a parade last Friday celebrating the country's independence, Maduro said there would be "good news" this week about the negotiations. Guaido calls Maduro a "usurper" for staying in power after a 2018 election widely dismissed as a sham. Venezuela is suffering from hyperinflation in an economic crisis that has forced millions to flee. The UN estimates that more than seven million Venezuelans are in need of urgent humanitarian aid. — AFP

International

'Black box' reveals last moments of doomed Himalayan climbers

Rescue team analyze GoPro footage; British climber still missing

NEW DELHI: Indian authorities yesterday showed heart-wrenching images of the final moments of an international team of climbers swept away in an avalanche as they attempted to scale an unconquered Himalayan peak. The 154 second clip shows the four Britons, two Americans, an Australian and their Indian guide roped together in bright sunshine as they take nervous, synchronized steps along a narrow ridge towards a snow-capped peak. Then the screen goes blank.

"Suddenly we noticed a loud noise. The video went blank and stopped," said Vivek Kumar Pandey, spokesman for the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). "They were crossing a very dangerous ridge. The snow cornice must have given away because of their weight, triggering an avalanche," he said. The camera, that was carried by the final climber in the line, was found buried in snow near where seven bodies were uncovered. An eighth climber, British team leader Martin Moran, is still missing, according to Indian authorities.

In addition to Moran, the climbers were Britons John McLaren, Rupert Whewell and University of York lecturer Richard Payne, US nationals Anthony Sudekum and Ronald Beimel, Australian Ruth McCance and Indian guide Chetan Pandey. "It was mesmerizing for us to see the footage," said A P S Nambadia, the ITBP deputy inspector general who planned the operation to retrieve the bodies. "It will help us to analyze what went wrong with their mission," he told a press briefing. "The GoPro has proved to be like the black box of

an aircraft giving an insight into the last few moments of the climbers."

Put our lives at risk

Nambadia said the operation to find the bodies at an altitude of 6,100 meters had been "extremely challenging". Twelve climbers had started the expedition, but four Britons were rescued after breaking away. The missing climbers last communicated on May 26, a day before heavy snow fell in the region. On June 3, a military helicopter spotted the bodies and climbing equipment in the snow but several attempts to airlift the bodies away were aborted due to fierce winds and the difficult terrain. The ITBP then sent its expert climbers on foot to bring the bodies down.

S S Deswal, the ITBP director general, said the rescue team risked their own lives to retrieve the bodies "with respect and dignity". "We put our own lives at risk and undertook the operation by foot. We slept with the dead bodies on the side for days," said Ratan Singh Sonal, an ITBP officer who led the rescue team. "At night we would bury the bodies under snow outside our tents to slow down the decomposition process," Sonal said. "But we were not afraid. We felt we are all a part of humanity."

Nambadia said the exhausted rescue team almost cracked emotionally when they found the climbers' belongings such as a toy penguin. "They were emotionally charged when they found the baby (toy) penguin. It was symbolic of the emotions of a mountaineer and my team could relate to it." — AFP



UTTARAKASHI: In this handout photo Indo Tibetan Border Patrol (ITBP) personnel carry the body of a mountaineer from Nanda Devi at base camp on the mountain before airlifting the remains down to Pithoragarh in the Indian state of Uttarakhand. — AFP

Hong Kong protesters moot Bank of China 'stress test'

HONG KONG: Anti-government protesters in Hong Kong began circulating plans yesterday to "stress test" the Bank of China in their bid to keep pressure on the city's pro-Beijing leaders, after five people were arrested in the latest clashes with police. The finance hub has been plunged into its worst crisis in recent history following a month of huge marches as well as separate violent confrontations with police involving a minority of hardcore protesters.

The rallies were sparked by a now-suspended law that would have allowed extraditions to mainland China, but have since morphed into a wider movement calling for democratic reforms and a halt to sliding freedoms in the semi-autonomous territory. Sunday night saw fresh political violence break out in the district of Mongkok as police baton-charged small groups of masked, largely young protesters who were walking along roads and refused to disperse following another massive, peaceful rally earlier in the day.

Police said the group were taking part in an "unlawful assembly" and had been warned that officers would take action. "Some protesters resisted and police arrested five persons for assaulting a police officer and obstructing a police officer in the execution of duties," a statement said. Another protester was arrested earlier in the day for failing to provide identification during a stop and search.

Excessive force

Activists hit out at the police tactics, saying the protesters had remained peaceful as they made their way home, and that violence was started by a shield wall of riot officers that had blocked the crowd's path. "HKers joined rally peacefully... against extradition bill result in being beaten and assaulted by HK Police," democracy activist Joshua Wong wrote in a tweet accompanying pictures of at least two protesters with bleeding head wounds. "Just another example of excessive force used by the police," he added in another tweet.

By yesterday morning, online groups were already planning more protests on encrypted messenger apps and chat forums that have been successfully used by demonstrators to bring out huge crowds. One proposal going viral was a call to collectively withdraw funds from the Bank of China this Saturday to "stress test" the organiza-



HONG KONG: A protester reacts as he is detained by police officers during clashes between demonstrators and police in the Mong Kok district in Kowloon after taking part in a march to the West Kowloon rail terminus against the proposed extradition bill in Hong Kong. — AFP

tion's liquidity. Shares in the bank were down about one percent yesterday in line with the broader market.

The state-owned Bank of China's towering Hong Kong headquarters is one of the most recognizable buildings in the territory's famous skyline and the organization is one of three banks licensed to issue its own notes. Public anger has soared against the city's pro-Beijing leaders and its police force after officers used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse protesters outside parliament last month.

Last Monday, anger peaked as hundreds of demonstrators stormed and trashed the city's parliament. Those unprecedented scenes—and renewed huge marches—have failed to persuade the government, whose sole concession so far has been to suspend the loathed extradition bill.

Protester demands

Protesters are demanding the bill be scrapped entirely, an independent inquiry into police tactics, amnesty for those arrested, and for the city's unelected leader Carrie Lam to step down. They have also demanded authorities

stop characterizing protesters as "rioters", a definition that carries much steeper jail terms. Beijing has thrown its full support behind the embattled Lam, calling on police to pursue anyone involved in the parliament storming and other clashes. With the exception of a pre-dawn press conference after parliament was stormed, Lam has virtually disappeared from public view in recent weeks with little clue as to what direction her administration intends to take. Her office announced she planned to speak to the media on Tuesday morning, the first appearance in over a week.

Despite repeated requests, police have not released a breakdown of how many people have been detained in the last month of protests. A tally kept by AFP shows at least 72 people have been arrested, though it is not clear how many have been charged. Sunday's rally outside a controversial train station that runs to the mainland drew 230,000 people, organizers said, after calls for the gathering started on online forums and snow-balled. Police estimated 56,000 people attended the protest at its peak. — AFP

South Korean follows parents in rare defection to North

SEOUL: A South Korean man has defected to North Korea, following in the footsteps of his political parents who also made a high-profile switch of allegiance in the 1980s, according to Pyongyang's state media. Years of repression and poverty in the reclusive North have led around 30,000 people to flee to its democratic neighbor in the decades since the Korean War, but defections in the other direction are extremely rare.

Choe In-guk—the son of former South Korean foreign minister Choe Dok-shin, who died in 1989, three years after moving to North Korea with his wife—landed in Pyongyang on Saturday, reported state-run outlet Uriminzokkiri. In video footage filmed at an airport and posted by the website on Sunday, the 72-year-old Choe said he had arrived in the North Korean capital "for residency". "I can't find words to describe my gratitude to the Republic that has embraced me," he said in the clip.

Choe added that he had decided to live in the North to "fulfill the wishes" of his parents. Seoul's unification ministry said Monday it was not aware of Choe's defection until the report was published, noting it does not track individuals because it "respects freedom of movement". A small number of South Koreans in economic difficulty have defected to the North in the past, but Pyongyang has repatriated many people as they hold little value for its propaganda platform.

It returned two South Koreans last year, said ministry spokesman Lee Sang-min, without elaborating. The government doesn't keep a record of the number of South Korean defectors to the North, he added. Pyongyang, which is under heavy economic sanctions because of its multiple nuclear tests and long-range missile launches, denounces defectors to South Korea as "human scum".

Those who do find their way to the South are an important source for accounts of the regime's brutal treatment of its citizens. Last week a South Korean general was sacked for a lapse in border security after a fishing boat from North Korea carrying four people managed to cross the intensely monitored sea between the countries and dock undetected. —AFP

Amnesty urges UN probe of 'systematic' Philippine drug war killings

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's narcotics crackdown has become a "systematic" campaign of killing, Amnesty International alleged yesterday, urging the United Nations to launch a probe into thousands of deaths. The drug war is Duterte's signature initiative and is heavily supported by many Filipinos, however the nightly slaying of suspects by police and masked gunmen has provoked international condemnation.

In its second report since the crackdown was launched in mid-2016, Amnesty said there is a well-worn pattern of deadly police operations, planted evidence and abductions that start with so-called "watch lists". Those names are supplied by local officials who are "under immense pressure" from authorities to provide a steady stream of suspects, the London-based monitor said. "Worse still, individuals on watch lists appear to be placed on them indefinitely, with no means of getting delisted, even after they have gone through drug treatment or stopped using drugs," said the report.

Amnesty said it was impossible to determine how many people have been killed in the campaign, accusing Manila of "deliberate obfuscation and misinformation" that has left victims' kin feeling helpless. The government's official toll is just over 5,300, but watchdogs say the true number is quadruple that. "What we believe is most important, in assessing the current situation, is the systematic nature of the violations," Amnesty's East Asia director Nicholas Bequelin told AFP. Amnesty said the press has lost interest in the killings while the government fails to investigate or provide adequate treatment programs for drug users. "It has had the effect of creating a climate of total impunity in the country, in which police and others are free to kill without consequence," it said. "There is sufficient evidence to conclude that crimes committed may constitute crimes against humanity," the group added.



MANILA: This photo shows Lilia Jacobs, the grandmother of Bryan Conje, crying at his wake, who went missing on July 2, but was found dead on July 5 under a bridge where he lived. — AFP

Failure of international community

Amnesty said it investigated the deaths of 27 people over the past year in Bulacan, a province near Manila that has become "the country's bloodiest killing field". Police broke down doors before shooting drug suspects inside and abducted others to be killed elsewhere, it alleged. Police also tampered with crime scenes and fabricated their reports, planted evidence and stole from victims, it added.

Amnesty called on the UN Human Rights Council to open an inquiry to "put an end to these crimes, and to provide justice and reparations for countless families and victims". "We ask that the council vote on the resolution and

let it pass this week so that an independent investigation can commence led by the UN," Amnesty section director in the Philippines Butch Olano told reporters.

He was referring to a draft resolution, proposed by Iceland and backed mainly by Western nations, which calls for a probe into the drug war and that is expected to go up for a vote before the council sessions ends on Friday. Duterte's spokesman yesterday criticized as "incorrigible" Amnesty's call for a probe, adding police only killed suspects in self-defense. "The problem is Amnesty International is politicizing the so-called extra-judicial killings in this country so there is bias. There is prejudice," Salvador Panelo told reporters. —AFP

India 'dosa king' seeks delay to life sentence

NEW DELHI: The founder of a trailblazing Indian restaurant chain sentenced to life for murder launched a Supreme Court appeal to delay the beginning of his term Monday, citing ill-health. P Rajagopal, the wealthy founder of the Saravana Bhavan chain of eateries popular across India and beyond was found guilty and sentenced to 10 years in 2004 over the killing of a love rival. Reports say Rajagopal, 71 and known as the "Dosa King" was obsessed with the daughter of an employee and wanted to marry her.

Unable to take a no for an answer, he ordered the killing of her husband. Rajagopal was meant to surrender to authorities by July 7 after his life conviction was upheld by the Supreme Court in March. But he moved the top court again yesterday, saying he was hospitalized and needed more time. His request will be taken up for consideration today.

Rajagopal, always dressed in white with a strip of sandalwood paste on his forehead, is the son of a low-caste onion trader from a village in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. In 1981, he opened his first restaurant at a time when eating out was unusual for most Indians. The chain now has outlets worldwide from New York to London to Dubai. The winning formula was, and remains, that the southern Indian vegetarian delights on offer—dosa pan-cakes, deep-fried vadas and idli rice cakes—taste homemade, and are affordable. Reports say he wanted to make the woman his third wife because an astrologer had advised him to do so. —AFP

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24833199 Extn. 125
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E mail: info@kuwaittimes.com
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Parched southern Pakistan farmers marching north

A shopkeeper Ali Akbar went to open his store last week along the main street of Thatta, in Pakistan's Sindh province, he found himself wading through a sea of people who had blocked the road, causing an enormous traffic jam. It wasn't a political rally - the normal cause of such crowds. It was people without water. "They were demanding the government declare a water emergency and resolve their woes on a war footing," Akbar told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a telephone call. "It was extremely hot, but they remained resolute."

Over a week, the people had walked 140 km from the Indus delta region, desperate to find an answer to worsening water shortages and land losses to erosion in their home villages. Zuhab Ahmed Pirzada, a young environmental activist from Thatta, said an original 50 or so marchers from the area around Kharo Chan - where the delta meets the Arabian Sea - were joined by others as they marched north. By the time the crowd reached Thatta, there were 1,500 marchers.

Tanzeela Qambrani, a legislator from Badin district, in southern Sindh province, said the region has seen the "slow death" of the delta for many years. Water expert Simi Kamal, who works at the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund and started a foundation focused on water and food security, said the spread of large-scale irrigation along the Indus River is partially to blame for less water reaching the delta.

But she said "mismanagement" of water, including wasteful flood irrigation and failure to leave enough water in systems to support nature, played a far bigger role. "Together these have been catastrophic for the environment as well as the local population," she said, predicting that a shifting climate would only make the problem worse.

Lower flow

The Indus is a water lifeline for over 200 million Pakistanis, about 50 million of them near the river's end in Sindh, according to the US-Pakistan Center for Advanced Studies in Water and other agencies. A report by environmental and development group Lead Pakistan said that as demands on the Indus' water grow, the delta is receiving less than a third of the water it needs. The flow is also less than what it is due under a 1991 water sharing accord among Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, the report said.

Khalid Hyder Memon, a former irrigation department official in the Sindh provincial government, said he felt Punjab province, upstream, was "stealing" water that should be Sindh's share. He said repeated protests and requests over the last two years for a water audit by an independent body had not yet been acted on by the Indus River System Authority, which monitors water distribution and sharing. "An audit would establish how much water there is in the system and how much is released to each province," said Memon, who worked on irrigation issues for 37 years.

But Usman Tanveer, deputy commissioner of Thatta, said recent shortages of water in Sindh were in part the result of cool June temperatures in Gilgit-Balistan's Skardu district, with less snowmelt coming from the foothills of the Karakoram mountains. "It takes between 17 to 25 days for the water from Skardu to reach us. The unprecedented and persistent low temperatures delayed snow melt and created havoc for us," he explained.

Qambrani said the Sindh government needs to show "seriousness" in dealing with growing water threats as climate pressures become the new normal, and as sea level rise and less water and sediment flowing down the Indus erodes delta land. "Here in the delta, the sea is fast swallowing up our land. The government must come up with a sound plan now or we will have a huge population of climate refugees to deal with," the legislator said.

On Sunday, the international Green Climate Fund announced it was providing \$35 million in funding, supported by \$12.7 million in funds from Pakistan, to improve water management and farming practices in eight climate-hit districts in Pakistan, including in Sindh and Punjab provinces. The six-year project, which the UN Food and Agriculture Organization will begin running this year, aims in part to help small-scale farmers learn how to farm with less water. It will also give them access better weather information to plan more effectively for droughts and other climate-related risks. — Reuters



In this photo taken on July 3, 2019, a Kashmiri man reads a newspaper at a stall in Srinagar. — AFP

Media feel the pinch in Kashmir

When plainclothes police arrested newspaper editor Ghulam Jeelani Qadri, his peers in Indian Kashmir saw it as just another attempt by New Delhi to squeeze the media working in the blood-soaked region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in power since 2014, has tightened the screws on the part of Kashmir controlled by India, particularly since February when a suicide bombing killed 41 Indian troops travelling in a convoy.

The attack, claimed by a Pakistan-based militant group, prompted tit-for-tat air strikes between the two nuclear-armed nations over a region divided between the countries since 1947. In step with beefed-up security, New Delhi has pressured the media inside Kashmir by intimidating reporters with legal threats and putting restrictions on movement as well as pulling ad revenues from troublesome outlets, journalists say. Qadri, publisher and editor of Urdu-language daily Afaaq, told AFP that he was given no reason for his arrest by the plainclothes police who took him from his Srinagar home on June 25.

"They simply asked me to accompany them," Qadri told AFP. His arrest was linked to a case from 1993 when he published a statement from an anti-India militant. Although he was freed a day later, the revival of the three-decade-old case was quickly interpreted by Kashmir's media community as a warning. There is "an invisible sword hanging over your head", one editor in Kashmir told AFP of the threat of legal cases, speaking anonymously for fear of reprisal. Other local reporters have also been arrested. Asif Sultan, has

been in jail since August 2018 over a report about a rebel leader, charged with having contact with and promoting militants.

No investigation possible

Some 70,000 people, mostly civilians, have died over the past 30 years in Indian-administered Kashmir, monitoring groups say. The fighting is between Indian soldiers - who number around 500,000 on the ground - and rebels wanting either independence or union with Pakistan. Clashes between security forces and militants - which often escalate as demonstrators gather - have been a near-daily occurrence since India launched "Operation All Out" after the death of charismatic militant Burhan Wani in 2016.

Since the February bombing, the deadliest attack on Indian forces in three decades of insurgency, India has arrested 900 people. Accusations of human rights abuses, arbitrary detentions have followed, as anxiety and anger mounts in the Muslim-majority region. Moves by Modi's government to scrap laws that bar Indians from elsewhere buying land in Kashmir have also irked locals. Covering violent protests, which frequently see Indian forces use lead-pellet-firing shotguns on protestors, has become even harder.

"We're stopped miles away. No investigation by journalists is possible," said Umer Arif, a freelance journalist. "So, we show what the government forces want us to show, not much else." Foreign journalists also need special permission to visit the territory.

From boomerangs to A-bombs? Aussies debate nuclear arms

Facing a wobbly ally in the United States and an increasingly bellicose China, Australia's military strategists are cautiously debating whether the country needs to consider developing its own nuclear deterrent. For a long time, the country's defense forces had relatively little to worry about. A century-old alliance with the United States brought bankable security guarantees, while mineral exports to China ensured 28 recession-free years at home.

But Donald Trump's limited regard for alliances and Xi Jinping's quest for primacy in the Pacific have put both pillars of Australian security in doubt. "Far from being in a strategic backwater, Australia is very much now a state in the front line," said Malcolm Davis, a military planner who has long called for a rethink in Australia's defense. So far the response from Canberra has been cautious: trying to preserve the alliance with the United States while trading with the world's rising economic power.

But Hugh White - former adviser to prime ministers,

Put off by US, Chinese students eye other varsities

Caught in the crossfire of the US-China trade war, Chinese students are looking for alternative study destinations - threatening to turn off an important source of revenue for American universities. China accounts for nearly a third of foreign students on US campuses who pour billions of dollars into the economy, but in March their numbers dropped for the first time in a decade. Visa delays, concerns over being shut out of research projects and safety fears have turned off Chinese students, according to several admissions consultancies and nearly a dozen parents and students interviewed by AFP.

Rival education powerhouses such as Britain, Australia and Canada are the biggest beneficiaries, a survey by New Oriental China's biggest private education provider said. Japan and South Korea - traditional study abroad destinations for the Chinese elite - and parts of Europe, especially Germany and Scandinavian countries with strong engineering programs, have also

and a doyen of Canberra military analysts - believes it is time to get off the fence. Amid arcane discussions about strategic autonomy, interests and capabilities, his book "How to Defend Australia", published this month, has ignited a firestorm of debate with one simple question: "What about nuclear weapons?"

White - a professor of strategic studies at the Australian National University - does not advocate for or against nuclear weapons, but says the question is becoming unavoidable. Citing "big strategic shifts in Asia" he argues that "it is no longer clear that nuclear weapons would never make sense" to Australian defense. "The strategic costs of forgoing nuclear weapons in the new Asia could be much greater than they have been until now."

Developing even limited deterrence would carry enormous economic, political, diplomatic and social cost-requiring Australia to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty and provoking neighbors. But the vast nation-continent may be extremely difficult to defend alone with a limited population and conventional weapons. White argues that without a cast iron guarantee from Washington, even the mere threat of a nuclear attack from China could "force us to capitulate in a conventional war."

Decades in the making?

The discussion is not completely out of the blue.

seen an uptick in applications, the survey found.

The chilling effect started mid-last year, after President Donald Trump's administration slashed the visa duration of students in science and technology fields from five years to one in some cases. "Now there's a lot of uncertainty on whether they can even finish their studies," said Gu Huini, founder of boutique college consultancy Zoom In. Over one third of the roughly 360,000 Chinese students in the US study in "STEM fields" - science, technology, engineering and mathematics - according to the Institute of International Education in New York.

But the number of Chinese students in the US dipped by two percent in March compared to the previous year, the first drop since 2009, data from the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement shows. Melissa Zhang, a high school senior in Beijing, said she has abandoned plans to go to the US and was instead taking German lessons, in the hope of getting into a robotics program in Dresden. "I've already wasted a year preparing for my SATs," the 17-year-old said, referring to the standardized test needed to enter a US university. "But what's the point in going to the US if I might be shut out of a research lab, just because I am Chinese."

Her mother, Mingyue, said "the American dream is losing its shine" to many Chinese students. "If America makes them feel unwelcome, they'll go elsewhere... this generation feels the whole world is open to them."

India's part of Kashmir was brought under New Delhi's direct rule in June 2018 after Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) withdrew support for its local partner and dissolved the elected local government. Tens of thousands of extra troops were brought in for a general election in May that saw the right-wing Modi re-elected. During the voting, the main highway linking Kashmir with India was closed to civilian traffic two days per week for two months.

Humiliation and pain

The government has also stopped issuing advertisements to Kashmir Reader and Greater Kashmir, the biggest English-language daily, effectively "choking" it, according to its editor-in-chief Fayaz Ahmad Kaloo. That has left little money for reporting or investigations. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), says the freeze on advert spending is one of a battery of moves by the central government "to silence criticism of its policies in Kashmir".

"They want independent voices to go to oblivion," added Anuradha Bhasin, editor of Kashmir's oldest English-language newspaper the Kashmir Times. Manoj Kumar Dwivedi from the Indian Administrative Service who oversees the government information department conceded that advertising had been withdrawn to selected titles but insisted newspapers could publish what they liked. "It has nothing to do with public interest," Dwivedi told AFP. "If any individual newspaper has a grievance they should approach the relevant authorities." — AFP

White reports that for decades Australian planners had quietly considered nuclearization and worked on assessments of how long weapons would take to develop. But until now Canberra always decided that the price was too high, the risks were low and Washington had its back. But Trump's capricious temperament means half a century of policy could change with a single tweet.

Meanwhile the threat outlook has changed.

Historical documents show defense analysts did not believe Australia would be targeted even in a serious nuclear conflagration between the United States and the Soviet Union. Bumping up against China seems much more likely. And two regions inside Australia's sphere of interest have become geopolitical hotspots - the South China Sea and the South Pacific. Australian warships and aircraft routinely patrol through the South China Sea, much of which is claimed by Beijing.

Even when Australian ships stick to international waters, they are shadowed and challenged by the Chinese military. In one recent incident, lasers were shone at Australian Navy helicopter pilots taking part in a months-long naval operation, forcing them to land. Prime Minister Scott Morrison has launched a diplomatic "step-up" in the South Pacific - hoping to re-engage in a region that increasingly draws Beijing's attention. —AFP

"Unfairly scrutinized"

Chinese students contributed \$13 billion to the US economy last year, a figure that includes tuition fees and living expenses, according to NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Top US universities including Yale and Stanford have complained that the trade war has affected campus recruitment. Rafael Reif, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, wrote in an open letter on June 25 that students and faculty felt "unfairly scrutinized, stigmatized and on edge - because of their Chinese ethnicity alone".

