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US puts Hezbollah lawmakers on sanctions blacklist for first time

Don't ruin summer, Lebanon tourism minister pleads after shootout

Trump slams May's 'foolish policies,' 'pompous' envoy

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump assailed Britain's US ambassador as a "pompous fool" and slammed outgoing premier Theresa May's "foolish" policies in a second straight day of virulent attacks triggered by the leak of unflattering diplomatic cables. The missives threaten to plunge Washington and London into an unprecedented diplomatic crisis with uncertain outcome, and have landed their author, British Ambassador



Kim Darroch

Continued on Page 24

WASHINGTON/BEIRUT: The US Treasury placed two Hezbollah members of Lebanon's parliament on its sanctions blacklist yesterday - the first time Washington has taken aim at the Iran-allied group's elected politicians. The Treasury named MPs Amin Sherri and Muhammad Hasan Raad to a terror-related blacklist, saying that Hezbollah uses its parliamentary power to advance its alleged violent activities. Also placed on the blacklist was Wafiq Safa, a top Hezbollah official close to Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah.

"Hezbollah uses its operatives in Lebanon's parliament to manipulate institutions in support of the terrorist group's financial and security interests, and to bolster Iran's malign activities," said Sigal Mandelker, Under Secretary of Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. The move came as the US steps up pressure on Iran and its alleged "proxies" in the Middle East, including Hezbollah, which Washington accuses of

encouraging "terror" attacks.

However, officials stopped short of a threatened sanctions action against Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. On June 24, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Zarif would be added to the sanctions list "later this week", amid rising tensions in the Gulf. A senior administration official who insisted on anonymity would not confirm that plan. "We are obviously exploring ... various avenues for additional sanctions on Tehran. Obviously Foreign Minister Zarif is a figure of key interest," she said.

It was the first time the US Treasury had placed Hezbollah lawmakers on its blacklist, which forbid US individuals and businesses with a US branch - including leading international banks - from doing business with those sanctioned. "It is time we believe for other nations around the world to recognize that there is no distinction between Hezbollah's political and military wing," a senior administration official who insisted on anonymity

told journalists. "To any member of Hezbollah considering running for office, know that you will not be able to hide beneath the cover of political office," the official said.

Raad, 64, is the head of the parliamentary bloc of the party and an MP since 1992. Sherri, 62, is a 17-year Hezbollah veteran of parliament representing Beirut. Safa, the Treasury said, maintains the group's ties to financiers and allegedly helps arrange the smuggling of weapons and drugs. The newest sanctions brought to 50 the number of Hezbollah individuals and entities blacklisted by the Treasury since 2017.

Meanwhile, Lebanon's tourism minister urged politicians yesterday not to wreck the country's best tourist season in years, after a deadly shooting in a popular mountain region stirred fears of strife. Avedis Guidanian said more tourists came to Lebanon in the first half of this year than in the same period any year since 2010. But he warned the pres-

ident in a meeting that the summer forecast would take a hit if political tensions persisted. "I told him, in case this incident cannot be contained, there are fears. There are many questions from people planning to come," the minister told a press conference at the presidential palace.

He added that there were no big cancellations so far. "His excellency (President Michel Aoun) assured me that things are on the right track. God willing, soon, we will have really overcome this."

The government has vowed to restore security after the shootout on July 1 killed two aides of a minister in the Chouf mountains, one of the bloodiest theatres of Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war. The tourism industry, once a mainstay of Lebanon's now-battered economy, has been in the doldrums since 2011 - the year conflict erupted in neighboring Syria.

Political paralysis in Lebanon and travel warnings from Gulf Arab states also

Continued on Page 24

Trump hails Qatar ties, to sign 'very large transaction'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump yesterday praised friendship with the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, saying he is "a highly respected man, a real leader in a large part of the world and a very important part of the world." In remarks to reporters alongside Sheikh Tamim at the Oval office, Trump said "we have known each other a long time and have been friends for a long time and we are doing a lot of work now." He added that Qatar is investing "very heavily" in the US and they are "creating a lot of jobs and buying tremendous amounts of military equipment, including planes and buying large numbers of commercial planes from Boeing."

Trump said that they will be signing "a very large transaction ...that will be purchasing a lot of Boeing

jets and a lot of money spent in our country and that means a lot of jobs, so we just appreciate everything." He also shed light on Al Udeid military base in Qatar, saying they built "one of the great military bases, I would say anywhere in the world."

For his part, Sheikh Tamim said that the US and Qatar "enjoy a very great relationship and we are doing a lot together." He indicated that the economic partnership has been more than \$185 billion and Qatar is "planning to double this number". He added that Qatar has "a lot of investments" in the US, saying "we trust the economy here, we do a lot in the infrastructure and we are planning to do more investments." Sheikh Tamim invited Trump "to see Qatar and visit Al Udeid base", to which Trump remarked that the base "is incredible, it is a great place to have it, in the middle of the Middle East, so obviously it is a very important location."

Earlier yesterday, US Acting Secretary of Defense Mark Esper met Sheikh Tamim at the Pentagon to "reaffirm the strategic security partnership" between the two countries, the Pentagon said in a statement yesterday. — KUNA



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump meets Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani in the Oval Office at the White House yesterday. — AFP

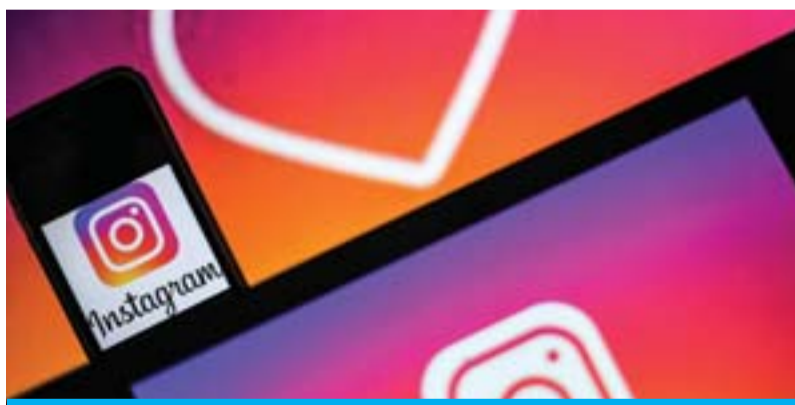
Instagram rolls out new AI features to counter bullying

WASHINGTON: Instagram will introduce new features aimed at curbing online bullying, the Facebook-owned platform announced Monday, as social media giants face increased scrutiny over the harassment faced by many users. There have been growing calls around the world for greater oversight of platforms like Facebook and Twitter, amid widespread criticism over bullying, as well as the spread of hate speech and fake news.