The State Department has said the increased scrutiny was prompted by a rising number of students who were co-opted by foreign intelligence while in the United States. Eric Wang, 25, a doctoral student at Purdue university in Indiana, said he was nervous about having to renew his visa every year. "It's difficult to plan long-term research projects or even think about going steady with your girlfriend," said Wang. Trump attempted to allay Chinese students' fears after reaching a trade war truce with President Xi Jinping at the G20 summit last week, saying they would be treated "just like anybody else". He also proposed a "smart person's waiver" that would make it easier for the brightest minds to get a Green Card allowing permanent residency. —AFP

All articles appearing on this page are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein.

Business

TUESDAY, JULY 9, 2019

12 Egyptian economy on right path; growth seen at 5.2% in FY19/20**13** Deutsche Bank to slash 18,000 jobs by 2022**14** Bursa Kuwait remains the strongest performer in GCC since start of 2019

BRUSSELS: (Left to right) Dutch Finance Minister Wopke Hoekstra, German Secretary of State at the Federal Ministry of Finance Joerg Kukies, Luxembourg's Finance Minister Pierre Gramegna and Spanish Economy Minister Nadia Calvino attend a meeting of Eurogroup Finance Ministers at the European Council headquarters in Brussels yesterday. — AFP

Wall Street falls as Apple and Boeing drag

Investors cut back bets of an aggressive Fed rate cut

NEW YORK: US stocks fell yesterday, dragged down by losses in Apple and Boeing and as investors cut back bets of an aggressive interest rate cut by the Federal Reserve later this month. A surprisingly strong June jobs data on Friday has forced traders to reassess expectations of an aggressive rate cut, even as a reduction is still expected at the Fed's July 30-31 policy meeting. Bets of a 50 basis point cut now hover around 7 percent, down from about 20 percent a week ago, according to CME Group's FedWatch program. Hopes that the US central bank would cut rates to counter any hit to economic growth from a prolonged trade war with China had helped Wall Street's main indexes rebound from a slump in May and hit record closing highs last week.

The market is carrying over some of the sentiment from Friday, said Art Hogan, chief market strategist at National Securities in New York. "It's a very light catalyst day... I think the markets should hold off until we hear testimony from Chairman Powell."

Fed Chairman Jerome Powell's semi-annual testimony to

the US Congress on July 10-11 will give investors an opportunity to gauge near-term monetary policy thinking. Also on tap is the central bank's June meeting minutes, scheduled for release tomorrow.

At 9:41 am ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 169.38 points, or 0.63 percent, at 26,752.74, and the S&P 500 was down 16.97 points, or 0.57 percent, at 2,973.44. The Nasdaq Composite was down 76.06 points, or 0.93 percent, at 8,085.73.

Technology fell the most among the 11 major S&P sectors, weighed down by a 2.2 percent fall in Apple Inc. Rosenblatt Securities downgraded the iPhone maker's shares to "sell" from "neutral", and said it expected the company to face "fundamental deterioration" in the next six to twelve months. The energy and the defensive utilities and consumer staples were the only major sectors trading higher. Boeing Co's shares slipped 1.1 percent after Saudi Arabian budget airline flyadeal said it would not proceed with a provisional \$5.9 billion order for the planemaker's grounded

737 MAX aircraft, instead opting for a fleet of Airbus A320 jets. Chip equipment makers Applied Materials Inc, Lam Research Corp and Ichor Holdings Ltd dropped between 1.2 percent and 5.6 percent as D A Davidson & Co changed its industry rating to "neutral".

Symantec Corp rose 3.8 percent after Jefferies said the cybersecurity firm is a "logical financial acquisition" amid reports of Broadcom Inc in advanced talks for a deal. Declining issues outnumbered advancers for a 2.30-to-1 ratio on the NYSE and for a 2.66-to-1 ratio on the Nasdaq. The S&P index recorded four new 52-week highs and no new low, while the Nasdaq recorded seven new highs and 17 new lows. European stocks moved little, with the pan-European STOXX 600 index adding 0.04 percent.

Among top movers on the STOXX 600 were TGS Nopec, up 6.7 percent on a well-received earnings update.

In Asia there was a wide sell-off in stocks, with MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan losing 1.4 percent and China's blue-chip CSI300 index down 2.32

percent, its biggest daily loss since May 17. "We are lowering our exposure to global equities to the range we consider 'underweight'," Morgan Stanley's London-based strategist Andrew Sheets said in a note. The previous range was "neutral".

Expensive valuations and pressure on earnings were among the reasons for the downgrade, Sheets said, while the bank increased its exposure to emerging markets sovereign credit and safe haven Japanese government bonds. Since the start of the year, global equities have generally been bolstered by expectations that central banks will keep interest rates at or near record lows to boost economic growth. The Greek stock index rallied at the open to hit a new February 2015 high before erasing gains and slipping 1.3 percent as traders booked profits after Greece's opposition conservatives returned to power with a landslide victory in snap elections on Sunday. Greek 10-year bond yields fell by 14 basis points in early trade to hit new all-time lows of 2.016 percent, reversing the 12 basis point yield rise on Friday. — Reuters

India set to raise \$2.18 billion by cutting stakes in 18 firms to 75%

NEW DELHI: India's government aims to raise up to 150 billion rupees (\$2.18 billion) by reducing its stake in 18 state firms to 75 percent, a finance ministry official involved in the matter said yesterday, as it looks to boost revenues and rein in the fiscal deficit.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman set an ambitious target of 1.05 trillion rupees (\$15.33 billion) from the sale of stakes in state-run companies, compared with 850 billion rupees the previous year, in her budget on Friday for the fiscal year that began on April 1. While a third of the divestment target will be met by the outright sale of state enterprises, including Air India, the other sales will be done through a rule under which all listed entities must have a public float of at least 25 percent after three years of listing.

But governments have been putting this off for state firms, winning extensions from the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) each year. "The government will aim to meet the SEBI norms in state-owned companies this fiscal," said the ministry official, who declined to be identified as he is not allowed to speak to the media, referring to the Securities and Exchange Board of India.

The government is planning to sell 10 percent each in state-owned reinsurers General Insurance Corporation of

India (GIC) and New India Assurance (NIA) which will bring its holding down to 75 percent in the two giant companies. In her budget, Sitharaman proposed increasing the minimum public shareholding for listed entities to 35 percent from 25 percent as part of efforts to make the market more accessible to retail investors.

But the finance ministry official said the new regulation would require at least two years to go into force after approval by the SEBI. Asia's third largest economy is banking on state enterprise sales, dividends from the central bank and additional levies and taxes to meet a fiscal deficit target of 3.3 percent of gross domestic product from 3.4 percent previously announced.— Reuters



India government is open to 100 percent stake sale in debt-laden Air India

Turkish lira hit by central bank chief's dismissal, policy worries

ISTANBUL: Turkey's lira weakened yesterday after President Tayyip Erdogan dismissed the central bank governor, reigniting concerns about political interference in monetary policy and expectations of rate cuts to revive the recession-hit economy. The lira stood at 5.7285 to the US currency at 0933 GMT, 1.6 percent weaker than Friday's close but off a low of 5.8245 in early Asian trade as investors fretted about the implications of the move for central bank independence.

"His removal speaks to Erdogan's insistence on imposing his diktats on monetary policy, and more broadly, it suggests tight presidential control of economic policies," said Phoenix Kalen, EM strategy director at Societe Generale. She said the dismissal challenged the thesis that Erdogan would exhibit greater pragmatism after the defeat of his AK Party's candidate in the re-run of the Istanbul mayoral election and that the economy would be allowed to gradually rebalance.

"Monetary policy-setting might be even more influenced by political pressure, leading to aggressive interest rate cuts that could undermine financial market stability

and demand for local assets," she added in a research note. The lira is down about 8 percent this year after having plummeted 30 percent last year during the currency crisis. The main share index fell 1.14 percent, with banks down 1.7 percent. Turkey's dollar-denominated bonds dropped across the curve. Governor Murat Cetinkaya, whose four-year term was due to run until 2020, was replaced by his deputy Murat Uysal, a presidential decree published early on Saturday in the official gazette showed.

Uysal, who has served as deputy governor for three years, is known as one of the more dovish of the bank's rate setters. No official reason was given for the sacking, but government sources cited Erdogan's frustration that the bank had kept its benchmark interest rate at 24 percent since last September to support the lira.

Isik Securities analyst Yusuf Kavak said the bank was now expected to cut rates more sharply when it meets on July 25. "The expectation has taken hold in the market that there may be a stronger interest rate cut," he said. The governor's dismissal comes just days before Turkey is expected to take delivery of Russian air defence systems, a development likely to trigger U.S. sanctions, which could put the lira under renewed pressure. "The S-400s are expected to be delivered this week. If US sanctions come onto the agenda, along with the central bank expectation, the lira may move to the 6 (to the dollar) level and beyond," Kavak added. The newspaper Hurriyet on Sunday quoted Erdogan as telling a meeting with his party's lawmakers that he had dismissed Cetinkaya for rejecting the government's repeated demands to cut rates. — Reuters

NBK economic report

Egyptian economy on right path; growth seen at 5.2% in FY19/20

Pick-up in capital spending, recovery in tourism sector boost growth

KUWAIT: As Egypt continues to implement its ambitious economic reform program...



High debt service

Egypt's government continues to consolidate its fiscal position through higher tax revenues...

Easing inflation

Since the most recent energy subsidy cuts in mid-2018, urban inflation started to decelerate...

Easing inflation has provided some comfort to the Central Bank of Egypt to cut its interest rate...

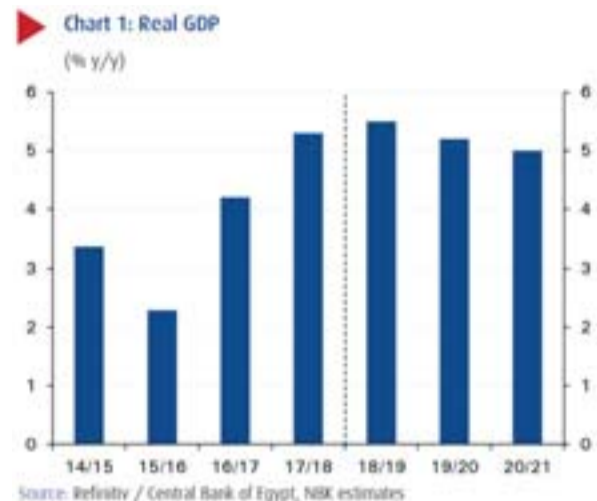


Table 1: Key economic indicators. Table with columns for indicators like Nominal GDP, Real GDP, Inflation, Budget balance, etc.

international bonds in different currencies with a view to diversifying its debt instruments...

The external sector to improve further

The external sector has continued to strengthen as the trade deficit narrows...

FY18/19 and to 1.5 percent of GDP in FY20/21 if gas exports continue strong.

Favorable outlook, but challenges remain

While significant progress has been made, a number of challenges need to be addressed...

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its weekly draw on 7th July 2019 announcing the names of the winners...

The winners this week are:

- Najah Kadhem Mohammad Almatrouk
Madiha Abdo Abdul Wahed Shehata
Dawoud Ahmad Hussain Qabazard
Mohammad Khalaf Hassan Abdullah
Najah Ali Salem Aldarawi

Gulf Bank's third Al-Danah quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on 25 September 2019...

Gulf Bank encourages customers to increase their chances of winning with Al-Danah by depositing more into their Gulf Bank accounts...

Al-Danah offers a number of unique services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card...

Special fares on Emirates airline tickets for ABK cardholders

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is offering all its Credit, Prepaid and Debit cardholders a discount of up to 12 percent...

In order to benefit from the offer, which applies to all destinations, except for Jeddah and Al-Madinah, customers must book their tickets online through http://emirates.com/...



Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account...



Taiwan's EVA Air cabin crew end strike

TAIPEI: An unprecedented 17-day strike at Taiwan's largest private airline that saw more than 1,200 flights cancelled and 300,000 passenger journeys disrupted...

The strike at EVA Airways was the longest in Taiwan's aviation history and comes less than six months after another strike by pilots at its competitor China Airlines...

Hundreds of striking workers burst into tears when news of the collective agreement was announced Saturday evening...

The union said it will not strike for the next three years in return for increased flight stipends and a promise by the company not to pursue retaliatory action against employees...

During the strike the firm announced it would hire 200 male and foreign nationals, part of an effort to diversify its current all-women flight cabin crew...

President Tsai Ing-wen has made low wages one of her top priorities since coming to office in 2016, and has since raised minimum hourly wage. But Taiwan still lags far behind developed Asian economies like South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore...

EXCHANGE RATES

Table with multiple columns listing exchange rates for various currencies under categories like AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO., DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD, and BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL.

Business

Premium prices attract small farmers back to coffee growing in Zimbabwe

Nespresso pays premium prices, helps with farmer training

HONDE VALLEY, Zimbabwe: David Muganyura smells the coffee cherries on the slopes of his plot and breaks into a smile, as he chats to workers who are harvesting a crop he expects to be his biggest to date. A long-time Zimbabwean coffee grower, Muganyura almost gave up on the crop when prices slumped to as low as US 20 cents a pound at the turn of the millennium, and foreign buyers took flight after land seizures drove out more than 120 white commercial coffee farmers under the banner of post-colonial reform.

But with companies like Nestle's Nespresso arm now willing to pay a premium for Zimbabwe's beans, small-scale farmers like Muganyura are returning to a sector that was all-but destroyed under former President Robert Mugabe.

Coffee output in Zimbabwe was 430 tons in 2018, a 10 percent increase over the previous year. This year production is set at 500 tons, according to industry officials.

Zimbabwe was never among the world's top producers: output peaked at around 15,000 tons in the late 1990s. But its Arabica coffee is prized for its zesty and fruity tones, and the sector once provided a livelihood for more than 20,000 poor farmers. Nespresso, which started buying Zimbabwean coffee last year at a 30 percent-40 percent premium above international prices and pays farmers in U.S. dollars, is helping to drive the modest revival.

It bought 200 tons from 450 small

Zimbabwean farmers and two large estates in 2018 and wants to attract more growers, said Daniel Weston, who heads Nespresso's corporate affairs division. Its limited edition "Tamuka muZimbabwe" ("We Have Awakened in Zimbabwe") coffee, launched in 16 countries in May, sold out in three weeks, he said. "What we are hoping to achieve over time is to increase the volume of coffee coming initially from the smallholder farmers we are working with and also to encourage other smallholder farmers to join the program," Weston told Reuters.

'Huge appetite'

Nespresso has teamed up with international non-profit TechnoServe to offer training to small farmers in the growing techniques needed to achieve the high quality it demands. "The market has a huge appetite for Zimbabwean coffee," said Midway Bhunu, TechnoServe's farmer trainer. "The world was about to lose one of the world's best coffees." Muganyura, a father of eight, received the training in 2018 and managed to more than triple output from his 2-hectare plot to 700 kg last year. This year, he expects to harvest 1.5 tons, a personal best that will earn him more than \$10,000.

"This is only introductory to a stage where we will get real money," Muganyura told Reuters during a visit to his plot in the eastern Honde Valley, about 360 km from the capital, Harare. The dollar payments have enabled

Muganyura to hire labor, install solar power at his homestead, buy farming inputs, pay school fees for some of his grand-children and medicine for his diabetic wife - which he struggled to do in the past.

This year, he aims to buy a car, a lifelong dream. Because of his success, he said, neighbors are inquiring about growing coffee. He plans to add another half a hectare of coffee trees. Zimbabwe outlawed the use of dollars and other foreign currencies last month, ending a decade of dollarization.

Nespresso said it was still assessing what that would mean for its dollar payments to farmers.

The Honde Valley is one of four districts that together had about 2,000 small coffee farmers at the turn of the millennium. But most quit and started growing bananas. Just two white-owned commercial coffee farms remain in Zimbabwe. Robert Boswell, 50, owns one of them. His family lost two other farms to land seizures in 2000 and cut the area under coffee production by 46 percent.

Boswell said he felt more confident after President Emmerson Mnangagwa replaced Mugabe in 2017, promising to restore property rights and revive the ravaged economy. Boswell, who had been selling coffee to roasters in Germany and Canada, started delivering to Nespresso in 2018. This year he will expand the area under coffee by 25 percent to 60 hectares, he said during a tour of his Crake Valley



A worker sorts coffee beans at Crake Valley Farm in Vumba, Zimbabwe. — Reuters

estate in the scenic Vumba hills, 140 km south of the Honde Valley. Commercial growers have an average yield of more than two tons per hectare.

Tanganda Tea Company, owned by diversified group Meikles Limited, is Zimbabwe's biggest coffee grower but its 134 hectares are a far cry from the more

than 1,000 hectares it used to grow two decades ago. Tanganda had largely abandoned coffee due to poor prices and started to grow avocados and macadamia nuts. But it too started selling to Nespresso in 2018 and plans to add another 40 hectares of coffee this year, according to a statement on its website. — Reuters

Somali women take on S Africa's property market

JOHANNESBURG: In the hallway of a large, brick-face apartment block in Johannesburg, Halima Jawahir greets her tenants, a group of six Somali women drying their henna-painted hands in the sunlight streaming through the windows.

After fleeing ongoing civil war in her native Somalia in 2016, Jawahir is now reinventing herself as a property mogul in the Mayfair neighborhood in Johannesburg, South Africa's biggest city. She rents an entire building of more than 100 flats from a South African landlord, before sub-dividing them into rooms, and subletting them to other mainly Somali and Ethiopian refugees.

But as a refugee without documentation, Jawahir is also breaking the law by subletting flats - a risk worth taking, she said, to save up enough to one day own her own property. "I am a widow, so I have to look after myself," said the 45-year-old, adjusting her green hijab as she sat on the couch in her second-floor flat. The United Nations estimates that at least 30,000 Somali refugees live in South Africa.

The country is wrestling with a massive backlog of asylum applications, according to human rights groups, leaving many refugees waiting months or even years for the authorization to work, go to school and find a place to live. Faced with this legal and economic uncertainty, some Somali women are challenging social norms and navigating the male-dominated property market in the hope that, one day, they will have the security that comes with owning a place of their own.

Jawahir's building is one of about a dozen properties in Mayfair that are being rented and then sublet by Somali refugee women, according to the Somali Community Board of South Africa.

For renters, subletting provides a stable source of income, and for their tenants it is

often the only way they can afford a place to live, said Jawahir. This is especially true for refugee women, many of whom are running their households and raising their children alone as they wait in limbo to be granted refugee status.

"Undocumented migrants do not qualify for government housing or subsidies and the impact of this overburdens mothers," said Tiffany Ebrahim, a researcher at the Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa, a human rights organization. "And the private (housing) market is inaccessible because it is so expensive, forcing people to fall back on solutions that are temporary with little security of tenure." Jawahir, whose name was changed to protect her identity, said that "as refugees and as women, we are always hustling".

Fleeing from home

Jawahir left Mogadishu for South Africa in 2016, after men robbed her at gunpoint at her home, killing both of her parents. "One bullet is still in my elbow," she said, pointing to scars across her arms and legs. "It makes it difficult to lift heavy things."

Once she was settled in Mayfair - a neighborhood so popular with the Somali diaspora that it is known as Little Mogadishu - Jawahir took the same route as other female Somali refugees in the area and set up her own business subletting flats. To supplement the rental income, she uses her contacts in Saudi Arabia, Dubai and East Africa to import perfumes, jewellery, honey, and shoes to sell in both stores and markets in Mayfair. She also sells cellphone credit to passersby.

At the end of each month, Jawahir said she sends about \$350 home to her family in Mogadishu, the Somali capital. Any extra money is put aside for future needs, including the possibility of one day buying the property she now rents out.

"If my husband was alive, he would be happy for me," Jawahir said. "Look at me, I am alone but empowered. I did this all by myself."

'A dream for many'

Although subletting is legal in South Africa, doing so without proper documentation showing asylum or refugee status



The Mayfair neighborhood in Johannesburg, South Africa's biggest city.

could lead to evictions - for both the original tenant and the subletter, Jawahir explained. And many have no other option, noted Abigail Dawson from the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa.

"We find that it is easier for many to fly under the radar, as the process of becoming 'legal' is such hard work," she said, referring to the backlog of refugee status appeals not yet processed by the government. The Department of Home Affairs and the South Africa Human Rights Commission were not available for comment. For Somali women in South Africa, many of whom lack a basic education and have no legitimate job prospects, the risk of subletting to others is worth it for the chance to one day own their own home, said Omar Muhammad from the Somali Community Board.

"Many of them (Somali refugees) cannot even speak English, so have little freedom to find opportunities outside their community," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in his office in Mayfair.

"Property ownership is a dream for many, because it would mean full independence." The benefits that refugees get from owning property are not limited to money, added Ebrahim from the Socio-Economic Rights Institute. "Location is everything," she said. "Having a secure place to live could be linked to accessible hospitals, schools, economic opportunities and most importantly, social networks that are needed in difficult times."

Property and community

Indhonoron Farah brought her five children to South Africa from Somalia 10 years ago, after her husband was killed in clashes between Somali clans when returning from work. She managed to secure her refugee documentation soon after - this was before the height of the application backlog - which meant she could send her children to school. "I arrived here with nothing and no one," said Farah, sitting behind the counter of her shop in Mayfair, where she sells fabrics, shoes, Kenyan honey and beaded bracelets.

"I would sell goods in townships all over South Africa and eventually made enough money to buy a property in Somalia," she said, adding that it is more socially acceptable and affordable for women to own property in their home country. She now rents that property out for extra income. Eventually, she wants to do the same in her adopted home.

"If I had more money, I would buy in South Africa too," she said. "Then when I die, I would have something to give my children here." As she spoke, an elderly beggar walked into her shop on crutches, asking for donations. Farah paused to open a drawer and pulled out a bag of porridge for the man. "If you have something, you must share with others," she said, smiling. "This is just how women must think. We can be mothers, shop owners, or landlords. It is how we have gotten through harder times." — Reuters

ECB should mull curbing low interest period: Merkel heir apparent

BERLIN: The European Central Bank's low interest rate policy is causing problems for savers and thought should be given to curbing its duration, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, leader of Germany's Christian Democrats (CDU) said in a newspaper interview.

Kramp-Karrenbauer, who succeeded Chancellor Angela Merkel as CDU leader in December, stressed in the interview with the daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung that the ECB is independent and should remain so, focused on its price stability mandate. "At the same time, one has to look for the future at whether the low interest rate phase should not, nonetheless, be curbed a bit," she said in the interview, published in yesterday's edition of the newspaper.

"Because the effect of these low interest rates is problematic, among other things because people with conventional savings deposits - including many in Germany - do not benefit from them," added Kramp-Karrenbauer, Merkel's heir apparent. "And when yields are so low, capital flows out of Europe. That is why we must ensure we continue to have leeway in monetary policy, but at the same time make monetary policy sustainable and very sensible. That is now a task for Christine Lagarde."

Lagarde, former French finance minister and IMF director since 2011, was tapped by European leaders last week to replace Mario Draghi as ECB president. Kramp-Karrenbauer's comments reflect frustration in Germany with the ECB's record low interest rates, which many believe are deployed to support weaker southern European economies and leave German savers with poor returns for their financial prudence. Her comments are nonetheless a rare, if veiled, criticism of the ECB's policy stance from a senior German politician.

Since taking over as CDU leader last December, Kramp-Karrenbauer has made a series of gaffes that have raised questions about her suitability to become chancellor once Merkel relinquishes the post, which she plans to hold onto until 2021. — Reuters

Deutsche Bank to slash 18,000 jobs by 2022

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: Germany's biggest lender Deutsche Bank said Sunday it would cut 18,000 jobs by 2022, as the former leading light of the country's financial sector looks to escape years of turmoil.

The slashing of around one in five of its workforce, to 74,000 employees, is an unprecedented round of departures for Deutsche. The bank said the layoffs would reduce annual costs by six billion euros (\$6.7 billion) over the same period. "Today we have announced the most fundamental transformation of Deutsche Bank in decades," chief executive Christian Sewing said, dubbing the scheme "a restart for Deutsche Bank".

The lender did not immediately make clear where the axe would fall. But with executives looking to find synergies in the integration of subsidiary Postbank and central infrastructure roles, many jobs are likely to go in home country Germany.

The new round of job cuts comes on top of some 6,000 already carried out over the past year. Bosses expect the restructuring plan to sap second-quarter results by some three billion euros this year, making for a net loss of 2.8 billion. Over the whole year, Deutsche is likely to plunge back into the red after a brief flirtation with profitability in



LONDON: A pedestrian walks past a logo outside the offices of German bank Deutsche Bank in central London. Germany's biggest lender Deutsche Bank said it would cut 18,000 jobs by 2022, as the former leading light of the country's financial sector looks to escape years of turmoil. — AFP

2018. The bank does not plan to pay out dividends this year or next.

Last chance?

The restructuring could be a last chance for Deutsche after much-hyped merger talks with crosstown rival Commerzbank fell through earlier this year. Negotiations collapsed despite the backing of the finance ministry in Berlin, which feared seeing a vital link in the financing of the country's economy bought up from abroad.

Over the past four years, the firm's market capitalization has fallen by 75 percent, making it a potential target for takeovers by bigger fish. As markets closed Friday, Deutsche was worth 15 billion euros (\$17 billion), placing it firmly at the

back of the pack in a European industry dominated by the likes of HSBC (165 billion euros), Spain's Banco Santander (69 billion) and France's BNP Paribas (54 billion).

"Deutsche plays in the first division, and should lay the foundations for things to stay that way" over the weekend, urged economy minister Peter Altmaier in the tabloid-style Bild's Sunday edition. Since he took the helm in early 2018, Sewing has attempted to refocus the sprawling group on stable revenue-generating business areas, including retail banking and so-called transaction banking for businesses.

Meanwhile Deutsche's focus has shifted from its attempt to compete with US-based global giants back to its home turf of Germany and Europe. In particular, tough cuts to the former flagship investment banking unit have been on the agenda since May.

Sunday's announcements target the once-proud division. Deutsche will stop almost all share trading activity, and is in talks with France's BNP Paribas to sell off some of its business and staff in the field. On Friday, Garth Ritchie, the head of Deutsche's South African investment banking unit, was first out of the door.

The unit's business had fallen back by 20 percent in the first quarter of 2018 alone, and it was no longer bringing in the fat profits of former years. Especially in the US, it was for years plagued by lawsuits and scandals, including some linked to the so-called "Panama Papers" leak of sensitive documents about offshore dealings. On top of the rank-and-file cuts, Deutsche is also rebuilding its board, sending away compliance chief Sylvie Matherat and two other executives. — AFP



CBK holds Najma draw for KD 500,000 prize money

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait held its biannual Najma draw for KD 500,000 prize money which was won by Mohammed Abdul Aziz Mohammed Abdul Aziz. CBK also awarded minor, Salem Saad Ali Bahrami with KD 5000 in Al-Najma weekly draw prize and awarded winners Osama Amer Abdul Rahman Othman, Hassan Mefarreh Al-Hajri and Hamed Al-Awadhi in the 'Your Summer In Cash' campaign in addition to the winner of the 'Salary & Cash on Top' campaign, Areej Suleiman Al-Awadhi.

Business

NBK Capital Global Markets Commentary

Boursa Kuwait remains the strongest performer in GCC since start of 2019

Global equity markets pare losses incurred in May

KUWAIT: Global markets managed to recover all of the losses incurred in May, after the US-China trade talks broke down, and resumed the drive upwards in continuation of the trend that persisted since the beginning of the year. Markets were buoyed by renewed hopes that the escalation between the US and China over trade tariffs will be contained and the two countries will go back to the negotiation table. Something which has actually materialized during the G20 meetings in Tokyo where the two Presidents of the US and China met and agreed to hold off on new tariffs and to resume trade talks.

Earlier in the month, the Federal Reserve voted 9-1 to keep the benchmark rate unchanged in a target range of 2.25 percent to 2.50 percent. Although the Fed didn't formally expect a rate cut until 2020 according to the dot-plot, the market is still expecting a cut that would come as soon as July. The Dot plot shows the median Federal Funds rate at 2.1 percent in 2020 down from 2.6 percent in its March projections. Inflation was seen running below target and projections of the headline PCE inflation numbers were taken down to 1.5 percent for 2019 down from a projection of 1.8 percent in March. Ten-year Treasuries touched the 2.0 percent level for the first time since November 2016 after having dropped from around 2.50 percent since the beginning of May. Concerns about a weakening US economy are still lingering in the background as US Manufacturing remained somewhat weak as the ISM Manufacturing Index edged lower to 51.7 in June from a reading of 52.1 in May.

International Indices had a strong month with the MSCI AC World Index rallying 6.36 percent to close the quarter at 2.93 percent and to record a mid-year performance of 14.88 percent. Major US indices recorded robust returns for the month of June recovering all of their previous month's losses and getting closer to new records. The S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were up 6.89 percent and 7.19 percent recording returns for the first six months of the year of 17.35 percent and 14.03 percent respectively. The tech-heavy Nasdaq was also on track to break new records. It closed the month of June at 8,006.24 and up 7.42 percent for June, 3.58 percent for the second quarter, and 20.66 percent for the first half of the year.

Over in Europe the picture was largely similar with a broad-based rally across markets. The Stoxx Europe 600 bounced back by 4.28 percent returning to positive territory for the quarter at 1.52 percent. The German DAX was up 5.73 percent, while the French CAC40 added 6.36 percent recording 17.42 percent and 17.09 percent for the first half of the year. Manufacturing activity continued to weaken, however, with the Markit Manufacturing PMI down to 47.6 in June from 47.7 in May and market expectations of 47.8.

In the UK, the FTSE 100 ended the month of June up 3.69 percent reversing last month's losses and closing the second quarter in the green. The Index is up 10.37 percent for the first half of the year. The Markit manufacturing PMI recorded 48.0 in June down from 49.4 the previous

NBK CAPITAL

month, continuing its downward trend which started around the end of 2017.

In Japan, revised GDP figures for the first quarter of 2019 showed a growth of 2.2 percent, 0.1 percent better than the 2.1 percent preliminary data showed earlier. As to manufacturing activity, the Nikkei Manufacturing PMI showed a slight decline to 49.3 in June from a previous reading of 49.8. Equity markets, however, joined the global rally as the Nikkei 225 Index added 3.28 percent in June returning to positive territory for the quarter at 0.33 percent, while advancing 6.30 percent during the first half of the year.

Emerging markets also rallied while slightly underperforming. The MSCI EM Index added 5.70 percent in June to recover most of the losses recorded as of the end of May and close the second quarter down marginally at -0.31 percent. For the first six months of 2019, the index is up 9.22 percent. Notable winners include the Borsas Istanbul 100 Index which added 6.51 percent and the Brazil Ibovespa Index with an advance of 4.06 percent. Emerging Asian markets also had a strong month as the MSCI Asia ex-Japan added 6.06 percent. In India, however, the NIFTY 50 succumbed to selling pressure after it hit a record high at the beginning of June and



closed the month down 1.12 percent.

GCC markets had a short trading month this June due to the Eid Al-Fitr holiday as most markets started trading on June 9 and joined the global rally in equities. This momentum, however, was short lived as it lost steam in the wake of geopolitical tensions in the Gulf between the US and Iran. Nonetheless, most markets managed to end the month in the green albeit slightly underperforming the global and emerging markets. The S&P GCC Composite Index added 2.38 percent in June returning to positive territory for the second quarter with a gain of 1.09 percent. The index closed the first half of the year up around 10.8 percent driven by a strong performance in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The Tadawul All share Index managed to end the month of June up by 3.58 percent leading the performance of GCC equities. It

was followed by Bahrain and Qatar with monthly returns of 2.62 percent and 1.78 percent respectively.

Kuwait closely followed with the Boursa Kuwait All Share Index adding 1.75 percent which pushed the second quarter return higher to 3.81 percent and the total performance for the first half of the year to 14.82 percent which is the highest among GCC peers. On a year-to-date basis, the Saudi market came in second after Kuwait with a performance of 12.71 percent. In the UAE, the Dubai market outperformed with a return of 1.46 percent against a loss of -0.47 percent for Abu Dhabi. On a year-to-date basis, Dubai is now up 5.09 percent, while Abu Dhabi is up 1.32 percent. Oman was the only GCC market that is negative for the year after declining by 1.25 percent in June bringing its total loss for the first month of 2019 to 10.15 percent.

Installment campaign on all KAICO pre-owned Chevrolet cars

KUWAIT: As it is always been their aim to offer the best services to the customers, Kuwait Automotive Imports Company (KAICO) which was co-founded by Al Shaya and Al Sagar in 1949 and best known for its quality service delivery on all kinds of automobile related products, has launched an installment campaign for its Pre-owned Chevrolet Cars (Impala, Caprice and Suburban). A peace of mind, affordability and trust worthy package that incorporates (No down payment and 0 percent interest) has been implemented in this campaign. In addition to one year/20,000 km (whichever comes first) warranty on engine and transmission and a gift of 1,500 liter gasoline for more comfortable winning deal.

The offered vehicles have the credibility and suitability to the comfort and quality requirement. The Chevy Caprice: Aside its very sophisticated interiors that complements its classy exterior look, with its V8 powerful engine and 6 speed automatic transmission is available in this offer with 3 different variants (LS, LTZ



& Royal), the monthly payment starts from KD 70 only.

The Chevy Suburban LT, one of the most suitable for adherents of old-school truck design as a result of its strength, with a monthly payment of KD 138 only.

The Suburban LT comes with many features such as Power lift gate, Navigation system, rear camera, power seats and 20" chrome wheels, it is also awarded four

stars overall safety rating. It also received four stars in the frontal crash category. Five stars were awarded for side crashes, and the rollover rating was three. Last but not least The Chevrolet Impala LS with a monthly payment of KD 50 only, is an excellent full-size five passenger sedan with a spacious, well laid out interior, and a V-6 engine.

Why buying gold from GCC will be cheaper than buying from India

By Abdul Salam KP

KUWAIT: The union budget 2019 will definitely help in the progress of the rural India however the additional import duty for gold will hurt the domestic gold and jewellery market and promote illegal gold businesses which is detrimental to the economy. While the new duty structure effects the Indian Jewellery Industry negatively, Jewellery business in the neighboring market will benefit out of this duty hike. Even the most popular designs and artifacts of India will be much cheaper in the UAE, other GCC states, Singapore and Malaysia.

Earlier these markets were depended on imports from India, whereas most of these markets have developed with manufacturing facilities. As the machineries and manpower are available from various parts of the world, Jewellery manufacturing is growing in these markets.

Customers from the subcontinent, especially from India taking advantage of this price benefit.

With the revised duty structure, customer will benefit more than Rs. 400 per gram on the gold purchases from GCC countries. This will definitely encourage bulk buyers, especially on wedding related purchases, to visit Dubai or any of these markets. If a family of four visit and bring back ornaments on a reasonable allowed quantity, they can cover their trip cost easily. They have additional benefit of much wider choice from international designs of Jewellery.

Current price difference is mostly on account of 12.5 percent custom duty and 3 to 4 percent other taxes. Whereas in GCC countries, gold bullion is zero rated, and the GST charged in many countries are refunded to the tourists, thus practically no duty or tax on the purchases made by them.

The increase in import duty from 10 percent to 12.5 percent will also affect the import of jewellery from different parts of the world into India. This will affect availability of internationally designed and manufactured jewellery. Customers will therefore find a much larger array of designs and jewellery in markets like GCC, Singapore and Malaysia etc.

The price advantage of 10 - 12.5 percent along with the VAT refund for the tourists which will leads the NRIs and tourists to buy gold from this part of the world.

People from subcontinent still believe gold as the ideal investment compared to other options. As a substance with high market liquidity, it can be easily sold without having to alter the price. In addition, it is a movable asset whose value does not witness depreciation with uncertain economies. So this price advantage will be beneficial for those who buy gold as an investment. — Abdul Salam KP is the Group Executive Director, Malabar Group



Microsoft appoints Charles Nahas as regional GM for ME multi-country cluster

KUWAIT: Microsoft yesterday announced the appointment of Charles Nahas as Regional General Manager for its new Middle East Cluster (MEC). Under his leadership, the new subsidiary will aim to strengthen Microsoft's footprint in the region - work closely with governments, organizations and partners, to harness the power of the digital revolution and achieve more.

Nahas brings over 18 years of professional experience in the high-tech sector with leadership roles spanning multinational organizations, midsize companies and startups across Middle East and North America. He joined Microsoft in 2006 as General Manager for Eastern Mediterranean and Pakistan. And then took on the role of Business & Marketing Officer for the NEPA region (North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean & Pakistan) where he continued to spearhead the company's growth. In November 2013, Nahas was named General Manager for Microsoft in Kuwait, where he worked closely with public and private sector organizations to accelerate digital transformation and contribute towards the economic growth of the country.

Commenting on his appointment, Samer Abu-Ltaif, President for Microsoft Middle East and Africa said, "Digital transformation in the Middle East is in full swing, and this calls for us to work more closely in the region's key markets to deliver on our mission of empowering every individual and organization to achieve more. I truly believe Charles's rich experience coupled with his people-first leadership style, as well as customer and digital transformation driven acumen, will be pivotal for the newly established subsidiary, paving the way for success".

Prior to joining Microsoft, Nahas has spent many years working in various leadership capacities in start-ups, midsize and multinational organizations in North America and the Middle East including Omnix Media Networks, Webraska Mobile Technologies, General Datacomm and Bell Northern Research (Nortel Networks).



Charles Nahas

Burgan Bank announces winner of Al-Thuraya salary account draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, announced yesterday Hzoom Qablan Hzoom Al-Shammari as the lucky winner of the Al-Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw.

The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank by offering them a chance to win a Nissan Patrol SUV every month. With every KD 10 available in the account, the customer receives one chance to enter the draw.

The Al-Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and other major currencies and can access account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards, and benefit from the discounts and offers throughout the year. Customers wishing to open the Al-Thuraya account can do so by simply visiting the nearest Burgan Bank branch and obtain all the necessary details.



بنك بروقان
BURGAN BANK
driven by you

Travel



See 'The Lion King' cast for real in Africa

From Banzai, Simba and Shenzi to Pumbaa, Timon and Zazu, the characters of The Lion King have captivated millions, both young and old, since the original animated feature was released 25 years ago. With the live-action remake out on 19 July, we thought we'd reintroduce you to some of the species featured in this famous film and provide some advice on the best places to see them in the wilds of Africa.

Lions

Simba (named after the Swahili word for lion) and his extended family of Scar, Mufasa, Nala, Sarabi and Sarafina portray traits often seen in Africa's biggest cats when in the wild - loving and loyal, lions can also be fierce, lazy and occasionally loathsome. Unsurprisingly, this fascinating and powerful species is one of the most sought after by safari goers.

The shared ecosystem of Kenya's Masai Mara and Tanzania's Serengeti is perhaps the most iconic of settings to observe lions living life as they have done for time immemorial. The vast rolling savannahs punctuated with flat-topped acacia trees is the quintessential safari setting in East Africa. And the Serengeti's large, horizon-busting outcrops seem straight from the movie reel.

Other incredible locations to follow lions in live action include Chobe National Park and the Okavango Delta in Botswana, Kruger National Park in South Africa and South Luangwa National Park in Zambia. The latter is famous for its guided walking safaris that put you on level footing with lions in their natural habitat.

Warthogs

Who can forget Pumbaa, with his lofty tail and large curved tusks? Once considered one of the 'Ugly Five' in the safari world, the warthog's reputation has been forever transformed by this humorous character in The Lion King. His name aptly translates to 'silly or foolish' in Swahili.

Their tails shooting skyward as they scamper off when spooked now never fails to garner smiles from those on safari. It's believed this behavior facilitates them to follow each other when dashing into deep grass for cover. Many guides affectionately call their

tails 'bush antennas'. Also endearing is the warthog's eating stance - with long legs and short necks, it has evolved pads on its front knees to allow them to kneel down while grazing. The species name relates not to actual warts, but rather large growths of fat and skin on their faces that provide some protection during mating season fights.

Warthogs are widely distributed across Southern, West and East Africa. Eastern South Africa, northern Namibia, northern Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and southern Kenya are all hot spots.

Meerkats

And where there is Pumbaa, there is of course Timon. This meerkat character is one of the few in The Lion King whose name does not have a meaning in Swahili - though it is derived from a Greek word that means 'to honor or respect'.

In the wild meerkats live in large family groups of up to 50 members and reside within complex networks of underground tunnels in desert regions of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. Omnivorous, it eats everything from plants, insects and eggs to snakes, lizards and scorpions. Remarkably, dining on the latter is possible due to the species having an immunity to scorpions' poison. While members of the family dig and forage for food, others act as sentries to keep an eye out for predators, both on the horizon and in the sky above.

One of the most rewarding experiences is to visit the groups of habituated meerkats within Ntwetwe Pan in the Makgadikgadi and Nxai Pan region of Botswana. While still wild, these meerkats have no fear of humans, which means the sentries may actually clamber right up your leg and up to the top of your head. Rather than looking for affection, they are just using you to get a more expansive view of possible predators on the prowl. Simply stand still and they will eventually move on.

Spotted hyenas

Did you know Scar's three spotted hyena henchmen - Shenzi, Banzai and Ed - were originally supposed to be African wild dogs? It's thought that this was changed given the ferocious rivalry between lions and



dominant role in their large clans. Wrongly labeled mere scavengers, these hyenas are incredibly skilled hunters and are known to take down wildebeest, zebra, antelope and even juvenile hippos. It's actually not uncommon for lions to scavenge from hyena kills. With some of the strongest jaws in the animal kingdom, these creatures will even eat the bones of their prey - as a result their droppings are often white in color.

There are more than 7000 spotted hyena in Serengeti National Park alone, which make it and the adjacent Masai Mara prime territories to see them. Though as the spotted hyena is primarily nocturnal, you'll likely need to be up at the crack of dawn to catch a glimpse. As the three main waterholes at Namibia's Etosha National Park are floodlit and open to visitors throughout the night, it is a fantastic place to observe the captivating dynamics of hyena clans at work.

Mandrills

The character Rafiki, whose name means 'friend' in Swahili, is a mandrill. The largest of all monkeys, the mandrill looks much like it has come off the worse after a run-in with a graffiti artist. Its brilliantly colored face and rump almost need to be seen to be believed.

Reclusive and shy, this species distribution is limited to the equatorial rainforests of central Africa. The best bet of seeing one in the wild is within Lope National Park in Gabon.

Red-billed hornbills

Last but not least is Zazu, the red-billed hornbill. Known for its swooping flight pattern and long curved bill, this bird has a unique nesting ritual. The female will lay up to half a dozen eggs in a tree hole before imprisoning herself inside for the duration of the incubation by sealing the entrance with a mixture of mud, fruit pulp and droppings - only a small hole is left for the male to transfer food inside to the mother.

There are up to five different species of red-billed hornbill and they combine to cover most of the woodlands and savannah of sub-Saharan Africa. You'd be unlucky not to see one on safari wherever you travel. -www.lonelyplanet.com



Health

Ethiopia dishes up free school meals; drought stokes hunger

Millions of students going to school hungry

ADDIS ABABA: Endale Terefe remembers a time when he used to go to school so hungry he had trouble staying awake during lessons. The 14-year-old student in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, was living with his aunt after his parents died. "My aunt has no money to buy food," he said. "So I was obliged to come to school with no lunch box and felt sleepy in class." Then, three years ago, he and other students in the city started getting two free school meals a day through local charities. "I am now attending the class attentively," Terefe said with a smile.

As drought in parts of Ethiopia makes food less available and more expensive nationwide, millions of students, including in cities, are going to school hungry - if they go at all. But while the federal government provides rural schools with free food in times of drought, the task of feeding students in the capital has typically been left to charities. That changed in January when the Addis Ababa government launched its own "school feeding programme" for tens of thousands of children, aiming to combat rising urban hunger as climate change is predicted to intensify dry spells.

Lower crop yields on farms across Ethiopia have resulted in declining food supplies to cities, said Esubalew Abate, assistant professor of food and nutrition security at Addis Ababa University. The consequences include soaring food prices and double-digit inflation, which put a

massive financial strain on city dwellers already struggling with a lack of housing and high poverty rates, he said. The impact of drought in rural areas of Ethiopia has been evident in Addis Ababa over the last four years, Abate said. "Whenever there is drought, it is very clear that the food price increases (in the city)," he added.

El nino effect

Belaynesh Ferede, 45, a mother of two who lives in Addis Ababa, said the prices of many staples had jumped dramatically in just the last four years. For example, the price of a kilogramme of teff - Ethiopia's staple grain - rose from 20 birr to 30 birr (\$0.70 to \$1), while a kilo of potatoes doubled from 10 birr to 20 birr. "Living has become expensive in the city," she said. And for many children in Addis Ababa, where 80% of people live in slums, according to the charity Habitat for Humanity, those high food prices mean going to school on an empty stomach.

The indirect effect of climate extremes on education became clear in 2015-2016, when El Nino - a warming of sea-surface temperatures in the Pacific - hit an already drought-stressed Ethiopia, tipping it into the worst drought in 50 years. Relief agencies reported that students were falling asleep or feeling sick in class, attendance rates fell and dropout rates spiked, as children were either too

hungry to go to school or had to stay home to help their families look for food. To keep children in class in the wake of El Nino, the Ethiopian government launched a \$50-million emergency programme in drought-hit rural areas, which gave about 6 million students free school meals over three years. The UN World Food Programme observed that the programme stabilised school attendance rates, with fewer dropping out. "Even students who had dropped out a long time ago returned to school," it said in a report.

The Addis Ababa government hoped to see the same positive results among the city's school children with this year's feeding initiative. It has allocated 169 million birr for free meals in all the city's primary schools, covering more than 50,000 children. "Education for all is a global motto and access to education is a matter of right, so the city government has a responsibility to feed students," said Meti Tamrat, the programme's coordinator at the Addis Ababa Education Bureau.

The city programme complements school-meal projects run by local charities that continue to provide meals for about 80,000 students. But not all needy students have yet been covered, Tamrat noted, adding it was still too early to measure the impact of the city government's initiative. Research by the Ye Enat Weg Charitable Association, which has provided free school meals since 2014, showed

that by 2018, the dropout rate in Addis Ababa's schools had fallen by 75% and students' academic scores had improved by 14% since 2006.

'Huge lesson'

As Addis Ababa works to stop rural droughts hurting education in the city, the federal government is looking to launch another feeding programme that will support children all over the country. According to the ministry of education's emergency school meal plan for 2019, more than 1 million children in drought-affected areas are still coming to school hungry. Meanwhile, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network has warned that the majority of households in five regions of Ethiopia face a crisis-level food shortage through September 2019 due to a combination of drought and conflict.