Instagram, which has more than a billion users worldwide, is a platform focused on images, allowing users to post photos and videos, which can then be commented on by other users. The company said it has used artificial intelligence to monitor bullying and harmful content for years, and will now use the technology to detect when a user is about to post something offensive and issue a warning.

"This intervention gives people a chance to reflect and undo their comment," Adam Mosseri, the head of Instagram, said in a statement. "From early tests of the feature, we have found that it encourages some people to undo their comment and share something less hurtful once they have had a chance to reflect."

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NANTES, France: In this photo taken on May 2, 2019, logos of US social network Instagram are displayed on the screen of a computer and a smartphone. — AFP

Perot, billionaire who sought US presidency, dies

WASHINGTON: Ross Perot, the eccentric and iconic self-made billionaire and computer industry giant whose two runs for president as an independent candidate shook up American politics, died yesterday at 89, his family said. "A true American patriot and a man of rare vision, principle and deep compassion, he touched the lives of countless people through his unwavering support of the military and veterans and through his charitable endeavors," they added.

The trailblazing Texas tycoon, technology pioneer and philanthropist died at his Dallas home, after what the Dallas Morning News described as a five-month battle with leukemia. Perot delivered a shockingly strong performance as an independent in the 1992 presidential race, capturing 19 percent of the vote and syphoning off conservative support, helping seal Democrat Bill Clinton's victory over incumbent George HW Bush.

No other independent or third-party candidate has won such a large slice of the vote since the Democratic and Republican parties began dominating presidential politics in the mid-19th century, and he foretold the impact that strong, focused third-party campaigns could have on a White House race. His appearance alongside Clinton and Bush on the debate stage sharply boosted his credibility among viewers.

When Bush asked what experience Perot had to run the country, the retort from Perot - who spent \$63 million of his own money on the race - was a corker. "I don't have any experience in running up a \$4 trillion debt," Perot fired back. "I don't have any experience in gridlock government where nobody takes responsibility for anything and everybody blames everybody else... but I do have a lot of experience in getting things done."

Four years later Perot ran again, as leader of the Reform Party. But he did not fare as well, and Clinton was re-elected. Perot's first campaign caused a rift between him and the Bush family, but yesterday, George W Bush, the 43rd president, hailed him as an American icon. "Texas and America have lost a strong patriot," Bush said in a statement. "Ross Perot epitomized the entrepreneurial spirit and the American creed."

Henry Ross Perot was born on June 27, 1930, in



TAMPA: In this file photo taken on Oct 31, 1992, independent presidential candidate Ross Perot speaks at the University of South Florida. — AFP

Texarkana, Texas, and raised in the height of the Depression. He graduated in 1953 from the US Naval Academy, where he first learned about computers. After his naval service, Perot joined IBM as a computer salesman in 1957 and quickly made a reputation for himself. In 1962 he met his yearly sales quota by Jan 19.

Continued on Page 24

Ransomware hits hard; cyber attacks cost \$45bn in 2018

WASHINGTON: An estimated two million cyber attacks in 2018 resulted in more than \$45 billion in losses worldwide as local governments struggled to cope with ransomware and other malicious incidents, a study showed yesterday. The Internet Society's Online Trust Alliance, compiling data from the United States and some international sources, said other important losses came from fraudulently taking over business email credentials as well as "cytojacking" or hijacking a computer or network to generate bitcoin or other virtual currency.

The report suggested cyber criminals are getting more sophisticated in targeting their victims, but also noted many attacks could have been prevented with improved computer security. Various security researchers found as many as 6,515 computer breaches and five billion records exposed in 2018. Jeff Wilbur, technical director of the alliance, said the report's estimates are conservative because many attacks are not reported. "The financial impact of cybercrime is up significantly and cyber criminals are becoming more skilled at profiting from their attacks," Wilbur said.

Some \$8 billion in losses came as the result of ransomware attacks including high-profile incidents targeting the cities of Atlanta, Georgia, and Baltimore, Maryland that forced the municipalities to rebuild their networks. While the number of ransomware infects fell by an estimated 20 percent, the financial losses surged by 60 percent, the report said. Attackers also continued to profit from a variety of email scams that impersonate employees or vendors, a technique also known as "phishing".

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Local

Amir, Crown Prince receives Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad

PM meets security, defense delegation; KJA members, auditors



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. —KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Kuwait Journalists Association members.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah separately at Bayan Palace yesterday.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received members of a Kuwaiti security and defense delegation, which recently visited the UK to discuss crisis management developments. The delegation consisted of officials from His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan, the Kuwaiti Army, the Interior Ministry, Kuwait National Guard (KNG), and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS). The delegation briefed His Highness the Prime Minister on their trip to the UK, which also focused on enhancing bilateral ties. His Highness the Prime Minister commended the members of the delegation for their efforts, expressing the political leadership and government trust in the security and defense forces of Kuwait. He stressed that members of the security and defense forces should always seek ways to boost their readiness to fend off any dangers that might face the country.