Instead of offering free school meals only in emergency situations, the federal government wants to implement an ongoing programme in all primary schools, said Bereket Takele, advisor for the programme at the Ministry of Education. Mitigating the impact of drought on the education sector has now become a priority for Ethiopia, he added. "The government has learned a huge lesson about how drought can affect students," Takele said. "There is a saying: 'Challenge is an opportunity'." — Reuters

CLINIC
PAGE





248 33 199

CLINIC
PAGE





248 33 199



Dr. Ahmed Hosni Abd Elhamid
Consultant



Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally
Senior Registrar



Dr. Abeer Khattab
Specialist



Cataract Surgery



Glaucoma



Retina



General Ophthalmology



Follow-Up All Treatments

Optthalmology Services

Follow Us On Social Media @hadclinic

Tel: 1828392
Whatsapp Us
+965-6000 2104

Dr Sahar Ghannam

Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser

Timing: Saturdays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 5 pm
Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 am to 5 pm
Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm

Friday is a holiday.

Address: Fourth Ring Road - Abdallah Fadallah Street, Meidan Hawally, opposite fire station - block 35, building 31.

Clinic Phones: 25610407/ 409/ 314 Fax: 25610465
Mobile: 90974754/ 99166746





To advertise on this Page

Call: 24833199 ext:101,102 or Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617

or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

WELCOME

Dr Tammam Abou Ali
Consultant ENT, Head & Neck, Facial Plastic Surgeon.

Follow-up of the vocal folds of surgeons in UK and Ireland. 10 years work experience in Jeddah Hospital (KSA) Riyadh. In Head of ENT department in Farwaj Hospital (KSA) Kuwait. 10 years work experience in UK and Ireland.

- Endoscopic Sinus Surgery
- Septoplasty and turbinate reduction surgery by laser or RF
- Snoring and OSAP Surgery
- Rhinoplasty with open and closed techniques
- Microscopic Middle Ear Surgery and Tympanoplasty
- Salivary gland and parotid surgery
- Thyroid and parathyroid surgery
- Micro laryngeal surgery



1 888 883
www.qmc-kuwait.com





Dr. Abdullah Hadi
Cardiology Department
Consultant - Internal Medicine
Interventional Cardiology & Adult Cardiology

د. عبد الله هادي
قسم أمراض القلب والأوعية الدموية
إستشارات - الأمراض الباطنية
وأمراض القلب والفسطرة القلبية التداخلية للكبار



We bring you the best expertise

Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088 @TaibaHospital

Dr. Husain Alenezi

-Board Certified Urologist.
-Endourology Society-Approved Fellowship In Endourology And Robotic Surgery At Western University, Ontario, Canada.



Expert in diagnosing and treating:

- 1- Urinary Stones (Kidney, Ureter & Bladder) By Endoscopy & Laser
- 2- Prostate Cancer And Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia
- 3- Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms In Males And Females
- 4- Tumors And Malignancies Of The Urinary Tract (Kidney, Adrenals, Ureter, Bladder And Testes)
- 5- Male Factor Infertility And Varicoceles (Microscopic Surgery)
- 6- Erectile Dysfunction



Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088 94449452 Twitter: @DrHusain_Urol

Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family

Book your appointments today!





Dr. Kiran Taraka
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Zarreena Zahir
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Hassan Khan
Senior Cardiologist



Dr. P. Seshendra Nath
Orthopedic Consultant (AUSTRALIA)
Specialized in Neck, Shoulder Hip and Knee

50721507 24551555
www.exircenterkw.com

EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER
Block No.4 Jahra - Kuwait

Tel : 24568857 / 24568899 info@exircenterkw.com www.exircenterkw.com

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

DR. MOHAMMAD AL HAJRY
Canadian Board of Otolaryngology
Head & Neck Surgery and Facial Plastics.
Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons-Canada
A rare Subspecialty in Microscopic Ear Surgery, Cochlear implant & Ear diseases

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

Salmiya, Belajat Street, Tel: 1881122

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

ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

SPECIALIZED IN:

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

SHARQ, Ahmad Alieher st., Building 68, Floor 13.
Tel.: (+965) 22060777
@DrFahadmed, @FahadSabb, @FahadSabb
Email: drfahadmed@beautybeyond.com.kw

To advertise on this Page

Call: 24833199 ext:101,102
or Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617
or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

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

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

مسشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

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

Specialized in:

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

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

- Laryngology Fellowship - Canada
- Fellow of the European Board Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the British Laryngological Association
- Member of the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- Member of the European Laryngological Society

Specialized in:

- Management of benign and malignant vocal cord lesions.
- Vocal cord augmentation.
- Treatment of spasmodic dysphonia.
- Adenotonsillectomy using latest techniques.
- Thyroid surgery.
- Surgery for the deviated nasal septum.
- Endoscopic sinus surgery.
- Treatment of allergic rhinitis.
- Treatment of snoring.
- Treatment of vertigo.

IC INTERNATIONAL CLINIC
American Board Certified in General Surgery
Member of the Society of American Gastrointestinal & Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES)
Higher specialization in Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery & Organ Transplantation
Member of many prestigious surgical societies.

- Day case surgeries
- Minor surgeries (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
- Diagnosis, treatment and follow up of all surgical emergencies
- Hemorrhoids, fistula & anal fissure surgeries
- Surgery for morbid obesity (sleeve, gastric bypass)
- Breast surgeries
- Hernia repair
- Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- Surgery for reflux disease
- Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendectomy
- Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

Dr. Hani Haider
General Surgery Consultant
http://www.international-clinic.com
Tel: 1886677

Scope of Clinical Practice:

- General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- Single Port Surgery
- Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, including Colorectal Cancer
- Surgical Treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abdomen
- Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- WART Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistaloscope)
- Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve-Gastroctomy
- Gallstones & Abdominal Hernia Surgery

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

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

مسشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

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.

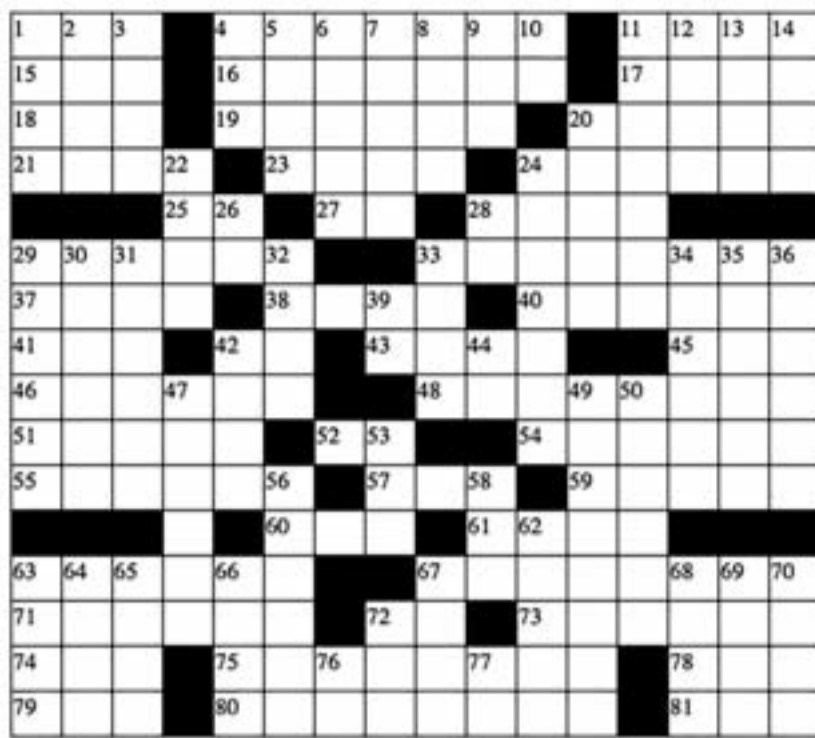
Scope of clinical Practice.

- 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 - Closer Center Mazaya Building

Stars

CROSSWORD 2252



ACROSS

1. Experiencing or showing sorrow or unhappiness.
4. The dignity or rank or position of an earl or countess.
11. God of fire.
15. A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.
16. A member of the Siouan people formerly inhabiting the Black Hills of western South Dakota.
17. A cut of meat taken from the side and back of an animal between the ribs and the rump.
18. A legal document codifying the result of deliberations of a committee or society or legislative body.
19. A mountain peak in the Andes in Bolivia (21,391 feet high).
21. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
23. Avatar of Vishnu.
25. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
27. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
29. In motion.
37. Harsh or corrosive in tone.
38. A city in northwestern Syria.
40. Requiring secret or mysterious knowledge.
41. Acute delirium caused by alcohol poisoning.
43. Being or located on or directed toward the side of the body to the west when facing north.
45. Any of numerous hairy-bodied insects including social and solitary species.
46. Constituting or relating to a tail.
48. Primitive evergreen mosslike plant with spores in club-shaped strobiles.
51. A means of serving.
52. A gray tetravalent metallic element that resembles zirconium chemically and is found in zirconium minerals.
54. A river that rises in northern Colombia and flows generally eastward to the Orinoco in central Venezuela.
55. A person of Polish descent.
57. A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
59. A mark to indicate a direction or relation.
60. (informal) Of the highest quality.
61. A Lolish language.
63. English courtier (a favorite of Elizabeth I) who tried to colonize Virginia.
71. Relating to the blood vessels or blood.
73. A member of an agricultural people of southern India.
74. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
75. Relating to or characteristic of or situated in suburbs.
78. (used especially of persons) Having lived for a relatively long time or attained a specific age.
79. The month following March and preceding May.
80. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
81. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.

DOWN

1. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
2. Type genus of the Alciidae comprising solely the razorbill.
3. Evergreen tree of eastern Asia and Philippines having large leathery leaves and small green-white flowers in compact cymes.
4. (Greek mythology) The winged goddess of the dawn in ancient mythology.
5. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
6. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar.
7. Wild or domesticated South American cud-chewing animal related to camels but smaller and lacking a hump.
8. Fallow deer.
9. Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
10. Informal terms for a mother.
11. An annual publication including weather forecasts and other miscellaneous information arranged according to the calendar of a given year.
12. The state of affairs that a plan is intended to achieve and that (when achieved) terminates behavior intended to achieve it.
13. An impression in a surface (as made by a blow).
14. Of the color of black ink.
20. Bake (eggs) in their shells until they are set.
22. Set down according to a plan.
24. A genus of Psittacidae.
26. Not out.
28. A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.
30. The size of a book whose pages are made by folding a sheet of paper three times to form eight leaves.
31. Relating to or using sight.
32. A Gaelic-speaking Celt in Ireland or Scotland or the Isle of Man.
33. A detailed description of design criteria for a piece of work.
34. A small drum with one head of soft calfskin.
35. Romanian violinist and composer (1881-1955).
36. A plaything that is ridden up and down by children at either end.
39. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
42. A fine grained mineral having a soft soapy feel and consisting of hydrated magnesium silicate.
44. A state in southeastern United States between the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico.
47. An ornamental jewelled headdress signifying sovereignty.
49. Hindu sacred text instructing the Brahmins to perform the Vedic rituals.
50. A sudden short attack.
53. A fixed charge for a privilege or for professional services.
56. Coffee-flavored liqueur made in Mexico.
58. The cry made by sheep.
62. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
64. An association of people to promote the welfare of senior citizens.
65. British artist and writer of nonsense verse (1812-1888).
66. A short labored intake of breath with the mouth open.
67. Queen of the Olympian gods in ancient Greek mythology.
68. A mountainous landlocked communist state in southeastern Asia.
69. Look at with amorous intentions.
70. A quantity of no importance.
72. Small rounded bread either plain or sweet.
76. A nonmetallic largely pentavalent heavy volatile corrosive dark brown liquid element belonging to the halogens.
77. A heavy brittle diamagnetic trivalent metallic element (resembles arsenic and antimony chemically).

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may have discovered you are giving more than you are receiving. You have a tendency to give too much of yourself to others. This is a time you may need to turn your focus on you. Get serious about your health and mental well-being. Remember taking care of you is a necessity. You tend to see this as being selfish. Remember if you do not take care of you, you will not be able to continue the constant care you give to others. Feed your soul, spoil yourself, but most of all, learn to relax. Today is the day to take a deep breath, grab a quick nap, and face the world with a new refreshed attitude. Aries. Learn to put yourself first.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Today you may feel led by your heart maybe even more loving and emotional than usual. Today is a great day to spend time with someone you love. This closeness is something you long for. Intimacy and love are driving factors for you today. You could be extremely sensitive and emotionally unable to express your feelings to someone very close to you. This is something unfamiliar to you as your words usually flow with grace and style. Taurus. This may leave you feeling somewhat vulnerable.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

When the heavens are in certain positions, you could feel different sensations and sense noticeable, but unseen, changes to your environment. Such are the positions now, you decide to go with the flow and let events unfold as they will. Your confidence levels are high, even when things don't appear to be working; this shows that you can't always go by what you see with the physical eyes! Being first in line doesn't always mean being served first! Accepting where the cards fall is an indication of a spiritual warrior: working with what you're given reveals your power and abilities. Spending some time alone could help with a decision that affects more than one person.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are fiercely independent, especially today. You have drive and ambition. You may be focused on a goal but may be drawn to accomplish it in a less conventional manner than you normally would. You are bored with your usual routine and seeking a bit of change. Thinking outside the box may lead to some exciting new experiences. This may also lead to recognition for your creative thinking from those around you. The choices you make today will be clear and concise. These choices will also clearly be the correct ones and will be reap great rewards in the future from decisions made today.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may find yourself feeling emotionally detached from your surroundings. Ideas are what are important to you now. You may not have tolerance and find yourself distancing yourself from those who do not see things this way. You seem to be drawn to all that is unusual and a bit on the eccentric side. From the way you are beginning to think to the material possessions you wish to acquire, your taste is changing. You have a desire to travel and are focused on your relationships with friends and those who are in your social circle.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Leave the major decisions for later, frustration and other obstacles may seem to be in your way today. You seem to find yourself wanting to be more social. A desire to hit the town. You find pleasure in surrounding yourself with friends. Choose your company wisely as you could find yourself in conflict with someone close to you. You seem to know what to say and when to say it. Others are seeking your company, and this would be a great time to spend time with your siblings or neighbors. Today is a great day for an escape. Take in a movie or curl up with a book. This may just what you need to rest your mind and start tomorrow with a new outlook on life.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

A seriousness comes over you today. This is a great time to think and study. Enroll in an online course, or sign up for classes to further your education. Your frame of mind now is perfect for it. This is a great time to reorganize for you. Getting things in order will come naturally and with ease. Connect with old acquaintances. Reach out and connect with someone you love. Clear thoughts and an open mind make for great times with those you love.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

As clearly as you can see what direction you want to be headed, you are also able to see the past today. Memories of days gone by seem to flood in. You have come to appreciate the obstacles life has put in your path. You know that the struggles you have faced have only made you stronger. You may develop a strong bond with someone younger today. Your wisdom and life experience will be very beneficial when helping them with a situation they are dealing with.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may be facing a very emotional issue in your life today. It may seem your desire to be respected by others is very strong. You may find yourself even demanding this from others today. You may find yourself becoming very organized and structured. A strong will takes hold. You may discover you may not only have a knack for organizing things, but you have one for organizing people as well. This makes you a great leader and this quality could be acknowledged in the workplace today. Your ability to work with haste and little emotion makes you a natural in a position of leadership or management. You may find that you are not as appreciative of those around you. You will find others looking to you for support and advice and you are just the one to lead them in the right direction.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may have been so focused lately you have been missing out on a social life. Today is a great day to get out and about. Hit the town but choose your company wisely as not to experience any conflict while doing so. Surround yourself with like-minded friends. Choose friends who are positive and share your love of life. You may find yourself experiencing a real spiritual awakening and the desire to share this with others. You should be pleasantly please at how receptive your friends are. A great day for you where the lines of communication open in all aspects of your world.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You will tell on yourself by the company you keep. If all your friends look, talk, and think like you, you may want to seek out some new relationships. You can learn from children as well as elderly, and everyone in between. Cultivate people of different races and cultures, from different social and economic backgrounds. Don't avoid those whose religion is different from yours. When you feel secure about yourself, you can enjoy diversity, and your life will be enriched by each relationship.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Prepare for a major event. This may put an end to your old way of life. You may find independence is a necessity now rather than a choice. You are on your own and this may mark a time of increased responsibility and accountability. Some soul searching may be in order to face this new life. Take your time and spend sometime meditating or relaxing to access your new situation. Do not ask yourself, Why me? You know why. Because you can handle any obstacle that is put in your path.

Wordsearch Puzzle

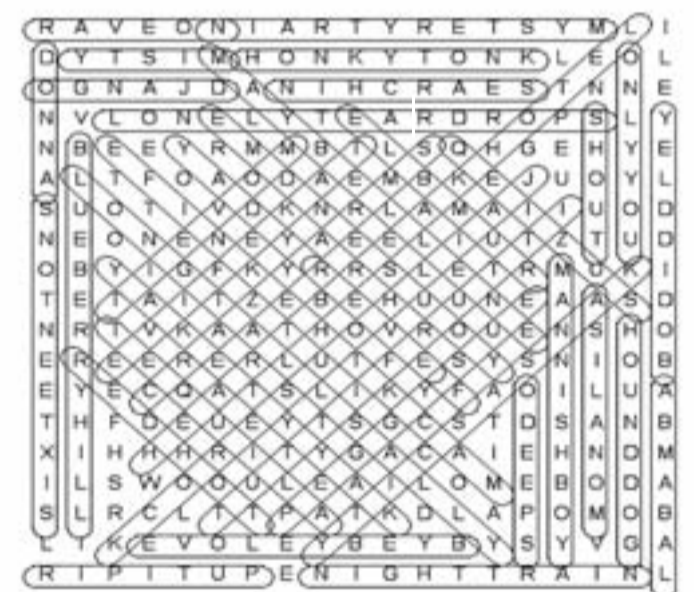
60's Songs

Find and circle all of the 1960's song titles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional 1960's song.



- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| BABY LOVE | ELENORE | MEMPHIS | TEEN ANGEL |
| BLUE MOON | FINGERTIPS | MY GIRL | THE BOXER |
| BLUE VELVET | FIRE | MY GUY | THE TWIST |
| BUS STOP | GALVESTON | PEOPLE | THESE EYES |
| CARA MIA | GOOD LOVIN' | PUPPY LOVE | VALLERI |
| CHAIN GANG | GROOVIN' HAIR | RESPECT | VOLARE |
| CHERISH | HEATWAVE | RUNAWAY | WHITE RABBIT |
| CRAZY | HEY JUDE | SHERAY | WILD THING |
| CRYING | HOLIDAY | SOUL MAN | WINDY |
| DIZZY | ITCHYCOO PARK | SPOOKY | WIPEOUT |
| DOWNTOWN | LAST KISS | STAY | WORDS |
| EL PASO | | SURF CITY | YESTERDAY |

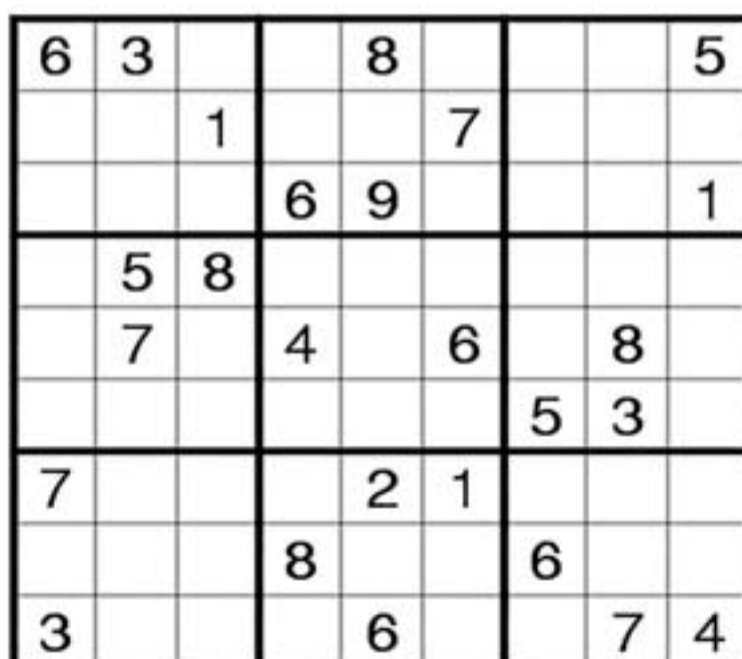
1950's Songs



- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| BLUEBERRY HILL | HOUND DOG | MONA LISA | SEARCHIN' |
| BO DIDDLEY | JAILHOUSE ROCK | MOVE IT | SHOUT |
| BYE BYE LOVE | KANSAS CITY | MYSTERY TRAIN | SIXTEEN TONS |
| CRAZY ARMS | LA BAMBOLA | NIGHT TRAIN | SPEEDO |
| DJANGO | LONELY TEARDROPS | ONLY YOU | SUZIE Q |
| DONNA | LONG TALL SALLY | PEGGY SUE | TAKE FIVE |
| EVERYDAY | MACK THE KNIFE | RAVE ON | TEQUILA |
| FEVER | MANNISH BOY | RED HOT | TUTTI FRUTTI |
| HEARTBREAK HOTEL | MAYBELLENE | REP IT UP | YAKETY YAK |
| HONKY TONK | MISTY | RUMBLE | YOU SEND ME |

The hidden sentence is: I'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THIS WORLD ALIVE

Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JULY 9, 2019



A model presents a creation from Spanish label Brain&Beast's Spring/Summer 2020 collection during the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week in Madrid on July 7, 2019. — AFP

Malawi's albino busker ready for world stage



Malawian musician with albinism, Lazarus Chigwandali, poses with his sons Layijo (left) and Joseph before leaving his home at Likuni to go and perform at Area 3 Market in the capital Lilongwe on May 10, 2019 in Likuni on the outskirts of Lilongwe, Malawi.



Malawi's musician with albinism, Lazarus Chigwandali, practices his guitar and drum before leaving his home.



Malawi's musician with albinism, Lazarus Chigwandali, poses with his managers Siphwe Zulu (left) and Esau Mwachwa before leaving his home.

Like scores of other buskers, Lazarus Chigwandali plies the streets of Malawi's capital Lilongwe hoping for a few coins from appreciative passers-by. But Chigwandali is not your usual street musician. He is an albino, releasing a professional album, and the star of a documentary produced by Madonna. Albinos are often targeted in brutal attacks in Malawi and other southern African countries because they have white skin due to a hereditary condition that causes lack of pigmentation. Killings, abductions and gruesome dismembering of body parts for witchcraft are all real dangers.

Despite the risks, Chigwandali, 39, has been out in front of the public for years playing his upbeat tunes on a homemade banjo and a drum that he hits with a pedal operated by his right foot. His big break came just last year when a tourist took a video of him on a cellphone and the footage was seen by Swedish producer Johan Hugo, who asked him to record an album. Chigwandali, who sings in the local Chichewa language, draws on his tough upbringing for his music, telling of constant harassment, suspicion and the threat of physical attack. "Growing up, people didn't want us being close to them because of our skin," he told AFP. "People would leave when I went to watch a football match with my younger brother (also an albino), others would jostle us." The album talks about the plight of persons with albinism. How people should not stigmatize others.

'Blows you away'

Chigwandali's music stands out on its own-energetic with sharp vocals that catch everyone's attention as they walk by. Hugo, the Swedish producer, was so impressed by the video clip that he tracked down the Malawian busker and offered to record his music. "A few golden times in life something blows you away in such an amazing way you just cry and laugh and shake your head," Hugo said later on social media.

"(It was) one of the coolest and most emotional moments of my life." Chigwandali still busks occasionally to provide for his wife and three sons—two of them albinos—though he hopes the blossoming projects he is involved with will soon bring in a regular income. He wears a wide-brimmed hat to keep off the sunlight that causes painful damage to his sensitive, heavily-freckled skin, and a traditional handmade shirt with a matching pair of trousers. Ikponswa Ero, the

UN's chief expert on albinism, told AFP that Chigwandali was playing a unique role in tackling prejudice against albinos.

"He is using the arts for advocacy, which is a powerful tool because it touches people's hearts, so he is really doing something important here," she said. "People like Lazarus complement people like myself who report and help build policy." And Malawi, one of the world's poorest and most aid-dependent countries, has experienced a surge in violent attacks on people with albinism.