In the meantime, His Highness the Prime Minister received Chairwoman of the Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) Fatima Hussain Al-Essa and members of the board. His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak also received the honorary president of the Kuwait Accountants and Auditors Association Yousif Al-Othman, its Board Chairman Faisal Al-Tubaikh and board members. —KUNA



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Kuwaiti chief auditors.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with members of the Kuwaiti security and defense delegation.

Kuwait's govt forms information technology policy committee

KUWAIT: Kuwait's government on Monday formed a committee with a mandate of creating national information technology policy and executive programs to implement it. The committee will be chaired by President of the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), with members from the Public Authority for Civil Information, Central Agency for Information Technology, Ministry of Interior, Oil Sector and General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement. The Cabinet, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, approved draft agreements over social affairs and education with Jordan. It assigned competent authorities to purchase private properties in Failaka Island in order to pave way for the island's development. The Cabinet, said Saleh, assigned Kuwait Municipality to allocate a storage location for the Public Authority of Industry at Kabd Area, as well as specifying another location for PAI to be used for food and pharmaceutical storage.

Minister of State for Economic Affairs Maryam Al-Aqeel briefed the Cabinet about general privatization project and financial restructuring plan, which aimed at diversifying income, lessen dependency on oil, improving public services, creating lucrative investment opportunities for citizens, and providing productive job opportunities. Aqeel also explained how government department were on course towards the 2035 new Kuwait vision. Meanwhile, the government welcomed

the parliament's confidence of Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf. The Cabinet paid tribute to late former Minister of Health Dr Abdulrahman Al-Awadhi, and highly appreciated his services at the health and planning sectors.

Sport ban end

Meanwhile, the Cabinet congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti people for the complete lifting of international ban on Kuwait sport. The Cabinet commended His Highness the Amir's support for executive and legislative authorities, Public Authority for Sport (PAS) and sport sectors which contributed to lifting of ban, Saleh said. The Executive Board (EB) of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) last Friday fully lifted the suspension of Kuwait's National Olympic Committee (NOC) as a result of the successful implementation of a roadmap agreed between all parties. The first step of the roadmap (revision and adoption of new statutes for the sports clubs, followed by elections) was successfully completed within the prescribed deadline (end of January 2019), said the IOC in a press release.

The second step (revision and adoption of new statutes for the National Sports Federations, followed by elections) was implemented in close coordination with the International Federations (IFs) concerned, and was successfully completed in early June 2019. The third and last step (revision and adoption of the NOC statutes, followed by NOC elections) was successfully completed on 30 June 2019, with the holding of the NOC Elective General Assembly. The NOC was suspended by decision of the IOC EB on 27 October 2015, to protect the Olympic Movement in Kuwait from undue government interference, after a sports law that was not compatible with the basic principles that govern the Olympic Movement was passed in the country. Saleh hoped the lift of the ban would mark a strong start for Kuwaiti athletes to realize accomplish-



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the Cabinet's weekly meeting. —KUNA

ments at the regional and international levels.

Houthis' terrorist attacks

In the meantime, the Cabinet condemned the repeated terrorist attacks by the Houthi militia on the International Airport of Abha, Saudi Arabia, which resulted in many injuries of innocent civilians, as well as attacks on King Abdullah airport in Jizan. Kuwait confirms its stance with the Kingdom and supports all decision its takes for maintaining its stability and security, stressing the continued attacks by the Houthi militia on civilians are a breach of international law, calling on the international community to take necessary measures in order to stop these repeated criminal acts.

The Cabinet also condemned the shocking attack

that hit Tajoura detention center in Tripoli, Libya, resulting in many deaths and a large number of casualties, and considered it a major breach of international law. The agreement reach in Sudan between the Transnational Military Council and the Force for Freedom and Change to establish a sovereign council was praised by the Cabinet as an important step to a new phase for Sudan's stability and security, while also providing necessary needs of its people. The Cabinet expressed sorrow for the terrorist bombing that hit Ghazni in Afghanistan that resulted in the death of security officers while tens of civilians were injured. The Cabinet rejects such terrorist attacks that have no place among any religions and humanitarian norms, and wished the injured a quick recovery. —KUNA

Local

Political group comments on bedoon's suicide: Find solution for chronic problem

Domestic helper recruitment offices urged to update data before August

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti political group issued a statement yesterday commenting on the recent suicide of a young bedoon man in Jahra. In its statement, the Kuwait Democratic Forum (KDF) demanded accelerating the procedures needed to grant citizenship to eligible bedoons as soon as possible and finding a fair and humane solution to provide this sect of the society with their basic human rights of education, medical services and decent living conditions.

KDF stressed that the issue transcends being just a case of a bedoon committing suicide, which is alarmingly indicating that both the legislators and the executives have so far failed to reach any accepted solution for this 'chronic' problem. KDF added that stateless people live on the margins of the state, society and institutional frameworks regardless of their humane circumstances or legal protection.

"Many of them face compelling living conditions," the statement added, noting that they cannot find suitable jobs, and when they do, those jobs do not pay well enough to provide for a decent life for their families, needless to mention the fees they have to pay for education, which hinders many of them from going to university. KDF urged all officials to be up to their responsibilities and set the needed laws and legislations to undo the imminent danger threatening bedoons.

Final procedures

The Kuwait hajj mission is currently finishing the final procedures before heading to Saudi Arabia to start receiving Kuwaiti pilgrims there, well-informed sources said. The sources added that the mission will leave in two groups on July 26 and most probably July 28, so that the mission's members can get prepared for the upcoming hajj season. The sources

said the mission usually comprises of elements from a number of ministries and government bodies including the ministries of awqaf, information, interior, foreign affairs and health, in addition to the youth and sports authority and fire department. In addition, the sources said representatives from the abovementioned bodies will meet with the head of the mission and awqaf ministry undersecretary Faeed Emadi to discuss the needed preparations.