In a report last year, Amnesty International said that since November 2014 there had been 148 crimes reported against people with albinism, with at least 21 deaths. For Chigwandali, he says his "recent status as a famous musician has made it difficult for me to be a target because I am more prominent. So, now I go to the village without the fear of being abducted."

'Give voice to albinos'

Originally from the town of Dedza in central Malawi, Chigwandali moved to Lilongwe after his much-loved younger brother died of skin cancer in 2006. Superstar singer Madonna met him during a visit to Malawi last year, and took an executive producer credit in the documentary, simply titled "Lazarus", which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York in April. "A powerful voice of a new generation in Malawi," Madonna wrote beneath a picture of the pair on social media when they performed together in Malawi. As well as Madonna, Chigwandali hopes to emulate Salif Keita, the Malian afro-pop star singer who also has albinism.

Now preparing for his album launch, he has released a promotional track "Ndife Alendo" ("We are strangers") which has been played on several BBC radio stations. "My message is reaching the whole world now," he said. "But there's also been really amazing support from Malawi radio and TV—I want people in my home country to hear this music and appreciate it. "This has all been a rollercoaster ride for me, these things don't happen in real life normally. I don't know what to expect. But I trust that people want the best for me. "I hope my music gives a voice to people with albinism, so they understand they're as worthy as any other human being." — AFP

Researchers say ancient Philistine town located in Israel

Researchers in Israel said yesterday they have pinpointed the site of an ancient Philistine town mentioned in the biblical tale of David seeking refuge from the Israelite king Saul. Ziklag was a town under the rule of a Philistine king in nearby Gath after the ancient "sea peoples" began arriving in the region in the 12th century BC, the researchers say. A biblical tale says the town became the unlikely seat of David before his anointment as king in Hebron following Saul's death.

Ziklag's location has been the subject of scientific debate, with 12 possible locations named in southern Israel. None of the sites, however, had the necessary evidence of consecutive Philistine and Israelite settlement to fit what is believed to be the historical narrative, the Israeli Antiquities Authority said in a statement. Now researchers from the IAA, Hebrew University and Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, say they have found a Philistine-era settlement under a rural one from the historical era linked to the biblical King David.

Those findings have led them to believe

it is Ziklag, the statement said. The site, Khirbet al-Rai, is located near Kiryat Gat in central Israel. Researchers have excavated finds typical of the Philistine civilization as well as pottery vessels connecting it to the historical era identified with the biblical David, the statement said. The Philistines are believed to have arrived in the region in the 12th century BC, with DNA tests on their bones recently suggesting their origin to be in southern Europe.

They ruled what is today part of central and southern Israel and the Gaza Strip and were a feared enemy of the Israelites. In the biblical narrative, David sought refuge in Ziklag from Saul, who was trying to kill him. David fled the boundaries of the Kingdom of Israel to the coastal area under the rule of the Philistines. As relayed in the first book of Samuel, when Saul heard David was in the Philistine city of Gath, "he sought him no more." David then requested—and received—the town of Ziklag, which remained property of Judean kings, the bible says. — AFP



Yosef Garfinkel, professor at the Hebrew University, displays pottery vessels that were found at the site claimed to be the Biblical town of Ziklag near the southern Israeli city of Kiryat Gat.



Archaeologists take part in excavations at a site claimed to be the Biblical town of Ziklag near the southern Israeli city of Kiryat Gat. — AFP photos



In this file photo taken on July 06, 1969 British Formula One driver Jackie Stewart negotiates a curve in his Matra MS80 during the 55th French Formula One Grand Prix at the circuit de Charade in Clermont-Ferrand on July 6, 1969. — AFP photos



This file photo taken on March 10, 1969 shows Italian actress Claudia Cardinale, who was born on 15 April 1939.



In this file photo taken on November 28, 1969 French actress Brigitte Bardot attends the 24th "Night of the cinema" (Nuit du cinema) at the Theatre Marigny, in Paris.



In this file photo taken on August 21, 2007 Canadian Space Agency's Dafydd R (Dave) Williams describes his experience in space at a press conference after the space shuttle Endeavour landed at Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida.

Small step, giant memories: Neil Armstrong's moonwalk remembered

Half a century has passed-but the moment Moon pioneer Neil Armstrong took his historic first step on the lunar surface is etched in the memories of those who tuned in. The grainy pictures coming back on the night of July 20, 1969, from a quarter of a million miles (380,000 kilometers) away fascinated viewers young and old. AFP spoke to some, who recalled their joy and emotion, including Dafydd Williams, now a Canadian astronaut with NASA who has twice been into space-in 1998 and 2007 but who was a schoolboy back then.

DAFYDD WILLIAMS

"It was a pretty remarkable day. The sixties was this decade of exploration and the highlight of the decade was humans walking on the surface of the Moon. "If you were alive at that time, everybody remembers where they were. "I was fifteen years old at the time, at home watching it with my family glued to the television set, which was black and white because we didn't have money to afford a colour TV. "It changed the course of history and for me it demonstrated the fact that the seemingly impossible is actually possible. "Watching NASA going from never having flown humans in space in 1960 to have humans walking on the surface of the Moon in 1969... what an incredible decade!"

JACKIE STEWART

Formula One champion Stewart was a friend of Armstrong and also of Eugene Cernan, the last man to date to walk on the Moon in December 1972. "I was in

the Playboy Club in New York with Roman Polanski and my wife Helen. I knew a lot of the astronauts because they were coming to see Formula One and Indycar races. I was blown away by what I was seeing," said Stewart, who with his son Mark produced a 2014 documentary, "Last Man on the Moon."

BRIGITTE BARDOT

"I was in Normandy on that night of July 20-21, 1969. I was shooting the Bear and the Doll," recalled the French screen icon. "I watched this miracle without really believing it, it was so extraordinary, unachievable-and yet they did it. "Human genius can reach the divine."

CLAUDIA CARDINALE

The Italian actress, then aged 31, has hazy memories of exactly where she was when she saw the broadcast. But "a few months later, Neil Armstrong, who was an amateur trumpeter, dropped by for a house party (in the Rome countryside), invited by Franco Cristaldi," Cardinale's first husband. "My brothers accompanied. We'd hired two trumpets-one got bent by Neil in a state of inebriated joy."

PIERRE CARDIN

"I was on the Champs-Élysées, with thousands of people, waiting for the dream to become reality," said the fashion designer, then 47, now 96. "When Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the Moon I felt an immense satisfaction. We were all awaiting news and this

triumph was greeted with a shriek of joy shared by the thousands of people around me. "Nobody believed (it could happen) a few years earlier but I always was sure it would come to pass. It was a great leap forward for humanity," said Cardin, who later would meet Armstrong and mission colleague Buzz Aldrin.

BERTRAND PICCARD

The Swiss psychiatrist and aviator was 11 at the time and recalled how "I was lucky enough to be invited to Cape Kennedy to watch the rocket take off on July 16 as my father worked for NASA. "On July 20, I was at a restaurant with my family at Palm Beach, Florida, when a NASA official tipped off my mother that we had to hurry up and get back as the astronauts leaving (the module) had been brought forward two hours.

"We rushed home as quickly as we could. Shortly beforehand, my father had bought a television especially for the occasion. "I remember the first step as if it were yesterday. I had the impression I was watching the most important event in the history of humanity. I still think so..."

BORIS VOLYNOV

Volynov was a 34-year-old Russian cosmonaut who saw his country, after taking an early lead in the space race, beaten to the Moon by the Americans. "Of course we felt a certain rancour as we had our own Moon program. I was myself in training to walk in lunar gravitation conditions. We had all dreamed of one day walking on

the Moon," said Volynov, who flew on two Soyuz missions. "We feared the Americans were getting ahead of us as our program was losing momentum," said Volynov, adding that two competing Russian programs meant that "we ended up being overtaken." He later met Armstrong. "We quickly became friends, communicating via a Soviet translator. The pictures of us saluting one another were only declassified after the break-up of the Soviet Union."

ALAIN PROST

French four-time Formula One champion Prost was just 14 when Armstrong made his great leap but "it's one of those memories which always stay with you. "My parents had a little studio at Cannes and we were on holiday. I still recall that day so clearly-I remember looking at the TV and the Moon simultaneously and saying to myself 'what's going on?' "It's a crazy memory — you felt something is happening. At the time we thought it was totally impossible."

JEAN-MICHEL JARRE

The composer of electronic music watched the broadcast live and recalls "celebrating the era when we had a vision and an appetite for the future-it was an absolute inspiration for musicians, filmmakers and writers. Pop culture was born at the same time as the beginning of the conquest of space." — AFP

Changing face of the Moon

Cinema versions of the Moon have been equally fanciful. In George Melies' extraordinary 1902 work "A Trip to the Moon", the travellers find giant mushrooms and excitable natives. He follows Verne with a cannon-propelled space capsule-and a splashdown at sea on their return. As technology brought the possibility of a lunar flight closer, that seemed to dampen the market for the more fanciful lunar tales. Classic sci-fi writer Robert Heinlein still used the Moon as the setting for his 1966 novel "The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress".

But by this time, humans inhabit it-and Heinlein's tale is about the revolt of the lunar colony against rule from Earth. And just a year before the real Moon landings, Stanley Kubrick's epic 1968 film "2001" has astronauts at an outpost on the Moon finding a mysterious obelisk there. Here, as in Clarke's original story, the Moon has become little more than the stage for something far more important.

Perhaps what the 1969 Apollo mission to the Moon did was not so much end the telling of tales about the satellite as change the kind of stories being told. After the Apollo landings, the Moon became a focus for pop culture. The heroes of the achingly kitsch 1970s science fiction television series "Space 1999" are based on the Moon-and have to cope with a nuclear accident that knocks it out of orbit and sends them hurtling into space.

The Moon also featured in any number of comic-book adventures and cartoon series from the 1970s onwards. David Bowie released his Kubrick-inspired classic 1969 single "Space Oddity" the same month as the Moon landings. A generation later, in the 2013 version, Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield played his cover version of the song from the International Space Station. And in 2009 Bowie's son, Duncan Jones, broke into the cinema mainstream with his cult hit-sci-fi puzzler "Moon". — AFP

How visions of the Moon inspired centuries of storytellers

By landing on the Moon in 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin arrived at a place which, up until that point, had been the stuff of fantasy. But even after this profound fantasy into fact, it is a place that continues to capture the imagination of storytellers, as it has for centuries. Literature, novels, cinema... from antiquity to the present, the Moon has been the object of any number of imaginary expeditions. As far back as the second century BC, the satirist Lucian of Samosata, in "True Stories", imagined a voyage to the Moon that saw the author and his fellow travellers find the King of the Moon caught up in a war with the King of the Sun.

In the 17th century, French writer Cyrano de Bergerac the real one, not the character in Edmond Rostand's famous play-wrote a tale titled "The Other World: Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon". Baron Munchausen travelled to the Moon in a flying boat in German writer Rudolf Erich Raspe's 1785 fantasy.

And the 17th-century astronomer Johannes Kepler imagined demons on the Moon in his story titled "The Dream". In more modern times, science fiction pioneer H.G. Wells imagined a sophisticated race of insect-like creatures living below the satellite's surface in "The First Men on the Moon". Wells's adventurers reached the Moon using a substance that negated the forces of gravity. Verne, in his 1865 tale "From the Earth to the Moon", was a little less fanciful, shooting his travellers across space in a giant cannon. A century or so later Armstrong, travelling back from the Moon, referred to Verne's tale in one of his television broadcasts. More recently still, one of Herge's 1950s Tintin adventures featured a visit to the Moon-and even Snowy, his loyal dog, got a spacesuit.



A man looks at "Atlas Photographique de la lune" (1894-1908) by Maurice Loewy and Pierre Henri Puiseux on July 1, 2019, part of a new exhibition by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, to open on July 3, 2019, called "Apollo's Muse: The Moon in the Age of Photography".

Centuries of Moon depictions on display in New York

Some 400 years of depictions of the Moon, particularly via photography, are going on display at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art ahead of the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 landing. The Met will unveil its "Apollo's Muse: The Moon in the Age of Photography" on Wednesday, approximately two weeks before of the five-decade mark since the 1969 space trip that landed the first two people on Earth's satellite. Visitors however, are not limited to the recent past. On display will be works dating as far back as 1610, when Galileo etched the giant glowing body in a book of astronomical observations. "The Moon

has always been an object of both science and art, observation and imagination," said exhibit curator Mia Fineman, during a press presentation.

The Moon has been photographed since the medium's earliest days, and in 1840 American John William Draper made the first daguerreotype-an early version of the photo using silver-plated copper. "The fascination with the Moon and the development of photography were linked and connected from the very beginning of this particular medium," said Met Director Max Hollein.

Special telescopes were developed with the sole purpose of photography and astrophotography became a trend in its own right. As snapshots of the Moon grew ever more precise, they circulated among the general public, increasing its mystique while bringing it up close and in person for many for the first time. At the turn of the 20th century, Maurice Loewy and Pierre Henri Puiseux's "Photographic Atlas of the Moon" marked a turning point. From 1894 to 1908, the pair meticulously charted the Moon from the Paris Observatory, home to the most powerful telescope in the world at the time.

The entirety of their work has been reproduced for the first time for a museum at the Met. "Without photography, they wouldn't have been able to land a space craft on the Moon," said Fineman. "They needed to understand the geography to find a landing site."

Moon photos such as those on display at the Met have fueled the imagination of not only the public, but also artists, novelists painters and poets, providing the inspiration for such works as early French filmmaker Georges Melies' 1902 iconic short film "A Trip to the Moon." "It's our closest celestial companion," Fineman said of the Moon. "It's the only other planet that we can see clearly with the naked eye. And so it's something that's both near and far, both constant and changing. It's a paradox." The exhibit is open through September 22. — AFP



People look at a drawing by Etienne Leopold Trouvelot called "Total Eclipse of the Sun" (1882) on July 1, 2019, part of a new exhibition by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, to open on July 3, 2019, called "Apollo's Muse: The Moon in the Age of Photography". — AFP photos



In this file photo taken on October 3, 2007 a technician wraps up Jules Verne's manuscript 'From the Earth to the Moon' and 'Around the Moon' before it is sent into space with the next mission at the Thales Alenia Space center in Turin, Italy. — AFP

How conspiracy theories followed man to the Moon

It was the biggest piece of supposed fake news before the term "fake news" was even invented. Millions of people across the world still believe that no one has ever walked on the Moon, and that the images that NASA broadcast in July 1969 were shot in a Hollywood studio. Thousands of Internet sites are devoted to "proving" that the landing never happened, or calling into question the whole Apollo 11 mission. Some claim that NASA did not have the technological know-how to pull off such a coup, or that if it did that it wasn't done with a human crew—who would surely have been fried alive by cosmic rays.

Others tout possible alien involvement, which of course has been covered up—as has the lunar civilization the astronauts discovered... But almost all the conspiracy theories focus on supposed anomalies in the grainy photos and videos which NASA sent back to Earth. Shadows in the footage show they were suspect, as is the absence of stars in the sky in some images—theories which have long since been refuted by scientists. Yet theories live on regardless of proof from the Lunar Orbiter in 2009 which showed the abandoned modules from Apollo 11, 14, 15, 16 and 17 still on the Moon's surface.

Six in 10 Russians skeptical

When Apollo 11's lunar module touched down on the Sea of Tranquility in 1969, less

than one in 20 Americans doubted what they were seeing on their television screens. By the turn of the century a Gallup poll found skepticism has only spread to six percent of the population.

In contrast, more than half of Russians—the old Cold War enemy—still refuse to believe that the Americans got there first. But surprisingly serious doubt is also rampant among some of Washington's closest allies, with a 2009 TNS survey showing a quarter of British people did not believe the landings happened, while nine percent of French people were also unconvinced, according to pollsters Ifop. Academic Didier Desormeaux, who has written widely on conspiracy theories, said the more important an event the more likely it is to attract outrageous counter narratives.

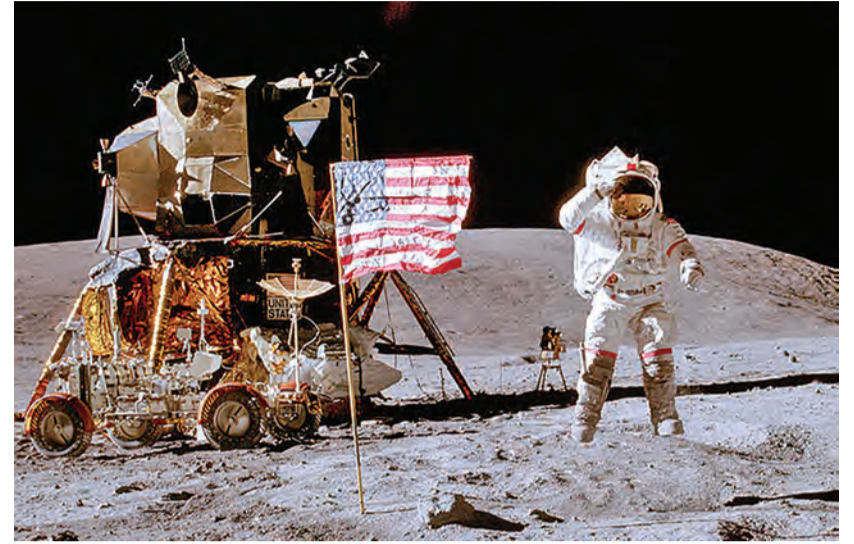
"Conquering space was a major event for humanity. Undermining that can shake the very foundations of science and man's mastery of nature," he told AFP, making it a huge target for conspiracists. While earlier conspiracy theories also involved images—such as the assassination of US president John F Kennedy in 1963, and the so-called Roswell UFO incident—"what is new about these rumors is that they are based on a minute deconstruction of the images sent back by NASA," the French specialist insisted.

'Images anaesthetize thinking'

For Desormeaux it is the first time a "conspiracy theory was built entirely around the visual interpretation of a media event—which they denounce entirely as a set-up." The same logic has been used repeatedly to dismiss school massacres in the US as fake, he added, with hardcore conspiracists claiming that the dead "are played by actors". "Images can anaesthetise our capacity to think" when deployed with ever more twisted leaps of logic, Desormeaux warned. "The power of such theories is that no matter what they survive, because they become a belief which comes with a kind of evangelism and so they can go on forever," he added.

For NASA's former official historian Roger Launius, "the fact that the denials of the Moon landings would not go away should not surprise anyone." Launius—who has devoted a large part of his career to fighting them—said in his latest book, "Apollo's Legacy", that deniers "do not accept the same rules of investigation and knowledge that all others live by. They have tapped into a rich vein of distrust of government, populists critiques of society and questions about the fundamentals of (scientific method) and knowledge creation," he added.

For decades they have played on "our deepest and most secret fears", fed by America's defeat in



Charlie Duke salutes the American flag on April 16, 1972 as he stands on the lunar surface. — NASA

the Vietnam war at home and by anti-Americanism abroad, he said. But Launius also blames the media for adding fuel to flames of paranoia. "Moon landings denials were fanned by... competition for a new and different perspective on the events," he said. — AFP



In this picture a mid-Qing dynasty era Lian Po shadow puppet is seen on display at the Beijing Shadow Show Troupe office in Beijing.



A mid-Qing dynasty era shadow puppet character is seen on display at the Beijing Shadow Show Troupe office in Beijing.



A mid-Qing dynasty era shadow puppet depicting a horse and carriage is seen on display at the Beijing Shadow Show Troupe office in Beijing.



A mid-Qing dynasty era shadow puppet depicting a building gate is seen on display at the Beijing Shadow Show Troupe office in Beijing.— AFP photos

Chinese shadow theatre fights against dying of the light

Shadow puppets flitting across screens and reliving age old stories have fascinated Chinese people for some 2,000 years, but with falling audiences troupes are having to be creative to stay on the stage. On a translucent screen in a Beijing classroom, a child with a cosmic ring takes on the son of the dragon king, attacking him with huge thrusts of his lance. Behind the screen, puppeteers use rods to move the figures, to the joy of the schoolchildren watching. The legends of the past are the bedrock of shadow theatre—a tradition still popular in the countryside, though it has lost much ground in large cities over the last few decades.

Shadow theatre was celebrated up until the 1960s when it was targeted as part of the Cultural Revolution. It had something of a renaissance in the 1980s and in 2011 was included on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. For the Chinese, the show is the forerunner of cinema in the Chinese language the word "cinema" literally means "electric shadow". With video games, film and TV now vying for viewers glued to their smartphones, shadow theatre is slowly losing its audience, and performers are struggling to keep their heads above water.

Wiping his forehead after his furious on-stage battle, Lu Baobang—one of the last puppeteers of the old genera-

tion—is worried there is no one to replace him when he retires. "We can't offer reasonable living standards to young apprentices," said Lu, who descends from a large family that developed one of the main schools of shadow theatre in Beijing.



Jin Xinchun, a member of the Flying Dragon Troupe, creates a shadow puppet at the troupe's studio on the outskirts of Beijing.



Beijing Shadow Show Troupe puppet master Lu Baogang (second right) and his puppeteers conduct a performance for schoolchildren in Beijing.



Kun Du, a member of the Flying Dragon Troupe, creates a shadow puppet at the troupe's studio on the outskirts of Beijing.



In this picture taken on April 17, 2019, Beijing Shadow Show Troupe puppeteers (left) conduct a performance for pupils (right) at a school sportsground on the outskirts of Beijing.

'Like my babies'

While the theatre struggles to attract young peoples' interest, a troupe in a Beijing suburb—whose performers have an average age of 22 — has managed to survive. It is made up of 60 or so puppeteers with dwarfism, who present themselves as having an average height of 1.26 meters. Jin Xinchun is one of them. He was struggling to find work several years ago, before he discovered the troupe online and moved to Beijing to join it where he was employed as a puppet maker. "I am always happy to cut old leather to make beautiful puppets. They are my babies!", Jin told AFP.

Wang Xi, a puppeteer founded the troupe with her husband in 2008 after meeting with the national association of dwarves. "They had trouble finding work. And it was hard for us to find successors. Our collaboration is like two drawbacks that turned out to be a plus!" The puppeteers now perform regularly in schools. But Wang Xi said she is nervous about the future: "Our masters are all older than 80 and they obviously won't be able to go on stage in 10 years." State support is key to keeping shadow theatre alive, Lu said. "The government is aware of the importance of traditional culture, what we need now are concrete measures," he said. "This art will have no future if we don't give young people hope." — AFP

Lifestyle | Music & Movies



In this file photo visitors look at Rembrandt's "The Night Watch" in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.



In this file photo a visitor takes a closer look at Rembrandt's "The Night Watch" during a press-viewing day at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. — AFP photos

WORLD INVITED TO WATCH MUSEUM RESTORE REMBRANDT'S 'NIGHT WATCH'

An Amsterdam museum yesterday began the biggest ever restoration of Rembrandt's "The Night Watch", building a giant glass case around the famed painting so the world can see the work carried out live. In what has been compared to a military operation, experts at the Rijksmuseum in the Dutch capital will spend a year studying the 1642 masterpiece before embarking on a huge makeover that could take several years more. The multi-million-euro revamp of the tableau—the survivor of a difficult history including several acts of vandalism and a period in hiding from the Nazis—will also be livestreamed online.

"The Night Watch belongs to everyone," Rijksmuseum director Taco Dibbits told a media conference in front of the glass restoration case, alongside the 25-strong research team. "More than two and a half million people come and see it each year. It belongs to everybody who lives in the Netherlands, and the world. And we felt that the public has the right to see what happens to that painting."

White haze

Rembrandt van Rijn, the greatest artist from of the Dutch "Golden Age" of painting, created his masterpiece after a commission by the mayor and leader of the civic guard of Amsterdam, Frans Banninck Cocq, to depict the officers and other members of the so-called "Night Watch" militia. Now one of the world's famous paintings, it remains under constant scrutiny by experts, who have recently noticed some changes.

In particular, a white haze has appeared on the surface of some parts, especially in the area around damage caused in 1975 when a mentally disturbed man slashed the painting 12 times. The haze is now bleaching out the figure of a small dog. While most restoration work happens behind closed doors, the Rijksmuseum has decided to let daylight in on the magic.

Experts will work on the Night Watch inside a glass case designed by French architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, who was behind revamps of both the Rijksmuseum and the Louvre gallery in Paris. "The Night Watch was restored in the 1970s... while the restorers were at work, we closed

the curtains at that time. And now it will all be on view for the public to see so in a sense it's the first time," Dibbits told AFP. "There will be a team of 25 scientists, researchers, conservators, curators, restorers... So it's a great team of people who have a lot of experience with Rembrandt because the Rijksmuseum has 22 Rembrandts and we've treated them over the past generation."

Experts will examine the painting using high-resolution photography and computer analysis of every layer including varnish, paint and canvas before deciding on the best restoration techniques.

Historic survivor

But the museum warned that anyone expecting fast-paced excitement might be better off watching paint dry. "The research phase will take about one year," said Petria Noble, head of paintings conservation at Rijksmuseum. "Then we will be able to make a treatment plan and that will be the next step in the restoration. At this moment, we don't really know how long the actual treatment of the painting will take." Noble said the sheer scale of the three-

meter-by-four-meter (nine-foot-by-13-foot) painting—which is housed in its own special room at the museum—had also contributed to the decision to restore it in public view.

"Given the size of the painting, it's really not possible to take it out of the galleries. That also imposes a certain risk for the painting," she said. In many ways it is a miracle Rembrandt's brooding painting has survived the last three and a half centuries to be restored at all. Large chunks were cut from each side of the Night Watch during a move in the 1700s, followed by several bouts of work on the varnish that darkened the picture and helped give it its name.

In 1911 a man stabbed it with a knife. Then in September 1939 the painting was evacuated from the Rijksmuseum and hidden in the cave, just months before Nazi Germany invaded the Netherlands. After the war in 1945 it needed major restoration. Then came the 1975 knife attack, but its sufferings were still not over, as a man sprayed it with acid in 1990. — AFP



In this file photo French actor Gerard Depardieu arrives for the screening of the restored version of the movie "Novecento - Atto Primo" by Bernardo Bertolucci. — AFP

Depardieu puts contents of Paris restaurant up for auction

French actor and legendary gourmand Gerard Depardieu is putting the entire contents of one of his Paris restaurants under the hammer on Thursday. Depardieu sold La Fontaine Gaillon in central Paris last month and is now putting everything inside—including its cellar containing vintage Chateau Latour, Cote-Rotie and Meursault wines at up to 6,000 euros (\$6,700) a bottle—up for auction. The flamboyant star opened the restaurant serving hearty French classics in 2003 with his then partner actress Carole Bouquet and wine magnate Bernard Magrez.

The outspoken Depardieu, who railed against the previous Socialist government's plans to raise taxes on the rich, has been selling off a number of his assets in the French capital, including a mansion, a fishmonger and a deli. "The adventure has come to an end," a friend of the actor told AFP. Depardieu, 70, who owns a clutch of vineyards in his homeland, announced plans to open three restaurants in Russia in 2014, a year after sparking an outcry by taking Russian nationality.

Rarely out of the headlines, the actor has made more than 180 films, and became the face of French cinema through films such as "Cyrano de Bergerac", for which he was nominated for an Oscar. La Fontaine Gaillon is set in a picturesque square close to the French capital's theatre district, and had become a gastronomic fixture, warmly reviewed by food critics. "The sale of the contents of grand hotels and restaurants always attracts a lot of interest," said David Nordmann and Xavier Dominique of auctioneers Ader, even without the added spice of the association with the popular if controversial star. — AFP

Cameron Boyce, Disney Channel star, dead at 20

Cameron Boyce, a young Disney Channel star, has died at age 20 in Los Angeles. Disney CEO Robert Iger confirmed yesterday. Boyce died in his sleep Saturday from an ongoing medical condition, his family told celebrity news outlet TMZ. Boyce was known for his starring role in the Disney series and movie "Descendants," the comedy series "Jessie," and Disney XD series "Gamer's Guide to Pretty Much Everything."

He also had parts in the feature films "Mirrors," "Eagle Eye," "Grown Ups" and "Grown Ups 2." "The Walt Disney Company mourns the loss of #CameronBoyce, who was a friend to so many of us, and filled with so much talent, heart and life, and far too young to die," Iger tweeted. "Our prayers go out to his family and his friends," he said. — AFP



In this file photo actor Cameron Boyce attends the World Premiere of the Emoji Movie at the Regency Village Theater in Westwood, California. — AFP



Members of the Mongolian band The Hu perform on stage.



Members of the Mongolian band The Hu pose during the 30th Eurockeeennes rock music festival in Belfort, eastern France.

Mongolian throat-singing rockers take on Europe

Heavy metal band The Hu are taking their mix of Metallica-style thrash and Mongolian steppe music to rapt audiences across Europe this summer. The four long-haired leather-clad Mongolians, who have been hailed for their mesmerizing live performances, grew up listening to a mix of metal and rock, from Metallica and Sepultura to the Foo Fighters. But while their Western idols belt out songs about love lost and the meaning of the universe, The Hu, who rocked the Eurockeeennes festival in the eastern French city of Belfort Thursday, sing about upholding Mongolian traditions and respect for the ancestors.

What makes the head-banging foursome particularly compelling though is that three of the four—Gala, Enkush and Jaya—do traditional Mongolian throat singing or "khoomei", usually only performed during ritual ceremonies. "That style, we call it 'hunu rock'. 'Hunu' means 'human' in the Mongolian language. But it is also inspired by the Hunnu, the ancient Mongolian empire," Gala, who plays the "morin khuur", a two-stringed fiddle prominent in Mongolia's nomad culture, told AFP in an interview. Among the other traditional instruments being brought to European festival audiences by The Hu this summer are the "tovshuur", a two-stringed lute, and a "tsuur", a long, wooden flute which features on Unesco's list of intangible heritage. "Thousands of years ago, our ancestors played the instruments we use on stage, even the percussions. That's how we mix Eastern and Western culture, old and new, and in this way everyone can appreciate our art," said Gala.

Bandanas and top knots

It was a shared love of heavy metal which brought the band together when they formed in 2016. "We met at music school and

spent our free time to listen to a lot of records. We listened to a lot of different music, but heavy metal united us and we wanted to play some," Gala said. The Hu's unique sound and look—a mix of tasseled leather jackets, bandanas and traditional top knots—has reached a global audience thanks to the Internet. Their first videos, "Yuve Yuve Yu" and "Wolf Totem", shot in dramatic, rocky Mongolian landscapes, have racked up a total 33 million views on YouTube.

After their set at Eurockeeennes, the band went to Switzerland and the Czech Republic before a nine-date tour in the US in October. "Touring outside our country is an honour and a great satisfaction," Enkush said. "We're discovering all these different audiences that don't know us either, it's exciting. We try our best to impress!" — AFP



A member of the Mongolian band The Hu performs on stage.



In this file photo taken on June 26, 2019 a giant inflatable Spider-Man is displayed on the red carpet for the 'Spider-Man: Far From Home' World premiere at the TCL Chinese theatre in Hollywood. — AFP

SPIDER-MAN LEAVES NEW YORK FOR EUROPE IN 'FAR FROM HOME'

Spider-Man leaves New York for Europe in Marvel's latest film about the web-slinging superhero, who once again has to fight off a new enemy. Set in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, "Spider-Man: Far From Home" sees protagonist Peter Parker, played by Tom Holland, take on his superhero responsibilities again when Samuel L. Jackson's super-spy Nick Fury, a regular "Avengers" character, asks him to step up against a new threat. But Parker is reluctant as he heads off on a school trip to Europe, where he just wants to enjoy himself and share his feelings to love interest MJ, played by singer and actress Zendaya. "We've taken Spider-Man outside of Queens and we put

him on the world stage...we've taken him to London, Venice, Prague," Holland told Reuters.

"In this film he's trying to hang up the suit and not be Spider-Man for a while and take a break. And wherever he goes it seems that trouble follows so we've caught him in a vulnerable state and we get to see how he deals with that situation." The film follows on from Marvel's "Avengers: Endgame", the finale to a decade-long superhero series. Jackson said Fury was "definitely trying to regain control of his life and a modicum of control of the world" in this movie, which also looks at the concept of fake news and misrepresentation.

"We are living in a time where there is a lot

of complication and people don't really know what's going on," Jake Gyllenhaal, who plays newcomer Quentin Beck, said. The film also introduces a new twist on Spider-Man's early warning reflex. "Spidey Sense", where it is renamed the "Peter Tingle". "Spider-Man: Far from Home", which begins its worldwide cinema roll-out later this week, is Holland's second film in the leading role as the superhero. He also made appearances in several "Avengers" movies. He follows in the footsteps of Andrew Garfield from "The Amazing Spider-Man" franchise and Tobey Maguire who played the superhero in three movies from 2002 to 2007. — Reuters

US financier Epstein charged with sex trafficking minors



NEW YORK: A protest group called "Hot Mess" hold up signs of Jeffrey Epstein in front of the federal courthouse yesterday. — AFP

NEW YORK: Jeffrey Epstein, a hedge fund billionaire with ties to top politicians and celebrities, was charged yesterday with sexually exploiting dozens of young girls. Epstein, 66, was arrested at an airport in New Jersey on Saturday after returning to the United States from Paris on a private jet. In an indictment unsealed in US District Court for the Southern District of New York, he was charged with one count of sex trafficking of minors and one count of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of minors. Epstein appeared in a Manhattan courtroom yesterday and pleaded not guilty to the charges which carry a maximum of 45 years in prison. A bail hearing was set for Thursday.

Geoffrey Berman, the US attorney for the Southern District of New York, said he would ask that Epstein be detained until trial. "We think he's a significant flight risk," Berman told a news conference. "He has enormous wealth and the charges are very serious." Berman said Epstein allegedly sexually exploited dozens of minor girls at his homes in Manhattan, New York and Palm Beach, Florida, between 2002 and 2005.

Some of the girls were as young as 14 years old and "particularly vulnerable to exploitation," he said, adding that Epstein was "well aware that many of the victims were minors". "The alleged behavior shocks the conscience," Berman said. "And while the charged conduct is from a number of years ago, it is still profoundly important to the many alleged victims, now young women. They deserve their day in court and we are proud to be standing up for them by bringing this indictment," he said.

UAE cuts troops in Yemen...

Continued from Page 1

that's been discussed extensively with our partners, the Saudis," he said.

Coalition spokesman Turki Al-Maliki said both the UAE and Saudi Arabia are committed to achieve their goals in Yemen. "The United Arab Emirates and the countries in the coalition continue to achieve their operations and strategic goals," he told a news conference in Riyadh in response to a question about the redeployment of UAE troops.

According to a Yemeni military government official, UAE troops fighting the Houthis have "totally vacated" the military base in Khokha, about 130 km south of Hodeida. The UAE withdrew part of its heavy artillery from Khokha but was - along with the Saudi-led coalition and the government - still overseeing the military situation in Yemen's western coast, he said yesterday.

Middle East expert James Dorsey has said a redeployment reflects "long-standing subtle differences" in the Saudi and UAE approaches towards Yemen. The pullback "highlights the UAE's long-standing concern for its international standing amid mounting criticism of the civilian toll of the war", he has said. Tens of thou-

The US Attorney said the girls were paid hundreds of dollars in cash to perform sexual acts and to recruit other girls. Berman said a search had been conducted of Epstein's Manhattan mansion and agents seized "nude photographs of what appear to be underage girls". Berman and an FBI agent who attended the news conference appealed to any other women who were victims of Epstein to come forward.

Epstein, a well-connected financier whose friends have included President Donald Trump, former president Bill Clinton and Prince Andrew, was convicted previously of paying young girls for sexual massages at his Palm Beach mansion. But he avoided federal prosecution in those cases with a 2007 plea deal negotiated by his lawyers with Alexander Acosta, now the labor secretary in the Trump administration. Under the deal, he pleaded guilty to a state charge of soliciting prostitution from a minor and served 13 months in a county jail.

Acosta, who was the top federal prosecutor in Miami at the time, has been the target of a campaign demanding his resignation over the relatively light sentence handed down to the billionaire financier. Berman, the US Attorney, was asked by reporters why the plea agreement negotiated in Florida did not apply to New York. "That agreement only binds the Southern District of Florida," Berman said. "The Southern District of New York is not bound by that agreement and is not a signatory to that agreement." Berman also told reporters he would have no comment on "speculation" about any individuals other than Epstein whose names have been raised previously in the case. — AFP

sands of people, many of them civilians, have been killed in Yemen since the Saudi-led coalition intervened in March 2015, relief agencies say.

The fighting has triggered what the United Nations describes as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with millions of people displaced and in need of aid. According to Dorsey with the pullback "the UAE may allow differences with Saudi Arabia to become more visible but will not put its alliance with the kingdom at risk". Furthermore, Emirati-trained local troops will "continue to do its (UAE) bidding" on the ground, he said. The Yemeni official told AFP the UAE has trained tens of thousands of Yemenis to fight against militants from Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic State group in southern provinces - mainly Aden, Mukalla and Shabwa.

The UAE announcement comes amid a standoff between the United States and Iran, which spikes in June when Iran shot down a US drone over strategic Gulf waters following a series of tanker attacks that Washington blamed on Iran, which denied involvement. The UAE official said the Emirates' redeployment decision was not linked to the increase of regional tensions but it was not "blind to the overall geostrategic picture". The official stressed the redeployment was in line with the agreement reached in Sweden in December between Yemen's warring parties. US-ally Saudi Arabia has repeatedly accused Iran of supplying sophisticated weapons to Houthi rebels, a charge Tehran denies. — AFP

the reflection of the sun on the building's windows and not a crack due to the earthquake. Meanwhile, the ministry of electricity and water issued a statement, assuring that the tremor did not cause any damage to the state's installations.

At least 45 people were injured, the head of Iran's relief and rescue organization, Morteza Salimi, told state TV. "One citizen at Masjed Soleiman also passed away due to a heart-attack after the earthquake," Salimi said. In nearby cities and villages affected by the quake, there were "only minor cracks in buildings" and roads to some villages were cut off. Iran sits on top of major tectonic plates and sees frequent seismic activity. In Nov 2017 a 7.3-magnitude tremor in the western province of Kermanshah killed 620 people. In 2003, a 6.6-magnitude quake in southeast Iran decimated the ancient mud-brick city of Bam and killed at least 31,000 people. Iran's deadliest quake was a 7.4-magnitude tremor in 1990 that killed 40,000 people in northern Iran, injured 300,000 and left half a million homeless. — Agencies

Tremors in Kuwait as quake hits...

Continued from Page 1

In reaction to the tremor, which lasted for several seconds, a number of ministries and Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFS) issued statements that no damages were reported because of the quake. The statements confirmed state bodies' readiness to face any emergency as a result of any natural disasters.

The KFS released a statement to refute news and photos circulating on social media platforms regarding damage to a commercial building in Kuwait City. The directorate affirmed that some of the photos on social media showed the alleged damage; however, it confirmed that the building is safe and no damage is visible. It added the photo showed

Modernity, rigidity face to face at Afghan Doha talks

DOHA: A woman in skin-tight trousers passed the Taliban delegation as they waited to enter the cavernous ballroom of the luxury Doha hotel hosting key peace talks between rival Afghan parties. The sight of the young woman in heels brandishing a box of electrical equipment breezing past the turbaned delegates of the Islamic militant group neatly illustrated the depth of differences yet to be bridged. Taliban representatives were holding two days of talks with members of the Afghan government, civil society, political opposition and several women in hope of bringing peace after 18 years of war.

A ceasefire, women's rights and minority representation were among the delicate issues on the table at the Sunday-Monday talks. Women's rights have proven particularly important as when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan, they imposed a rigid interpretation of sharia Islamic law that set curbs on women's dress, behavior and rights. The beachfront hotel was noticeably quieter for the second day of talks, with one Afghan journalist describing the whole of Doha as a "ghost city".

An eager lobby pianist played an eclectic songbook that veered from the possibly prescient Abba hit "Winner Takes it All" to Soviet rockstar Viktor Tsoi as roughly 70 delegates arrived for the intra-Afghan talks. The Taliban members, who wore minimal but immaculate robes and neatly trimmed beards, cut a far more modest image than the German and Qatari hosts. A security ring of steel was in place for the talks with the hotel's customary suited African security officers replaced with an army of men in traditional thobe robes and earpieces. Taliban negotiator Abbas Stanikzai had a brief altercation with one guard as he

attempted to enter the secure conference area. "We want to go to the dialogue but they are not letting us," Stanikzai said to an officer, who replied: "We are not joking with you, stop shouting at us."

Prominent Afghan figures including journalists, activists and politicians huddled in the angular lobby's plethora of corners and cubbies alongside guests - some in the niqab Islamic face-covering worn by some women, others in beachwear. "I've been to Afghanistan so I don't really mind it," said one guest in shorts, sandals and a t-shirt who said he was unaware the hotel was being used for talks between Afghan figures and the Taliban. "The Qataris are moderates in this region and if they bring the Afghans together then that's a good thing."

The German co-hosts, including an official with a man-bun hairstyle, looked nervous as media covering the forum's opening photographed and filmed the delegates who sat silently and impassively. They were arranged in a vast semi-circle under an octagonal chandelier at desks bearing nameplates - but not their affiliation. The invitees were there in a "personal capacity", circumventing the Taliban's refusal to negotiate with the Kabul government.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted that the Afghan gathering "has been a long time coming" and praised the country's "government, civil society, women, and Taliban" for coming together. Washington has said it wants to seal a political deal with the Taliban ahead of Afghan presidential polls due in September to allow foreign forces to begin to withdraw.

Qatar's counter-terrorism special envoy Mutlaq Al-Qahtani told AFP "both sides are making progress". "By the end of tonight we can reach a kind of positive conclusion that is acceptable to both sides," he said. "The differences is almost so narrow... we are quite frankly surprised how serious both sides are and they are so committed to putting an end to this conflict." Germany envoy Markus Potzel said "history will remember those who were able to set their differences aside for the sake of the country" as he opened the dialogue on Sunday. — Agencies

Iran warns to up enrichment...

Continued from Page 1

according to news agency ISNA. UN nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, confirmed it had verified Iran's enrichment was beyond 3.67 percent. Iran has said it will take another, third step away from the deal within 60 days. Kamalvandi said options included enriching uranium to 20 percent purity or beyond, and restarting IR-2 M centrifuges dismantled under the deal.

Such threats put new pressure on European countries, which insist Iran must continue to comply with the agreement even though the United States is no longer doing so. French President Emmanuel Macron was sending his top diplomatic advisor to Iran today and tomorrow to try and help defuse tensions, a presidential official said.

Washington has imposed sanctions that eliminate the benefits Iran was meant to receive for agreeing to curbs on its nuclear program with world powers. The confrontation has brought the United States and Iran close to the brink of conflict, with President Donald Trump calling off air strikes last month minutes before impact. Enriching uranium up to 20 percent purity would be a dramatic move, since that was the level Iran achieved before the deal, although back then it had a far larger stockpile than it is likely to be able to rebuild in the short term. It is considered an important intermediate stage on the path to obtaining the 90 percent pure fissile uranium needed for a bomb.

One of the main achievements of the deal was Iran's agreement to dismantle its advanced IR-2M centrifuges, used to purify uranium. Iran had 1,000 of them installed at its large Natanz enrichment site before the deal. Under the deal, it is allowed to operate only up to two for testing. Still, the threatened measures also appear intended to be sufficiently ambiguous to hold back from fully repudiating the deal. Kamalvandi did not specify how much uranium Iran might purify to the higher level, nor how many centrifuges it would consider restarting. He did not mention other more advanced centrifuges, including the most advanced, the IR-8. Iran has said all the steps it is contemplating are reversible.

The nuclear diplomacy is one aspect of a wider confrontation between Washington and Tehran that has threatened to spiral into open conflict since the United

States tightened sanctions from May. "Let me be clear: Iran should not confuse American restraint with a lack of American resolve," US Vice President Mike Pence said yesterday, reiterating Washington's resolve to protect US personnel and citizens in the Middle East.

European countries do not directly support the US sanctions, but have been unable to come up with ways to allow Iran to avert them. Britain, one of Washington's main allies, was drawn deeper into the confrontation last week when its Royal Marines seized an Iranian tanker entering the Mediterranean off Gibraltar over separate sanctions against Syria.

The tanker's seizure "will not be tolerated by us and will not go without a response", said Iran's Defense Minister Amir Hatami, quoted by Iran's ISNA and Tasnim news agencies. "This move is against international regulations and a kind of maritime piracy," he said during a ceremony at Bandar Abbas port in southern Iran. The 330-m Grace 1, capable of carrying two million barrels of oil, was halted Thursday by police and customs agencies in Gibraltar, a British overseas territory on Spain's southern tip. Authorities in Gibraltar said they suspected the tanker was carrying crude to Syria in violation of EU sanctions. Tehran

Gibraltar's Supreme Court ruled Friday that the tanker can be held for 14 more days, the territory's attorney general said. The government of Gibraltar said in a statement yesterday that the tanker was "well inside" British Gibraltar Territorial Waters when it was boarded, having "previously exited the international waters of the Straits of Gibraltar". It released a screenshot along with the statement of a maritime map that showed the tanker's location.

"Iran is neither a member of the EU nor subject to any European oil embargo. Last I checked, EU was against extraterritoriality. UK's unlawful seizure of a tanker with Iranian oil on behalf of #B_Team is piracy, pure and simple." Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tweeted yesterday, using 'B team' as a derisive term for the Trump administration.

Iran says the deal allows it to respond to the US breach by reducing its compliance, and it will do so every 60 days. Zarif also tweeted that world powers will not be able to negotiate a better deal than the 2015 nuclear deal. "#B_Team sold @realDonaldTrump on the folly that killing #JCPOA thru #EconomicTerrorism can get him a better deal," Zarif wrote, referring to the deal by its acronym for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. "As it becomes increasingly clear that there won't be a better deal, they're bizarrely urging Iran's full compliance. There's a way out, but not with #B_Team in charge." — Agencies

29 killed as bus plunges off...

Continued from Page 1

Local residents said they were woken by the crash and found the mangled bus submerged in blackish-grey water.

Police said it landed on its roof in a drain, where running water complicated rescue efforts. "We rushed out of our homes and saw people screaming for help," one witness told reporters. "We got into the drain and tried to save some of them. Soon police arrived and quickly brought cranes." Officials believe most of the passengers were asleep when the driver lost control of the vehicle, which had the Taj Mahal painted on its white exterior.

State Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath ordered an

investigation, as well as cash compensation of 500,000 rupees (\$7,289) for the families of those killed. "The committee will give a report on the cause of the accident and also suggest long-term measures to avoid such mishaps," government official Awanish Awasthi said. The Yamuna expressway was intended to be a symbol of modernity when it was opened - speeding up journey times from Delhi to the key region - but authorities admit there are key safety concerns.