Data update

Manager of domestic helpers' regulation department at the Public Authority for Manpower Nasser Al-Mousawi urged all domestic helper recruitment offices to update their data at the department's headquarters in Rumaithiya before the beginning of August to avoid legal accountability. Mousawi added that only 223 out of a total of 432 offices had so far updated their data, pointing out that legal actions to be taken vary from filing citations, suspension and even license withdrawal. Mousawi said that his department had received 802 complaints till May 2019, compared to only 281 in the same period the previous year.

Jordanian universities

A Kuwaiti students' union in Jordan urged His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to look into resolving the problem of suspending Kuwaiti students from joining 15 Jordanian government and private universities and to reconsider accrediting them, especially since these universities have many agreements with

international universities and that none of them had ever received any academic warnings. The union slammed the ministry of higher education's recent sudden decision to disaccredit the 15 universities without any explanation or even visiting the concerned universities to evaluate them.

New teachers

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is currently waiting for the return of its committees dispatched to Tunisia, Jordan and Palestine to hire new teachers to start the procedures of appointing new teachers and form special teams to start receiving them at Kuwait airport, said educational sources, noting that

Families' products to be sold in six co-ops

MoE will also arrange with the airport authorities to allow its vehicles into the airport to take the teachers' luggage to the MoE hostel. The sources predicted the first group of teachers to start arriving by August 18, ie after Eid Al-Adha, and that special teams from the health and interior ministries will receive them to conduct the needed medical tests and do the residency procedures, in addition to representatives from local banks to open bank accounts for new teachers and give them a KD 200 loan in advance. Further, the sources said only 100 teachers had been hired locally, in addition to 200 from Tunisia and Jordan and 350 from Palestine, which adds up the total to 650 teachers, still leaving MoE short of 130 teachers from the total number of 780 needed for the new school year.

Nurseries' licenses

Kuwait Municipality Deputy Director



Mohammad Al-Zobi said a ministerial decision had been issued limiting licenses for nurseries to three per residential area. Responding to an inquiry by Municipal Councilmember Hassan Kamal about nursery licenses, Zobi explained that the Ministry of Social Affairs usually asks the Municipality to examine the location, number of floors and parking availability before approving the application and issuing the license according to ministry regulations.

Families' products

Manager of the community development department at Ministry of Social Affairs Nadia Al-Azmi announced launching the productive families' project, adding that these families' products will be displayed for sale in six co-ops by the beginning of September. Azmi added that special training workshops had been opened at every community center to train women in painting, sewing and carpentry in various areas.

New structure

Well-informed sources said the Ministry of Health (MoH) has finished putting the final touches on its new organizational structure, adding that the new structure will reorganize various sectors, central directorates and health zones with the aim of avoiding the remarks made by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and other auditory bodies.



KUWAIT: Firemen inspect the scene of an accident reported on King Faisal highway.

Man attacks others with blade in Souq Sharq brawl

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti man was arrested at Souq Sharq for assaulting two others with an edged steel weapon, said the interior ministry's relations and security media department, noting that the suspect had acted strangely. The department added that along with others - who are still at large and a search is on to arrest them - the suspect had an argument with the two victims that developed into a fight, in which he assaulted them with the blade, injuring them both. On searching the suspect's vehicle, detectives found liquor in it, and a case was filed pending arresting the runaway

accomplices seen on a video posted on social media.

Road accident

A Kuwaiti was injured after he lost control over his vehicle and it turned over on King Faisal highway, said security sources, noting that Farwaniya firemen rushed to the scene and managed to release the driver from the wreckage and handed him over to paramedics for treatment.

Companies commit violations

Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations Department said Ahmadi municipal inspectors filed three citations against three companies for unlawful use of government property and the expiry of their storage licenses. In this regard, Ahmadi municipal safety department manager Al-Humaidi Al-Mutairi said an inspection tour in the southern areas resulted in fining the three companies a total of KD 302,066 for unlawful utilization of the total area of 17,000 sq m of government property as offices and storage areas with expired licenses.



KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's (KFSD) prevention sector closed 11 facilities for violating its safety and security conditions, said security sources, noting that the shuttered facilities had already received warning notices but did not heed them, which poses a threat to both lives and property. —By Hanan Al-Saadoun



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KUWAIT: A display of old and traditional Kuwait at Naif Palace during Ramadan. — Photo by Ahmad Darweesh (KUNA)

Zain partners with H&S Store Summer Internship Program

Organized by Zain's Future University Network during summer vacation

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced its partnership with H&S Store Summer Internship Program for students organized by Zain's Future University Network (FUN) where the company hosted the orientation session at Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) in its main headquarters in Shuwaikh, in the aim to develop the students' skills at product marketing, customer service, smartphones maintenance, during the summer vacation. The program continues until August 31, 2019.

Zain's partnership with this program comes as part of 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 entrepreneurial skills within the youth. The company is keen to offer world-class specialized programs for those who are interested in developing their talents within all areas. Zain, being a leader in the Kuwaiti private sector, believes in the importance of enriching the talents of the community in which it operates by adopting such initiatives.

The company hosted the orientation session for H&S Store participants at Zain's Innovation Center (ZINC) at its main headquarters in Shuwaikh, where a large number of students attended the session organized by FUN program, in the aim to prepare the students after completing their studies to work as a part-time job during the summer vacation.

Zain's own Future University Network (FUN), is a sustainable youth tailored CSR program for students that bridges the gap between studies and a unique work experience at Zain. This is achieved by recruiting the youth as

the brand's main ambassadors. The youth network initiative is considered the largest sustainable projects that Zain has been developing over the years since its first edition in 2008. It is a valuable opportunity for university students to benefit from the actual work experience to gain and develop the many skills and expertise that they need to



Program continues until August 31st

enter the labor market both professionally and personally.

Zain is always keen on supporting a great number of educational initiatives and programs that caters to developing the youth's skills and talents, including the KON Social Entrepreneurship Program 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, as well as the LOYAC AC Milan Soccer School, and more.

Zain affirms that it is committed to exerting more efforts into offering similar programs that enrich human resources development in all areas. The company will spare no



KUWAIT: FUN's team with H&S Store officials at the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC).

efforts in making its capabilities and resources available as well as reinforce its collaboration with entities and organizations that provide such initiatives and actively develop Kuwaiti talents.

As a leading national company, Zain firmly believes in the advancement of young people's skills and capabilities, and looks to empower and prepare them for the important

roles they will play in the further progress of the country.

H&S Store was established in 2011 in the aim to offer its customers a wide range of high quality products with a hassle-free shopping experience to insure customers satisfaction in Kuwait and throughout the GCC region, as well as providing a specialized maintenance and repair workshops for smart devices.

Kuwaiti caricaturists distinguished at regional level: Official



CAIRO: Head of the Kuwait Caricature Society Mohammad Thallab (center) speaks during the 'Caricature in Kuwait' seminar.

CAIRO: Head of the Kuwait Caricature Society Mohammad Thallab said Monday Kuwait caricaturists were distinguished at local, Gulf and Arab levels. Addressing the 'Caricature in Kuwait' seminar as part of the 6th International Caricature Forum in Cairo, Thallab spoke about the history of caricature in Kuwait where many Arab caricaturists worked in newspapers in the Arab Gulf country. Caricature in Kuwait, he added, was influenced by nationalism, the Palestinian cause, Arab struggle against the Israeli occupation, the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait, in addition to local issues. Thallab said that the Kuwait Caricature Society was established in 2017 and had held many workshops and exhibitions to promote the art of caricature. The society, he went on, was keen on cooperating with the Ministry of Information, Ministry of State for Youth and the National Council for Culture, Art and Letters (NCCAL) to develop caricature in Kuwait. — KUNA



A group photo of participants at the 6th International Caricature Forum in Cairo. — KUNA photos

Local

Exclusive interview

Sierra Leone Embassy marks 10 years in Kuwait; envoy woos investors, lauds ties

‘Come and feel at home - Sierra Leone is one of the most fascinating destinations’



KUWAIT: Sierra Leonean Ambassador to Kuwait Haja Ishata Thomas pictured during an interview at the Sierra Leone Embassy in Kuwait. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Chidi Emmanuel

KUWAIT: On July 1, 2019, the Embassy of Sierra Leone in Kuwait marked its 10-year anniversary. As part of efforts to promote tourism and investments, Sierra Leonean Ambassador to Kuwait Haja Ishata Thomas highlighted the key programs lined up to make Sierra Leone an investment magnet and one of the greatest economies in Africa. In an exclusive interview with Kuwait Times, the ambassador hailed Sierra Leone-Kuwait bilateral relations and urged Kuwaiti investors to turn to the African nation for fruitful investments. She said Sierra Leone has developed a political framework for the promotion and facilitation of inbound investments.

She urged Kuwaitis and foreigners to explore the vast Sierra Leonean market and investment opportunities. “Sierra Leone is beautiful and business-friendly. It has a lot of untapped resources,” Thomas said. She hinted the government is opening up some business venture in oil and gas, marine resource, transport, tourism and agricultural sector.

Bilateral relations

On Sierra Leone-Kuwait ties, Thomas said both nations have enjoyed cordial bilateral relations for decades. She lauded the effort of Kuwaiti leaders in maintaining peace and tranquility in this region.

“**Sierra Leone, Kuwait enjoyed cordial ties for decades**”

“Kuwait and Sierra Leone belong to OIC and UN among other international organizations. During the invasion of Kuwait, Sierra Leone sent a contingent of nurses to support the state. We admire Kuwait’s democratic principles, its vibrant economy and rich cultural heritage. Meanwhile, the Sierra Leonean government has offered plots of land for Kuwait to open its embassy in a bid to cement our bilateral ties. Arrangements are in progress for the Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone to visit her counterpart in Kuwait. On the other hand, Sierra Leone has benefitted from the Kuwait Fund with lots of infrastructural projects,” she added, thanking His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his generosity and support.

Reforms, investments

Turning to reforms, the envoy pointed out that the government has embarked on major reforms to promote economic cooperation in a bid to enhance economic growth and maintain regional peace, thus making Sierra Leone a magnet for investors. At a press briefing held at the embassy, Thomas underlined the investment opportunities in energy, education, mining and agricultural sectors.

She said local and foreign investors have been designed to encourage engagement in eligible new enterprises and expansion projects in mining, tourism, agro-industries, manufacture, construction, oil and gas



KUWAIT: Sierra Leonean ambassador to Kuwait Haja Ishata Thomas and First Secretary Khadijatu Eunice Bangura.

exploration. Thomas hinted the government is working on various attractive incentives to lure investors. She urged foreign investors to experience an ecofriendly and market-friendly environment. “Foreign investors are reaping bountifully from their investments in Sierra Leone,” she added.

Tourism

On tourism, the ambassador called on Kuwaitis and expatriates to take a trip to Sierra Leone and witness the lush vegetation, beautiful beaches and captivating

cultures on offer. “Come and feel at home. With its breathtaking mountains, palm-fringed exotic white sandy beaches, tropical rainforests and vibrant culture, Sierra Leone is one of West Africa’s most fascinating destinations,” she said.

The ambassador in her goodwill message reaffirmed the embassy’s commitment to Kuwait’s media, urging it to help in promoting the image of Sierra Leone and not darkening it. She urged all to perceive the African nation in a new light and put aside all stereotypes, misinformation, prejudices and wrong assertions.