In 2017 alone some 763 crashes were reported on the highway resulting in 145 deaths, authorities told the Save Life Foundation, a road safety campaign group. "The crashes may be due to human or a car error, but most of the deaths are because the road infrastructure is not good enough," said Piyush Tiwari, the group's founder. Fatalities on Indian roads are often blamed on speeding and drunk driving, but experts say many highways are poorly constructed and surfaced, making journeys risky. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defense Minister Rajnath Singh offered condolences to those affected and promised assistance to the injured. — AFP

Sports

Astros overpower Angels as Lucroy sent to hospital

Blue Jays beat Orioles to avoid series sweep

LOS ANGELES: Yuli Gurriel ran his hitting streak to 11 games with a game-tying grand slam, and George Springer delivered a walk-off hit in the 10th inning as the host Houston Astros claimed a wild 11-10 victory Sunday over the Los Angeles Angels in the rubber match of a three-game series at Minute Maid Park. The Astros, who rallied from a 7-2 deficit in the fifth to tie the game at 8-8 on Gurriel's slam in the sixth, were forced to rally again in the eighth after Angels center fielder Mike Trout delivered his second home run of the game, a two-run shot, in the top of that frame to make it 10-8. In the bottom of the eighth, Astros rookie Yordan Alvarez tied the game with a two-run single, and Houston loaded the bases with no outs but failed to score again. The inning ended on a double play in when pinch runner Jake Marisnick was ruled out after his collision with Angels catcher Jonathan Lucroy. An umpire review reversed the previous safe call, determining that Marisnick initiated the contact, which knocked Lucroy from the game and sent the catcher to a local hospital for a CT scan and evaluation for a possible concussion and nose fracture. Josh Reddick opened the 10th with a double off Angels right-hander Taylor Cole (0-1). Springer then drove Reddick home with a single to right-center field on the first pitch. Before the pitch, there was an umpire review that determined Reddick returned to second safely on a pickoff attempt.

Phillies 8, Mets 3

Aaron Nola carried a no-hitter into the sixth inning to improve to 8-2, and Jay Bruce continued tormenting his former team with a pair of home runs and four RBIs as Philadelphia rolled to a win in New York. The Phillies took two of three against the Mets to improve to 10-15 since June 10 — a span in which they are 6-1 against New York and 4-14 against everyone else. The Mets are a National League-worst 8-17 since June 10. The Phillies scored all the runs they'd need for Nola in the first, when Rhys Hoskins (RBI double), JT Realmuto (two-run double) and Bruce (RBI single) laced together consecutive run-scoring hits against Mets starter Zack Wheeler (6-6).

Rays 2, Yankees 1

Charlie Morton struck out 10 in 5 2/3 effective innings and made two first-inning runs stand up as Tampa Bay salvaged a four-game split against New York in St Petersburg, Fla. Tommy Pham had an RBI double off James Paxton (5-4) and scored on a ground-out by Avisail Garcia as the Rays won for the fourth time in 13 meetings with the Yankees this season. Brett Gardner homered for the third straight day as the Yankees finished the first half by going 16-4 in their last 20 games. New York heads into the All-Star break with a 6 1/2-game lead on Tampa Bay in the American League East. Morton (10-2) reached double digits in wins before the All-Star break for the second time in his career and lowered his league-leading ERA to 2.32 ERA. He held the Yankees to one run on five hits while throwing 100 pitches.

Padres 5, Dodgers 3

Fernando Tatis Jr. hit two home runs, and Joey Lucchesi pitched into the seventh inning as San Diego handed Los Angeles its first three-game home losing streak this season. Manuel Margot also homered for the Padres, who lost the opener of the four-game series on Thursday before winning a series against the Dodgers

for the first time in seven tries. Max Muncy and Justin Turner went deep for the Dodgers, who still head into the All-Star break with a major league-best 60 victories—just the 15th time a team has won 60 games before the break.

Braves 4, Marlins 3

Left-hander Dallas Keuchel had his best start of the season, and Josh Donaldson swatted his 200th career homer to help Atlanta hold off visiting Miami and take the rubber game of the three-game set. Keuchel (2-2) pitched 7 1/3 innings—his longest start of the season—and allowed two runs on five hits, walking one and striking out four. He threw a season-high 108 pitches. The Marlins twice loaded the bases in the ninth inning against closer Luke Jackson, but Miguel Rojas flied out to end the game. It was Jackson's 14th save.

Rangers 4, Twins 1 (11 innings)

Rougned Odor hit a three-run home run with one out in the top of the 11th inning to give Texas a victory over Minnesota in Minneapolis. Odor hit a first-pitch fastball from Adalberto Mejia (0-2) 409 feet into the bullpen in left-center, driving in Joey Gallo and Asdrubal Cabrera, who had both walked. It was the 13th home run of the season for Odor. Shawn Kelley (4-2), the fifth Texas pitcher, picked up the win as the Rangers avoided a series sweep by the Twins and won for just the second time in eight games.

White Sox 3, Cubs 1

Eloy Jimenez and Jose Abreu homered, and Ivan Nova pitched 5 2/3 shutout innings to earn his first home victory of the season as the White Sox defeated the Cubs in the final meeting of the season between the Chicago clubs. Jimenez's 16th homer was his second this season against his original organization, a two-run shot to straightaway center in the fourth inning that provided all the offense the White Sox would need. Abreu added a solo homer in the fifth, his 21st of the season, as the White Sox closed the first half of the campaign with their sixth win in nine games.

Pirates 6, Brewers 5

Bryan Reynolds hit a three-run homer and an RBI double to help Pittsburgh edge visiting Milwaukee. Kevin Newman had an RBI single, and Adam Frazier had three hits to give him 18 in July for the Pirates, who won five of seven. Jesus Aguilar hit two-run homer and a solo shot, and Keston Hiura added two-run homer for the Brewers, who have lost five of six.

Red Sox 6, Tigers 3

Christian Vazquez hit a two-run homer, Xander Bogaerts also drove in two runs and Boston won its fourth straight and completed a three-game sweep in Detroit. David Price (7-2) labored through five innings but picked up the victory. Price threw 99 pitches while giving up one run on four hits and two walks with six strikeouts. Heath Hembree got the last three outs for his second save. The Tigers used a series of relievers. Gregory Soto (0-3) pitched the first two innings, allowing two runs on three hits, before Nick Ramirez pitched the next three for Detroit, which is 6-25 since the beginning of June.

Indians 11, Reds 1

Greg Allen belted a two-run homer to highlight his

and an investigation continues, it added.

Main Tour rivals

The Tour de France is only two days old but the newly-rebranded Team Ineos have already issued an emphatic response to anyone hoping a change of name for the world's dominant cycle team might have diluted their aura. Ineos's eight riders, led by defending champion Geraint Thomas, did not win Sunday's 27.6km team time trial around the streets of Brussels but they landed the first blow in a three-week battle for the coveted yellow jersey.

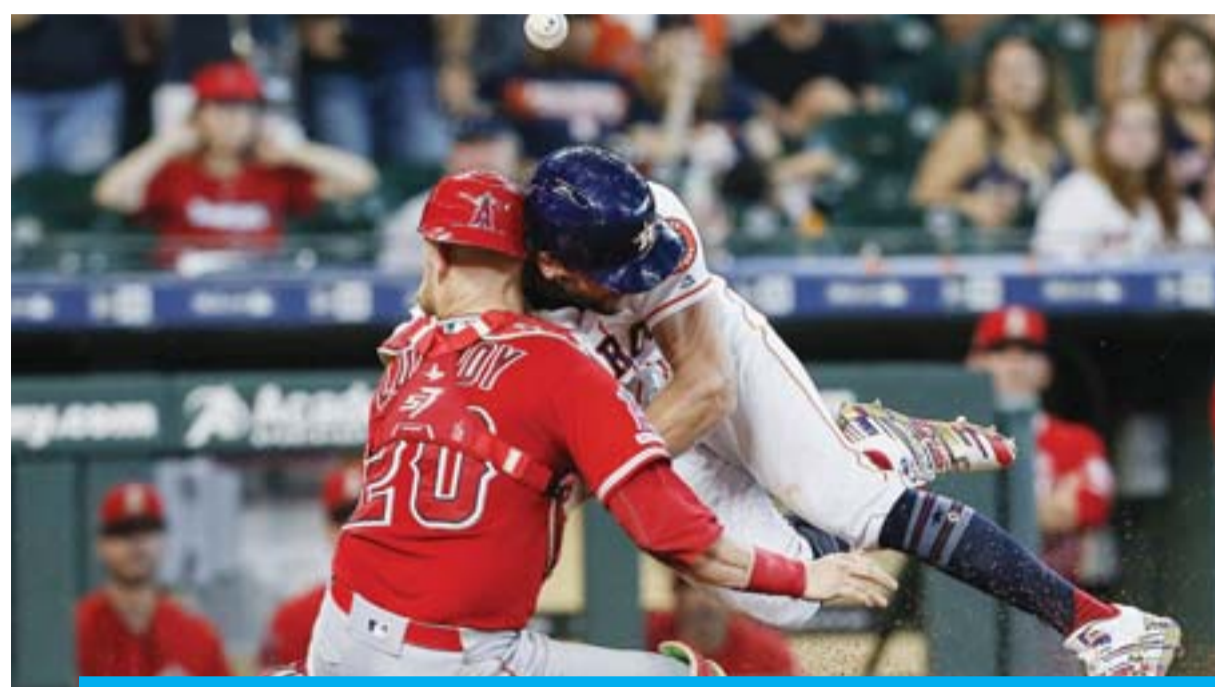
The team's road captain Luke Rowe said this week it had been a "copy and paste job" since Team Sky, winners of six of the last seven Tours, morphed into Ineos this year, with Britain's richest man, new boss Jim Ratcliffe, allowing business as usual. It looked like that on Sunday as the men in black and burgundy roared around the Belgian capital to set a target none of the next 20 teams could match, until Dutch outfit Team Jumbo-Visma's turbo-charged squad smashed it by 20 seconds.

It stung, but the truth is it was a great day for Thomas and team co-leader Egan Bernal as they opened time gaps on the men most expected to challenge them in the general classification (GC). Thomas and Bernal endured nerve-ridden Saturday's 194km opener, both snagged by a mass crash in the peloton inside the last three kilometres, although it cost them no time. A day later it was the likes of Frenchman Romain Bardet, Australia's former Sky rider Richie Porte, Movistar's Nairo Quintana, Adam Yates and Jakob Fuglsang who had reason to fret.

that was my goal," Feng said. "The last putt was a lot of pressure but I just told myself to make another good putt." Former world number one Feng's previous best finish this year was a tie for fourth at the Diamond Resorts Tournament of Champions.

Ariya, who was playing in the group in front of Feng, capped her eight-under 64 round with a two-foot birdie putt on 18 to tie Feng at 28 under and set up a dramatic finish. "I was walking up the green and I thought I had it but then I looked up at the scoreboard and realized I have got to make this putt," said Feng, who used a seven iron to hit her approach on 18 to just three feet. Ariya, of Thailand, had a three-shot lead at one stage on the back nine until Feng made her move on the soft Thornberry Creek course.

"Overall, my whole week was really good," Ariya said. "It's like amazing, because I didn't expect to play that good at all, so I'm really happy about how I played." Feng's 29-under was two shots shy of the LPGA record that Kim Sei-young set last year at the course just outside of Green Bay, Wisconsin.—AFP



HOUSTON: Jake Marisnick #6 of the Houston Astros collides with catcher Jonathan Lucroy #20 of the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim as he attempts to score in the eighth inning at Minute Maid Park on July 07, 2019. — AFP

first career four-hit performance as Cleveland hit four home runs and rolled to victory in Cincinnati. Jake Bauers, Tyler Naquin and Jason Kipnis each homered and drove in two runs for the Indians, who collected 18 hits en route to their season-high sixth straight win. Trevor Bauer (8-6) allowed one run on four hits with three walks and struck out nine over seven innings to improve to 4-0 in his last five starts.

As 7, Mariners 4

Matt Olson hit a three-run homer in a five-run first inning, and Oakland went on to defeat host Seattle. Marcus Semien and Ramon Laureano also homered for the As, who took two of three games in the series and have won nine of their past 12 entering the All-Star break. Oakland right-hander Daniel Mengden (4-1) won his third straight decision, allowing three runs on six hits in 5 1/3 innings. He didn't walk a batter and struck out two. Right-hander Liam Hendriks pitched the ninth for his fifth save.

Giants 1, Cardinals 0

Evan Longoria capped his best week of the season with a home run in the seventh inning that broke a scoreless tie and lifted San Francisco to a victory over St Louis. Jeff Samardzija (6-7) won a pitchers' duel with Jack Flaherty (4-6) with seven innings of four-hit ball, combining with Sam Dyson and Will Smith on the Giants' first shutout since April and the third of the season. Flaherty, who had struggled to a 7.82 ERA in his previous five starts, retired the first 12 batters he faced and took a no-hitter one out into the seventh before Longoria connected on his 12th homer, a shot to left field. Longoria has five home runs and 10 RBIs since last Monday.

Nationals 5, Royals 2

Anthony Rendon broke a tie with an RBI double, and pinch hitter Howie Kendrick added a two-run double as Washington scored three runs in the bottom of the

eighth inning to escape with a win over visiting Kansas City. The win allowed the Nationals to take two of three in the series and complete a 5-1 homestand. Meanwhile, the Royals lost for the sixth time in their last seven games. After Kansas City had rallied into a 2-2 tie in the top of the eighth, Adam Eaton got the bottom of the eighth rolling for the Nationals with a one-out single against Jake Diekmann (0-6). Rendon followed with his double to give Washington the lead, and two batters later, Kendrick brought two more home.

Diamondbacks 5, Rockies 3

Rookie left-hander Alex Young threw six hitless innings in his second major league start as Arizona completed a three-game sweep of Colorado with a win in Phoenix. Young (2-0) was taken out after six innings and 71 pitches. The 25-year-old struck out three and walked one. The Rockies broke up the D-backs' no-hit bid when Trevor Story reached on an infield single on the first pitch of the seventh from reliever Yoshihisa Hirano. Arizona had lost eight in a row to Colorado before sweeping the three-game series to get above .500 at the All-Star break (46-45). Colorado has lost six in a row to drop below .500 (44-45) for the first time since May 28.

Blue Jays 6, Orioles 1

Lourdes Gurriel Jr hit a two-run homer in the first inning, right-hander Trent Thornton pitched six shutout innings and Toronto avoided a sweep at the hands of visiting Baltimore. Thornton (3-6) limited the Orioles to three hits and no walks while striking out five as the Blue Jays completed their homestand with a 5-5 record. Teoscar Hernandez added a two-run single for the Blue Jays, who dropped the first two games of the series. Orioles starter Asher Wojciechowski (0-2) allowed three runs, four hits and three walks in 4 1/3 innings. The right-hander struck out six. Chance Sisco ended the Jays' shutout bid with a solo home run, his sixth, in the seventh.—Reuters

Explosives found in Brussels but no sign Tour targeted

BRUSSELS: Belgian police are investigating the discovery of home-made explosives, knives and brass knuckles, but nothing immediately points to an attack plot, including against the Tour de France, prosecutors said yesterday. A worker found the arms on Saturday evening hidden by a stairway of a building in Anderlecht, a neighbourhood of the capital Brussels through which the tournament's cyclists raced at the weekend.

"At the current time, nothing suggests that these are explosives designed to commit a future attack," the Brussels prosecutor's office said in a statement. "Nothing allows us to say that the Tour was being targeted," prosecutor's spokesman Denis Goeman said. "The theory of the discovery of an old cache of explosives is also being looked at," the prosecutor's office added. The statement said investigators were alerted to a bag containing explosives, knives and brass knuckles at around 7:30 pm on Saturday. Upon examination, the office said, they amounted to several "home-made" type explosives. No suspect has been identified in the case

Feng outguns Ariya to claim Thornberry Creek Classic

LOS ANGELES: Feng Shanshan scorched her way through the final round of the LPGA Tour's Thornberry Creek Classic on Sunday with a nine-under-par 63 to win a shootout by one stroke over Ariya Jutanugarn. China's Feng outduelled Ariya on the back nine, matching her closing birdie putt with one of her own from three feet to claim her first victory in 20 months and the 10th of her career.

Feng rolled in four birdies in her final six holes to reach a 29-under 259 total which is close to what she was shooting for at the start of the week. "I was aiming for 30 under,

Eagle at the last gives Wolff first PGA Tour win

MINNESOTA: Matthew Wolff eagled the final hole to claim the 3M Open on Sunday and become the youngest winner on the PGA Tour since Jordan Spieth in 2013. The 20-year-old Californian rolled in a 26-foot putt from the fringe for a one-stroke victory over Bryson DeChambeau and Collin Morikawa in Blaine, Minnesota.

"I just proved to myself that I can be out here," Wolff, the 2019 US collegiate champion, told CBS television. Five-time tour winner DeChambeau had eagled the same hole minutes earlier with a six-foot putt to temporarily take the lead by one stroke. But Wolff was not done as he sank the winning shot for a six-under 65 to win in only his third tour start as a professional at 21-under 263.

"I was shaking, to be honest," Wolff said of his emotions before the shot. "A lot of my putts weren't going in today, and I was just kind of telling myself one's bound to drop in." It happened at the right time. Just gave it a chance and it went over the right spot that I pointed out. And as soon as it dropped, the tears started coming. It's a really special feeling." Fellow Californian Morikawa then missed a 22-foot putt that would have forced a playoff at TPC Twin Cities.

Morikawa, who is 24, and the 25-year-old DeChambeau both shot 66. With the victory, Wolff is exempt on the PGA Tour through the 2021 season and will play in The Players, the Masters and the PGA Championship next year. "I've changed forever, I guess," he said. Spieth was 19 years, 11 months and 17 days old when he won the 2013 John Deere Classic. Canadian Adam Hadwin shot 67 to claim fourth at 18 under with Mexico's Carlos Ortiz (64) and Wyndham Clark (68) a stroke back.

As many as six players were tied for the top on a warm afternoon ideal for scoring. Wolff, who shared the overnight lead with Morikawa and DeChambeau, was the first to reach 19-under with a birdie at the 15th hole and Morikawa joined him a hole later. DeChambeau pulled within one with his birdie at the 16th. After all three took pars at the 17th, the fireworks began at the 18th with DeChambeau pushing his second shot to within six feet of the hole and the eagle that temporarily put him in front.—Reuters



BINCHE: Riders cycle during the third stage of the 106th edition of the Tour de France cycling race between Binche and Epernay, Belgium yesterday. —AFP

Bardet's AG2R-Mondiale team finished 19th, trailing in 59 seconds adrift of Ineos, Porte's Trek-Segafredo conceded 58 seconds, Quintana lost 45 seconds while Britton Yates was 21 seconds back with 11th placed Mitchelton-Scott. Dane Fuglsang, tipped as a pre-race favourite but left bloodied and bruised by a crash on Saturday, was relieved his Astana team only lost 21 seconds to Ineos. French enigma Thibaut Pinot (Groupama-FDJ) and Italian Vincenzo Nibali (Bahrain), the only man to break Team Sky's grip in the past seven years, lost 12 and 16 seconds respectively.—Agencies



WISCONSIN: Shanshan Feng of China poses with the trophy after winning the Thornberry Creek LPGA Classic at Thornberry Creek on July 07, 2019. —AFP

Sports

Australia's defence suffers a blow; Khawaja ruled out

Top-order bat Khawaja out with hamstring injury

MANCHESTER: Australia's World Cup defence suffered a blow yesterday after batsman Usman Khawaja was ruled out of the tournament with a hamstring injury ahead of Thursday's semi-final against England. All-rounder Marcus Stoinis, nursing a side strain, is also doubtful, head coach Justin Langer said.

"Ussie's got a hamstring strain so he'll be out for

probably three to four weeks, which is a real shame, but we have to work hard on getting him up for the Ashes now," Langer said. Matthew Wade and Mitchell Marsh have been drafted in as cover for the injured duo. "Not in the final XI yet but Matthew Wade is coming up. He's in great form, he's had a great 12 or so months back home, but he's also just scored two hundreds in one-day cricket so he's in great nick," Langer added. "And Mitch Marsh is going to come on standby for Stoinis."

Batting at number three, Khawaja scored a couple of 80s in his last four innings at the World Cup before retiring hurt in Saturday's loss to South Africa. He did return to bat later in the innings but was clearly in pain. Langer hoped the left-hander would be fit for the first Ashes test against England at Edgbaston from August 1. "Conservatively it'll be three or four weeks, and with all the help and the rehab he'll get hopefully he'll be right for the practice game or certainly the first test."

Stoinis bowled only three overs at Old Trafford on Saturday. "Marcus is the same, got another strain in his other side actually, so we are working through that at the moment and we'll have to make a decision on him in the next 24 to 48 hours," Langer said. Both Wade and Marsh were part of the Australia A squad who began their four-day clash with Sussex in Arundel on Sunday. Australia had earlier drafted in batsman Peter Handscomb for the injured Shaun Marsh. —Reuters



MANCHESTER: Australia's Usman Khawaja (center) receives medical attention during the 2019 Cricket World Cup group stage match between Australia and South Africa at Old Trafford in Manchester. —AFP

News in brief

Mitrovic, Fulham seal deal

LONDON: Fulham striker Aleksandar Mitrovic has ended speculation over his future at the English Championship club by signing a new five-year contract. The Serbia international scored 11 Premier League goals for the Craven Cottage outfit last season but it wasn't enough to save them from relegation. Several clubs were linked with a move for the 24-year-old following Fulham's drop into the second tier, including suitors in China. Mitrovic confirmed that he turned down interested parties to commit to a deal that will keep him in London until the summer of 2024. "There were a lot of clubs interested but in the end I decided to stay here because I'm really happy and settled at Fulham," he told fulhamfc.tv. —Reuters

Griezmann defies Atletico

MADRID: Atletico Madrid and France striker Antoine Griezmann delivered on his threat and failed to show up for the club's pre-season gathering on Sunday, a club spokesman told AFP. "Griezmann had an official summons to be at the club at 20.30 this Sunday and when he did not present himself, we opened a file and will study the case," said the spokesman. Griezmann, a Barcelona target, had already said he would not turn up. Madrid sports daily Marca reported on Saturday, with Atletico then telling AFP that "it changes nothing". "He is under contract with our club until 2023 and must resume training tomorrow like all the other players," they added. On Sunday evening, the club tweeted pictures of players arriving at Los Angeles de San Rafael where Atletico traditionally hold their pre-season training, including recent record signing Joao Felix, a teenage Portuguese striker. —AFP

Irving signs with Nets

NEW YORK: Six-time NBA all-star guard Kyrie Irving signed a contract Sunday with the Brooklyn Nets, finalizing a deal unveiled last weekend to revamp the club that includes obtaining superstar Kevin Durant. The Nets, who inked center DeAndre Jordan on Saturday, added top talent to a solid young playoff team and figure to be even tougher with Durant, who will miss next season after undergoing surgery to repair a ruptured right Achilles tendon. Irving, 27, averaged 23.8 points, career highs of 5.0 rebounds, 6.9 assists and 1.5 steals over 67 games with Boston last season. "Kyrie is one of the NBA's elite guards and has won at the highest level," Nets general manager Sean Marks said. "His championship pedigree, coupled with his gifted scoring and playmaking abilities, will make him an outstanding addition to our team," the first New Zealander to play in the NBA added. —AFP

Wilder-Fury rematch

LONDON: Briton Tyson Fury has said his rematch with WBC heavyweight champion Deontay Wilder will take place on Feb 22 next year. The 30-year-old is the only boxer that Wilder has faced and not defeated after the pair battled to a draw in December in Los Angeles. Fury controlled much of the fight only to be knocked down twice, including once in the 12th round that looked to be the deciding blow. "The rematch has been confirmed and signed, 22 February. It's on, the rematch," Fury told an event at Bradford's Alhambra Theatre. "This time I am going to knock him out," he added. "This time I haven't been out the ring for three years, this time I haven't been abusing too much alcohol." Wilder is scheduled to defend his belt in a rematch with Luis Ortiz and had tweeted in May that he would be fighting Fury after his bout against the Cuban. —Reuters

Australia's coach Langer pumped for England showdown

LONDON: Australia coach Justin Langer has always worn his heart on his sleeve so it is perhaps no surprise that his reaction to facing pre-tournament favourites England in the World Cup semi-finals was not fear but pure, unbridled enthusiasm. "Phwoah! It doesn't get much better does it?" he told reporters in Birmingham, where the reigning champions will face England on Thursday. "We're really excited. World Cup semi-final in England against England is going to be huge. "Both teams will be battle-hardened. Both have had really good lead ups. Both really good teams.