In my view

Al-Awadhi’s legacy lives on

By Dr Khaled Al-Saleh

We recently lost Dr Abdul Rahman Al-Awadhi, may Allah have mercy on his soul. I have known Awadhi since 1994, when he quit all government posts and dedicated all his time to voluntary and charity work. It has been 25 years since this acquaintance started, and this makes me mention the following:

Awadhi had taken modesty after his father. He always had a smile on his face, loved charity and reading and there was always a book on his desk. He was very sharp and creative. He always came up with solutions to problems we deemed unsolvable. He founded many humane and medical initiatives for the best of his nation. He was a fierce advocate of Arabic and true Islamic values.

There are many stories about him, including one about a Muslim American scientist who visited Kuwait 10 years ago to communicate with some officials. After concluding the tour, someone asked the visitor about the most significant thing he saw here. “It is Abdul Rahman Al-Awadhi,” said the scientist - who had never visited Kuwait before - without any hesitation.

A colleague who had visited an African country on an official mission during Awadhi’s tenure as health minister told me that on concluding the visit and on writing the usual report about the mission, he forgot the names of two types of medicines used in that country, and on asking one of his companions, he advised him to make up two imaginary names, saying that nobody ever reads these reports. “After returning to Kuwait, we visited the minister, who thanked us for our humanitarian efforts. However, before leaving his office, Awadhi asked us about the two fake names we used in the report,” my friend said, noting that Awadhi had read the entire report.

The best things Awadhi left for us are edifices that reflect his creativity and love for this nation, including the Arabization Center, Islamic Organization for Health Sciences, the regional Environment Protection Organization and many other societies, reflecting his complete dedication and devotion. He was also keen on prayers and voluntary fasting. You will surely be missed by many people.

Kuwait Airways beefs up Airbus A320 fleet

ISTANBUL: Kuwait Airways is set to receive next month between five to six Airbus A320 aircrafts as part of the airline’s plan to provide quality services to its clientele. The national carrier will own a total of 28 Airbus A320 by next year, its Chairman Yousef Al-Jassem said as he toured Istanbul’s new airport, where he held talks with officials from IGA: the consortium building and operating the sprawling facility. On his visit to Istanbul, he said it was a step towards stronger aviation ties between Kuwait and Turkey, ahead of a planned “partnership deal” Kuwait’s flag carrier seeks to clinch with IGA. The agreement primarily entails airport services, the official divulged, describing Turkey as a hotspot that has long beguiled Kuwaiti travelers, a fact he attributed to the commonalities

both nations share.

The Kuwaiti official’s visit is crucial to push aviation ties, according to IGA’s Chairman Murat Sumutcu, who pointed out that it was in the best interest of both countries. He added that the Kuwaiti delegation got a firsthand look at the cutting-edge technology employed by the new mega airport, which has already begun serving 16 million people. Kuwait’s Consul General in Istanbul Mohammad Al-Mohammad emphasized the importance of closer aviation ties as well, given the fact that the number of Kuwaitis to have visited Turkey has increased exponentially. Kuwait’s national carrier is offering daily flights to Turkey all summer long as part of a newly revamped itinerary.

Meanwhile, Turkish Airlines announced yesterday that it inked a code sharing agreement with Kuwait Airways. The Turkish Airlines said in a press release yesterday that the agreement would be applicable for joint flights from Kuwait International Airport and the airports of Istanbul and Sabiha Gokcen. The accord was signed at the Turkish Airlines headquarters in Istanbul. The inking ceremony was attended by Director General of the Turkish Airlines Bilal Eksi and Kuwait Airways Chairman Jassem. It will allow the two sides to reach new destinations via each other’s networks. — KUNA



ISTANBUL: Kuwait Airways Chairman Yousef Al-Jassem (center) holds talks with officials from IGA. — KUNA



ROME: The Kuwaiti military pilots during the graduation ceremony. — KUNA

Kuwaiti pilots graduate, train on Eurofighters

ROME: Seven Kuwaiti military pilots have graduated from Italy receiving courses that included training on one of the world’s most formidable combat aircraft, the Eurofighter Typhoon. The airmen have completed the courses at the International Flying School and graduated at a ceremony held at the southern air base of Galatina. Eurofighter joint international bureau said in a statement yesterday that the graduation ceremony, held last Friday, was attended by Commander of the Kuwaiti Air Force Air Vice Marshal

Adnan Al-Fadhli. Speaking during the ceremony, Air Vice Marshal Al-Fadhli said the occasion depicted depth of the Kuwaiti-Italian relations and fruitful cooperation between the two countries in various sectors. This significant event also signals distinctive cooperation between Kuwait and Italy for enhancing capacities of the Kuwaiti Army including the Air Force, he said.

Kuwaiti officers who take part in military courses in Italy get acquainted with latest technology that enable them to train on the Eurofighters, he said, also indicating that the airmen get training on commanding Eurofighter Typhoon squadrons. The Kuwaiti Air Force chief announced last year, during visits to plants in Europe where the fighter jet is manufactured, that the Gulf country would receive the first batch of Eurofighters by September 2020. Eurofighter Typhoon is the world’s most advanced swing-role combat aircraft providing simultaneously deployable Air-to-Air and Air-to-Surface capabilities. — KUNA

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Alan Kurdi rescue ship picks up another 44 migrants

China demands US cancel arms sale to Taiwan



HONG KONG: A protester holds up a mask of the anonymous group in Mong Kok district in Kowloon during a demonstration march to the West Kowloon rail terminus against the proposed extradition bill in Hong Kong. —AFP

HK leader says extradition bill 'dead'

Unmoved protesters threaten mass rallies

HONG KONG: Hong Kong's embattled pro-Beijing leader yesterday said a China extradition bill that sparked unprecedented political unrest "is dead"—but protesters immediately dismissed her comments, threatening more mass rallies. The international finance hub has been plunged into its worst crisis in recent history by a month of marches and sporadic violent confrontations between police and pockets of hardcore protesters.