"I'm sure everyone will be nervous going into it but excited because as I said, England against Australia in England. How good is that?" The five-times World Cup winners face the tournament hosts to decide who will meet the winner of the first semi-final between India and New Zealand in Manchester today. Langer's team were pipped to the top-ranking in their final pool match - a surprise 10-run loss to South Africa on Saturday - and have lost batsmen Shaun Marsh and Usman Khawaja to injury over the last week. —Reuters

WCup semi-finals: Players to watch

MANCHESTER: Defending champions Australia will take on England while India are gearing up to face New Zealand in the World Cup semi-finals. AFP Sport takes a look at five players to watch in the last four.

Steely Warner

David Warner has come back even stronger after a ball-tampering ban and has been unfazed by the hostile reception he has received from English crowds along with teammate Steve Smith. Warner scored an efficient 89 not out in his first international outing after his one-year suspension to lead Australia to an opening World Cup win against Afghanistan. That was just the launchpad for the left-handed opener's prolific run-scoring in the league phase as he hit three hundreds, including a dominant 166 against Bangladesh. Warner, buoyed further by the birth of his third child in London, will be a feared man in the knockouts, with his ability to take the game away from opponents in the blink of an eye.

Deadly Starc

Mitchell Starc has rattled opposition batsmen with speed and accuracy, taking 26 scalps in nine league matches to lead the bowlers' chart by some distance. Likened to Pakistan bowling great Wasim Akram, the left-arm quick returned figures of 5-26 in his team's rout of New Zealand. His inswinging yorker that bowled England batsman Ben Stokes left many in awe, with fans dubbing it the "ball of the tournament". Former England captain Graham Gooch hailed him as a "match-winning bowler" after his four wickets in the win against England, which confirmed Australia's place in the semi-finals.

'Genius' Williamson

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson has led from the front, hitting two hundreds for the 2015 World Cup finalists. Williamson's old-school batting style and elegant stroke-play makes him stand out in an era of muscular big-hitting. The skipper, who averages more than 47 in 147 one-day internationals, made his highest-ever ODI score of 148 against West Indies and was labelled a "genius" by former England captain Michael Vaughan. Williamson has the tough task of lifting the Black Caps after three consecutive defeats but he has the grit and skill to make a difference.

India v New Zealand: 3 World Cup battles

MANCHESTER: Two-time champions India face 2015 runners-up New Zealand today in the first World Cup semi-final in Manchester. India topped the group stage with seven wins from nine matches, while New Zealand limped into the last four after three successive defeats. Here, AFP Sport looks at three key battles in the knockout match at Old Trafford:

Kohli v Williamson - Lead thy way

There will be a sense of deja vu for India's Virat Kohli and New Zealand's Kane Williamson, who were captains of their sides when India and New Zealand met in the 2008 Under-19 World Cup semi-finals. Kohli's India won the game and went on to clinch the title at Kuala Lumpur and Williamson would dearly love to avenge that loss when they meet again for much higher stakes today. Kohli has led India into the last four with five half-centuries and is two wins away from what could be his first World Cup triumph as captain of the senior side. Williamson has also been inspirational for New Zealand, with two masterclass centuries and a fifty as his team return to the semi-finals four years after losing the title match against Australia. His elegant batting and shrewd brain make for a deadly combination for the Kiwis, who are bidding to cause an upset against India at Old Trafford.

Sharma v Guptill - opening charge

Rohit Sharma is in the form of his life after hitting a record five centuries in a single edition of the World Cup to lead the tournament's batting charts with 647 runs. Sharma comes in to the semi-finals fuelled by three successive centuries - 102, 104, 103 - and two opening stands with KL Rahul of over 180. But can he continue his blazing run on the big stage? Martin Guptill's form has been in sharp contrast with that of Sharma as the Kiwi opener managed just 166 runs from his eight outings. The Black Caps will be hoping for a change of fortune for Guptill, who was in smashing form in the last World Cup when he hit the tournament's best ever individual score of 237 not out against West Indies.

Bumrah v Boult - Pace wars

Yorker king Jasprit Bumrah has led the Indian pace attack with speed and accuracy and remains key to the team's chances against New Zealand. Bumrah has claimed 17 wickets in eight matches and has stifled the flow of runs for opposition batsmen with his ability to consistently bowl yorkers in the death overs. He is ably supported by fellow fast bowlers Mohammed Shami and Bhuvneshwar Kumar. But New Zealand can also boast significant firepower in their pace attack with left-arm quick Trent Boult leading the way. With his ability to move the ball both ways, Boult is a threat to India's famed batting line-up and claimed 15 wickets from eight group-stage games. His 4-30 against West Indies on June 22 at Old Trafford was one of the best spells of fast bowling in this edition of the World Cup, while he also claimed a hat-trick against Australia. —AFP



Australia's David Warner



MANCHESTER: Australia's Mitchell Starc is bowled during the 2019 Cricket World Cup group stage match between Australia and South Africa at Old Trafford in Manchester. —AFP

Feisty Bairstow

"He likes a bit of fire in his belly" is how England skipper Eoin Morgan described Jonny Bairstow after the opener struck a crucial match-winning century against India at Edgbaston. Former captain Michael Vaughan had had dig at Bairstow on social media after the batsman said people were waiting for England to fail at the World Cup following their stumbles. But Bairstow channelled his anger to spectacular effect, adding another ton against New Zealand as England made it safely through. He looked like a man on mission when he tamed New Zealand pacemen Trent Boult and Tim Southee and Australia will not feel comfortable until he is out of the way.

Inspired Sharma

Rohit Sharma has managed to stand out even in an Indian batting top order that features skipper Virat Kohli as the undoubted alpha male. The opening batsman, known as the "hitman", has struck five centuries at the World Cup to drive his team's campaign for their third title. Sharma, whose range of strokes combined with his ability to score quickly makes him so dangerous, tops the World Cup batting chart with 647 runs from eight league games at a startling average of more than 92. Sharma, the only batsman to have scored three one-day international double centuries, is a man on a mission and he will take some stopping. —AFP



A combination of file pictures shows India's captain Virat Kohli (left) and New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson. —AFP

Sports

Brazil win Copa America despite Jesus' dismissal

Gabriel Jesus scores in first half, sent off in second

RIO DE JANEIRO: Ten-man Brazil held on to win the Copa America on home soil despite Gabriel Jesus's dismissal with a 3-1 victory over Peru on Sunday. Jesus scored the decisive goal after a penalty from Peru captain Paolo Guerrero canceled out Everton's opener for hosts Brazil at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium. A last minute penalty from substitute Richarlison sealed a win for Brazil which handed the South American giants their ninth Copa triumph and first since 2007.

Jesus's evening went sour 20 minutes from time as he was sent off for a second booking. The Manchester City striker was in tears as he left the field, making obscene hand gestures, angrily kicking a water bottle and almost knocking over the VAR booth. Brazil's players rallied after the dismissal however to claim a battling victory. "It's really special because we built something together," enthused captain Dani Alves.

Earlier, after a minute's silence was held for bossa nova legend Joao Gilberto—who died on Saturday—underdogs Peru made a confident start and didn't appear overawed by either their opponents or the occasion. But it quickly became apparent that they were up against more accomplished players. "It was a game in which they took advantage of our mistakes and turned them all into goals," said Peru's Edison Flores. Peru coach Ricardo Gareca had said on Saturday they needed to prevent Brazil from dominating possession, but that was easier said than done.

Individual brilliance

Brazil started to stroke the ball around commandingly, and as they did that, they looked dangerous. Their opening goal came from a piece of individual brilliance by Jesus, whose drag back fooled two defenders, creating space for him to cross for the unmarked Everton to

drill home at the back post on the quarter hour. Brazil were in control and playing like champions elect as Roberto Firmino found space on the left and crossed for Philippe Coutinho to stab wide.

Left-winger Everton was clever with his movement in dragging the athletic right-back Luis Advincula out of position and Brazil's left-back Alex Sandro found acres of space to put in a deep cross that Firmino headed over. Just as it looked as if Brazil would stroll to victory, Peru went on the attack and a Christian Cueva cross hit the arm of a sliding Thiago Silva, giving Peru a penalty that was confirmed after a VAR review.

Guerrero sent goalkeeper Alisson the wrong way from 12 yards and Peru were back in it just before half-time. But they paid for their lack of guile and experience with almost the last kick of the half as Arthur was allowed to drive at the defence from midfield following a slip from Renato Tapia that left him space to attack. Center-back Carlos Zambano also slipped, allowing Arthur to feed Jesus in the middle of the area and the Manchester City striker made no mistake, finding the bottom corner.

Changed dynamic

Brazil had a few speculative shots at the start of the second half but Silva, Dani Alves and Coutinho all failed to hit the target. After some wing trickery from Everton, Alex Sandro crossed but Firmino headed wide. Brazil were in complete control at this stage as Peru could hardly string two passes together. But the dynamic changed 20 minutes from time as Jesus was given his marching orders for a second yellow card after a late challenge on Cueva.

The onus was now on Peru to attack and Miguel Trauco brought a near post save out of Alisson while Edison Flores fizzed a volley from outside the area



RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil's Miranda holds the trophy after winning the Copa America by defeating Peru in the final match of the football tournament at Maracana Stadium on July 7, 2019. —AFP

just wide. But amidst a flurry of substitutions, fouls and injury stoppages, the steam went out of Peru's efforts and they were unable to exert any sustained pressure on the hosts. Any hopes they had were

extinguished when Zambrano was adjudged to have barged over Everton in the penalty area and substitute Richarlison drilled home the spot-kick into the bottom corner. —AFP

Belaili, Mahrez star as Algeria outclass Guinea

CAIRO: Superbly-taken goals from Algeria's Youcef Belaili and Riyad Mahrez set them on the way to a 3-0 win over Guinea on Sunday and a place in the Africa Cup of Nations quarter-finals, reaffirming their status as one of the favourites. While the previous five last-16 ties had produced a heady mixture of shocks, drama and comebacks, Sunday's match was straightforward as Algeria, yet to concede a goal at the tournament, won their fourth straight match.

The Desert Foxes were strong in defence, intelligent in midfield, ruthless in attack and played with a swagger that suggested they believe they are on course to lift the cup again. Belaili broke the deadlock after playing a one-two with Baghdad Bounedjah in the 24th minute and Mahrez, following some sublime control, lashed home the second just before the hour.

Substitute Adam Ounas added the third on the break in the 82nd minute, making him joint tournament top-scorer with three goals alongside Senegal's Sadio Mane and Nigeria's Odion Ighalo. Algeria, whose one previous title came in 1990, will face either Ivory Coast or Mali in the quarter-finals, and coach Djamel Belmadi was not worried about their favourites tag. "It doesn't cost anything to believe in ourselves. We said from the very beginning we were here to win," he told reporters.

Sustained pressure

On Sunday, Algeria were quickly on the attack as a ball floated over the Guinea defence was chested down by Bounedjah but he fired wide. Guinea's attacks mainly consisted of long balls aimed towards



CAIRO: Algerian players celebrate after winning the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Round of 16 football match between Algeria and Guinea on July 7, 2019. —AFP

Jose Kante but he got little change out of the Algerian defence. A period of sustained Algeria pressure led to the first goal. First Bounedjah shot wide from eight metres and Guinea escaped again when Ismail Bennacer produced an acrobatic volley which was saved by Ibrahim Kone.

But there was no let-off from the next superbly executed move as Belaili exchanged passes with Bounedjah before slotting a low shot past Kone from a narrow angle. After a scrappy start to the second half, Mady Camara gave Algeria goalkeeper Rais Mbolhi something to do with a long-range shot which he turned over the bar. But Guinea were soon on the rack again. Bennacer found Mahrez with a pass

across the face of the penalty area and the Manchester City player caressed the ball past a defender before sending Kone the wrong way from 20 metres.

Algeria spent the rest of the match stroking the ball around but there was time for a third when Youcef Atal won possession, burst down the flank and laid the ball into the path of Ounas to score from close range. "Before we conceded we were in this match. But as soon as we made our defensive error, it was difficult," said Guinea coach Paul Put. "With this Algerian side it is very hard to come back. Algeria were better than Guinea today and deserved their win." —Reuters

Madagascar keep dream run alive



ALEXANDRIA: Madagascar's forward Charles Andriamahitsinoro (center, back) takes a free-kick during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Round of 16 football match between Madagascar and DR Congo on July 7, 2019. —AFP

ALEXANDRIA: Africa Cup of Nations debutants Madagascar kept their remarkable run going on Sunday with a penalty shootout victory over the Democratic Republic of Congo after a 2-2 draw to secure a place in the quarter-finals. Ibrahim Amada's wonder strike put Madagascar ahead just nine minutes in at Alexandria Stadium but DR Congo responded swiftly as China-based forward Cedric Bakambu headed home his third goal in two matches.

Madagascar captain Faneva Andriatsima nodded the Indian Ocean islanders back ahead with a quarter-hour remaining only for Chancel Mbemba to haul DR Congo level at a corner in the final minute. Marcel Tisserand and Yannick Bolasie both blazed over for DR Congo in the shootout as Madagascar prevailed 4-2 with their reward a meeting with four-time winners Ghana or 2004 champions Tunisia for a place in the semi-finals.

"I want to congratulate my players, particularly after we had to deal with that equaliser right in the last minute of normal time," said Madagascar coach Nicolas Dupuis. "We weren't quite as good as we were against Nigeria. We lacked a bit of juice but our opponents created us a lot of problems for us." He added: "I think 25 million will be partying at home. We want to go as far as possible and enjoy it."

Marco Ilaimaharitra's suspension forced Dupuis to alter his line-up for the first time in the tournament with Rayan Raveloson deputising in midfield for a team that shocked Nigeria 2-0 to advance as group winners. Britt Assombalonga replaced the injured Jonathan Bolingi in the lone change to the DR Congo side that trounced Zimbabwe 4-0, with captain Youssouf Mulumbu describing their qualification as a "miracle" following two opening losses.

Amada rocket

Madagascar President Andry Rajoelina chartered a 480-seater plane to take fans to Egypt, and the travelling support were soon rejoicing when Amada blasted a sensational 25-yard strike that tailed away from Ley Matampi and flew in off the post.

The jubilant celebrations were halted midway through the first half though when Bakambu slipped free of the Madagascar centre-backs to glance in Glody Ngonda's bending cross. Mbemba smashed over as another left-wing cross found the Malagasy defence in trouble, but this was a far more balanced contest than the last meeting—a 6-1 triumph for DR Congo in a 2017 Cup of Nations qualifier.

That hiding was the darkest day in Malagasy football history but they have undergone a dramatic transformation, and nearly regained the lead 10 minutes after the break when Jerome Mombri embarked on a driving run, his shot spilled by Matampi with Charles Andriamahitsinoro agonisingly hitting the rebound wide. A battling Madagascar eventually regained the lead against a nation ranked 59 places above them when Andriatsima flung himself at a Romain Metanire cross following a superb long-busting run from the right-back. —AFP

Dos Santos powers Mexico to eighth Gold Cup title

CHICAGO: Mexico's Jonathan dos Santos scored in the 73rd minute to give his side a 1-0 win over the United States in the CONCACAF Gold Cup final on Sunday. The victory over the defending champions at Chicago's Soldier Field earned Mexico a record-extending eighth title at the biennial tournament, which crowns the continental champions of North America, Central America and the Caribbean.

"This was what we came here for" said Mexico's Andres Guardado. "We did it and in an unforgettable setting. We're very happy. The whole team was spectacular." Mexico took control midway through the second half and got their goal when Dos Santos received a back-heel pass from Raul Jimenez and fired home off the underside of the bar.

The United States had a series of corners late in the game and in the 87th minute one delivery caused havoc in the Mexico box but Hector Moreno made a big block with his face to preserve their lead. The hosts threw everyone forward in the two minutes of stoppage time but Mexico held firm to reclaim the title they last won in 2015. "I thought we had a good start to the game. If anything the beginning of the second half wasn't what it needed to be," said American midfielder Michael Bradley. "They were able to get some momentum and got their goal. Tough way to lose."

The game got off to a frenetic start and it was the United States who had the better chances early on while Mexico, who entered the tournament as favourites, looked shaky at the back as they weathered the early storm. Christian Pulisic nearly opened the scoring in the fifth minute when he used his speed to



CHICAGO: Mexico players and coaches celebrate with the Gold Cup after beating the US during the 2019 Concacaf Gold Cup final football match on July 7, 2019. —AFP

break in alone after a smart through ball from Jozy Altidore but was denied by a brilliant save from Mexico goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa.

Moments later Tim Ream found Altidore with a ball over the top and the striker, with only Ochoa to beat, put his left-footed effort wide. Mexico's best chance of the half came in the 16th minute when Guardado looked ready to tap home a cross from the left only for Paul Arriola to arrive out of nowhere and put him off at the last second. Tempers flared after the break when Moreno pushed Altidore over and then dropped onto

his back. American Weston McKennie quickly jumped in and several players converged but no cards were issued.

A US corner in the 51st minute saw Jordan Morris power a header on target but Guardado headed the ball off the line. McKennie's follow-up shot was then blocked by a sea of bodies and while the Americans claimed handball the referee waved away the appeals. Mexico suddenly moved up a gear and after creating a number of chances Dos Santos finally broke the deadlock to set his side on their way to victory. —Reuters

25 Astros overpower Angels as Lucroy sent to hospital



27 Brazil win Copa America despite Jesus' dismissal



27 Mexico defeat US to win record eighth Gold Cup



LONDON: Spain's Rafael Nadal returns against Portugal's Joao Sousa during their men's singles fourth round match on the seventh day of the 2019 Wimbledon Championships yesterday. —AFP

Nadal bursts Sousa's bubble

Pliskova falls to Muchova in marathon match

LONDON: Rafael Nadal had plenty to grumble about during the first week of Wimbledon. He was irritated at being seeded third at the grasscourt major despite his status as world number two and he was left exasperated when the draw put him on a second-round collision course with Australian hot-head Nick Kyrgios - a player who thrives on rubbing Nadal up the wrong way. Those setbacks have well and truly fired up the Spaniard and it was poor Joao Sousa who felt the full force of Nadal's fury yesterday during a 6-2 6-2 6-2 demolition job in the fourth round.

Tougher tests will surely come for the two-time champion, who may have to beat Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic if he wants to complete a Roland Garros-Wimbledon double for the third time in his career, but for now he was happy to show off the kind of ruthless streak that Boris Becker hailed as "vintage Nadal on grass".

"It was a good solid match. A lot of positive things in there," the 18-times Grand Slam champion, whose surgically-repaired body often struggles to cope with the demands of playing on the slick grass surface, said with a smile. "Good forehands, good backhands and creating some good volleys, so I am happy to be in the quarter-finals again. "The body is holding up well and I am playing some good tennis and winning matches in straight sets also helps."

Tennis behemoth

Until this year, the only Portuguese to create a

racket, literally, in the singles at Wimbledon was Michelle Larcher de Brito. But whereas she made her name thanks to the cacophony of ear-splitting shrieks and squeals that could be heard all around, and beyond, the 42 acres that make up the All England Club, Sousa had let his racket do the talking as he became the first Portuguese to reach the last 16 of a major.

The run included a memorable second-round win over former US Open champion Marin Cilic but the world number 69 simply ran out of ideas when he came up against a tennis behemoth who had his eyes set on a 39th quarter-final appearance at the majors. The sweet-spot in Nadal's racket appeared to be the size of a beachball yesterday as the Spaniard fired off formidable forehands, breathtaking backhands and thunderbolt aces to burst Sousa's Wimbledon bubble.

As Nadal hurtled to a 4-0 lead in the first set, Sousa appeared to have adopted some Larcher de Brito tactics by producing a couple of comical grunts. But rather than throwing Nadal off stride, the "hay-way" yelps only made the crowd chuckle. Thirty winners in all flew off Nadal's racket, none better than the running cross-court passing shot he flicked over the net as he chased down a Sousa dropshot to end a breathtaking 20-shot exchange.

While the Centre Court crowd erupted as they rose to their feet, some fans were seen bowing to Nadal's greatness and even Sousa joined in by applauding the effort. The multi-lingual Sousa

may speak Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, English, French and Italian but when it came to the language of tennis there was only one man on court who was fluent. Nadal's fifth ace set up a last-eight meeting with the winner of the all-American duel between Tenny Sandgren and Sam Querrey.

Pliskova falls

Meanwhile, unseeded Karolina Muchova outlasted third seed and fellow Czech Karolina Pliskova to reach the last eight of Wimbledon in the longest women's match at the championships so far this year. Muchova won 4-6 7-5 13-11 in three hours 17 minutes, claiming victory with a netcord as former world number one Pliskova's wait for a first Grand Slam title continued.

In her first Grand Slam quarter-final world number 68 Muchova will face eighth-seeded Ukrainian Elina Svitolina after she eased past Croatia's Petra Martic. Had Pliskova not dropped serve in the final game of a high-quality duel, Wimbledon would have witnessed its first final set tiebreak at 12-12 — the new rule brought in after last year's tournament to prevent 'never-ending' final sets.

With Australian world number one Ash Barty's defeat in the earlier fourth-round tie on Court 2, Pliskova began the match as the highest seed left in the women's draw and with a golden chance to reach the quarter-finals here for the first time. The big-server seemed on course when she took the opener against her 22-year-old compatriot. But Muchova, making her main draw debut this year,



LONDON: Czech Republic's Karolina Muchova returns against Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova during their women's singles fourth round match on the seventh day of the 2019 Wimbledon Championships yesterday. —AFP

was undaunted and took the match to her more illustrious opponent with some sparkling tennis.

Pliskova squandered a 5-3 lead in the final set and then served for the match again at 11-10 but was broken to love. The tenacious Muchova did well to hold serve at 11-11 before going 0-40 up

on the Pliskova serve thanks to a stunning clean winner off a forehand service return. Pliskova got back to 30-40 with her opponent slipping over on her second match point but Muchova got lucky at the third attempt as her forehand return clipped the tape and dropped dead. —Agencies

US men come up short in Gold Cup; women go global

CHICAGO: The contrast in competitiveness between the United States women and men's teams was starkly exposed on Sunday when the former won a fourth World Cup and the latter went down to Mexico in the Gold Cup final. The 1-0 loss for the men in a regional

competition the US had won six times before was a missed opportunity to take a big step forward under Gregg Berhalter, who was leading the team in his first tournament as coach.

"When you talk about a step the team needs to take, we're close," Berhalter told reporters after the match in Chicago. "But we weren't there tonight. We needed to score goals, we needed to put pressure on, and you saw tonight as the match went on, they took control and scored the winning goal." Berhalter, who was hired in December, has called for patience during his short tenure but all results will be deemed meaningful after the United States failed to even qualify for the 2018 World Cup finals.

The Americans certainly had another opportunity to lift a major trophy against a Mexico side missing several key players. US midfielder Christian Pulisic, a promising 20-year-old who many expect to play a leading role in the team in the years ahead, had a couple of good chances but missed both. Still, Berhalter said, there were some positives to take from the final. "I think the guys will learn a lot from this game," he said.

"There's a lot of guys playing in a game like this for the first time. For us, the whole month has been about making progress. And when I look back I think we did make progress. "This experience will help us moving forward." Playing on the same day as their women cap-

tured headlines around the world with their triumph in France only highlighted the long road the men must travel to become a true international power.

While the women's team is a model of stability from the coaching staff through to the players, the men are still searching for the right mix. "You're always searching for a perfect performance so when you evaluate at every game, there's things that can improve," Berhalter added. "Defensively, we conceded two goals all tournament, chance creation I think was positive in most games but overall ... I think they did a good job of understanding that it's a long process, and you just keep having to build." —Reuters