The rallies were sparked by a draft law that would have allowed extraditions to mainland China, but they have morphed into a wider movement calling for democratic reforms and a halt to sliding freedoms in the semi-autonomous territory. In a city unaccustomed to such upheaval, police have fired tear gas and rubber bullets while the parliament has been trashed by protesters—as Beijing's authority faces its most serious challenge since Hong Kong was handed back to China in 1997.

Yesterday the city's chief executive Carrie Lam admitted her administration's attempt to introduce the bill was a "complete failure", saying that her government would not seek to reactivate it in parliament. "There is no such plan. The bill is dead," Lam said. But she once again refused to buckle to demands to completely

withdraw the bill from the legislative agenda, provoking outcry from the anti-government camp.

Lam's words about the bill are "another ridiculous lie" tweeted leading democracy activist Joshua Wong, who was recently released from jail for his role in protests in 2014. "The bill still exists in the 'legislative program' until July next year."

Claudia Mo, a pro-democracy lawmaker added: "A person cannot be resurrected. But then an object can always be remade... and it boils down to our complete lack of trust and confidence (in the government). The Civil Human Rights Front—which has organized some of the mass rallies—said it would announce fresh protests in coming days.

Challenge to Beijing

With calls mounting for her resignation, Lam has made few public appearances in recent weeks. But yesterday she resurfaced, agreeing to meet student protesters and adding that she recognized the swirling economic, political and social challenges facing the city. "I come to the conclusion that there are some fundamental and deep-seated problems in Hong Kong society," she

said. Analyst Dixon Sing said her words would do little to defang the protest movement.

"Trust in the government has sunk to such a record level that if there's not a clear fulfillment of the (key) demands, the majority of the Hong Kong public will still be very skeptical of the government's sincerity," he told AFP. Lam has been under pressure to appoint an independent judge as head of a public commission of inquiry into the police response to the protests. But she rejected those calls again yesterday, backing an existing police complaints body to investigate claims of excessive force.

Stress test bank

The anti-extradition movement has united an unlikely cross-section of Hong Kong society, including major business, legal bodies as well as religious leaders, activists and journalists. Protesters are becoming increasingly creative—chat forums and encrypted messenger apps are buzzing with calls for the mass withdrawal of funds from the Bank of China this Saturday to "stress test" the organization's liquidity.

Beijing has thrown its full support behind Lam, calling

on police to pursue anyone involved in the parliament storming and other clashes. "The central government expressed support, respect and understanding," foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters in Beijing when asked about Lam's latest statement. Over the weekend, Beijing's ambassador to London said the extradition bill was needed to "plug loopholes", fuelling fears it still wants the legislation to pass.

The protests are also part of a longer battle for the soul of Hong Kong between those who see full integration with the autocratic mainland as an inevitability and others wishing to preserve the city's unique freedoms and culture. Under the 1997 handover deal with the British, China promised to allow Hong Kong to keep key liberties such as its independent judiciary and rights like freedom of speech.

But many say that 50-year deal is already being reneged on, citing the disappearance into mainland custody of dissident booksellers, the disqualification of prominent politicians and the jailing of democracy protest leaders. Authorities have also resisted calls for the city's leader to be directly elected by the people. —AFP

Billionaire Democrat launches 2020 White House bid

WASHINGTON: Billionaire environmental activist Tom Steyer launched an underdog 2020 presidential bid yesterday, reversing his decision from months ago to focus instead on pressing the case to impeach incumbent Donald Trump. "My name's Tom Steyer and I'm running for president," the Democratic philanthropist and former hedge fund manager said in a video announcing his candidacy.

Denouncing a "rigged system" that benefits Americans at the top, Steyer said his campaign was "trying to make democracy work by pushing power down to the people." Steyer's announcement makes the 62-year-old the 24th candidate pursuing the Democratic 2020 presidential nomination, a sprawling field that includes heavyweights like former US vice president Joe Biden and senators Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and Kamala Harris.

His late entry likely puts him at a disadvantage: the party has already held its first debate, and Steyer will be hard pressed to meet the donor and polling criteria to make the stage for the next debate later this month. Steyer has been among the most unapologetic supporters of impeaching the president, donating millions of dollars of his own fortune to a television and online campaign. Need to Impeach.

But he steered clear of that message in his launch video,



SAN FRANCISCO: In this file photo US philanthropist Tom Steyer speaks on stage during the 2019 California Democratic Party State Convention at Moscone Center in San Francisco, California. —AFP

training his fire instead on powerful corporations that he said have "bought the democracy" and are putting profits ahead of everyday Americans and environmental stewardship.

"There's a breakdown in Washington DC, and I don't mean just Donald Trump," Steyer added on Twitter. "I'm talking about corporate money and our broken political system." Steyer recently has spoken critically of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the top Democrat in Congress, who is publicly opposed to launching impeachment proceedings against Trump but is facing mounting pressure from within her caucus to do so. —AFP

Trump 'dossier' author grilled by US Justice Dept

WASHINGTON: Federal lawyers probing the origins of the investigation of ties between Russia and President Donald Trump's campaign have interviewed the author of a "dossier" that alleged misconduct between Trump and Moscow, prompting the lawyers to extend their inquiry. Three attorneys from the Inspector General's office of the US Department of Justice met in person in early June with dossier author Christopher Steele in Britain, said two sources with direct knowledge of the lawyers' travels.

The interview with Steele, a former top spy on Russia for Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, or MI6, took place while Trump was in London for a formal state visit with Queen Elizabeth and a meeting with UK Prime Minister Theresa May. Steele's dossier, made public in 2017, alleged that Moscow attempted to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and that there was potential collusion between Russia and Trump's campaign, along with other unverified and salacious claims about the president.

The Justice Department's inspector general has been examining the earliest stages of an FBI investigation of Trump, his former 2016 presidential campaign rival Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, Russia and

former Trump adviser Carter Page. Inspector General Michael Horowitz, whose office is an internal Justice Department watchdog, launched his probe in March 2018 amid allegations by Republican lawmakers that the FBI erred in seeking a warrant to monitor Page.

Trump has described the Steele dossier as "bogus" and Republicans have long sought to discredit the FBI's investigation, which was later taken over by US Special Counsel Robert Mueller. His final report on Russia and the Trump campaign was released in redacted form in mid-April. In that same month, Attorney General William Barr, who now heads the Justice Department, told a congressional committee that the Horowitz probe would be completed by May or June.

One of the two sources said Horowitz's investigators appear to have found Steele's information sufficiently credible to have to extend the investigation. Its completion date is now unclear. A key focus of the Horowitz probe is whether the FBI followed proper procedures when it applied for a warrant with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISA) to secretly conduct surveillance on Page and his ties to Russia.

Declassified documents show that the FBI cited information in Steele's dossier when it asked the secretive FISA court in late 2016 for a warrant to eavesdrop electronically on Page, a US businessman with interests in Russia. Horowitz's office in Washington declined to comment. A spokesman for Orbis Business Intelligence, Steele's London investigations firm, declined to comment. UK government agencies declined to disclose whether they were in contact with Horowitz's team in London. —Reuters

International

Short-sighted policies stall Balkans' integration into EU

Leaders voice disappointment at summit

MOUNT JAHORINA, Bosnia: Short-sighted anti-immigrant populism in some European Union member states has blocked the integration of Western Balkan countries into the EU, weakening the region's stability, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday. He was speaking at a 12-nation Balkans summit where leaders voiced deep disappointment with the EU's lack of follow-through on promises to open membership talks with North Macedonia and Albania, opposed by northern EU countries.

In June, EU governments unexpectedly put off a decision to start the talks with the two and cast doubt on the bloc's existing strategy to counter a growing Russian and Chinese presence in the Balkans. Erdogan and other speakers at the Balkans gathering held near the Bosnian capital Sarajevo criticized the EU over its reluctance to pursue further enlargement of the bloc. "Recently we have seen that some short-sighted populist circles have blocked EU enlargement policy. Negative trends toward division and discrimination have spread across the continent and endanger not only internal peace

within the EU but...hope and potential of the (Balkans) region."

The EU's appetite for further enlargement has been eroded by anti-immigration sentiment among voters and by increased criticism of the 28-nation bloc's already complex and lumbering decision-making processes. France and the Netherlands, with support from Denmark, also may seek further conditions such as more reform to tackle corruption and organized crime in Albania and Macedonia.

Turkey's own bid for EU membership, launched back in 2004, has been stalled for years, with EU officials citing Ankara's disregard for human rights and civil liberties under Erdogan. Some EU leaders want the talks to be scrapped. Erdogan has blamed alleged prejudice against Muslims for the impasse. Montenegro President Milo Djukanovic called on other Western Balkan leaders to come up with a clear, common approach regarding expectations for relations with the EU.

"We are concerned about enlargement policy being slowed down and being made vague," Djukanovic said, adding that other

countries of the region had also received discouraging signals regarding the EU accession process. He said the EU had failed to abolish visa requirements for Kosovo citizens or approve the opening of the last chapter in Montenegro's accession process, while postponing the approval of Bosnia's candidate status for later this year.

"I believe the issue of a real enlargement perspective will have to be opened very soon - whether we, the countries of the Western Balkans and the EU, are privileged partners or we are going back to the position of neighbors who (merely) share concern about the future of our common continent," he said. Western Balkans states that comprised the former Yugoslavia were wracked by ethnic war in the 1990s, and tensions linger.

Erdogan also paid respect to victims of the 1995 genocide in Srebrenica, laying flowers on trucks bearing the coffins of 33 among the 8,000 Muslim men and boys massacred by Bosnian Serb forces. The remains, which were exhumed from mass graves, will be reburied in a ceremony on July 11, the massacre anniversary. —Reuters



SARAJEVO: Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan attends the meeting of presidents of South-East Europe Co-operation Process (SEECP), on Mt Jahorina, near Sarajevo. — AFP

Calls for unity in Ethiopia's Tigray

MEKELE, Ethiopia: In his cramped studio, Ethiopian reggae singer Solomon Yikunoamlak plucks his guitar and reads over his latest ballad, a strident call for unity in his native Tigray during a time of national upheaval. It is unusual material for an artist who rose to fame singing love songs, but Solomon expects it will resonate with Tigrayan listeners who have witnessed their authority fade under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's leadership.

Since coming to power last year, the 42-year-old leader has loosened controls in long-authoritarian Ethiopia and shaken up decades-old power arrangements, angering some Tigrayans who feel sidelined as other ethnicities jostle for influence. "Nowadays everybody becomes activists, and everybody becomes politicians," Solomon told AFP, reflecting on the fevered political climate that has taken hold since Abiy assumed office. "This is because of the current problems."

In Mekele, the regional capital, Tigrayans complain they have been scapegoated by the prime minister, who is an ethnic Oromo, for Ethiopia's woes in recent years. Anti-Abiy sentiment in Tigray was spotlighted following the killings last month of five high-ranking government and military officials—violence Abiy says was part of a coup attempt in Amhara state, neighboring Tigray.

Two of the victims, including the army chief, were from Tigray, and their funerals in Mekele sparked an outpouring of grief, with some mourners denouncing Abiy as a traitor. "There is a huge frustration here in Tigray," said Nebiyu Sehil Mikael, a writer and lecturer at Mekele University. "There is a sharp opposition against the federal government."

We are under threat

Yet anger with Abiy was a feature of daily life in Mekele before the June unrest. Tigrayans grumble of a central government hostile to their interests. Though they make up just six percent of Ethiopia's population of 100 million people, Tigrayans were long seen as wielding outsized authority. After toppling the brutal communist Derg regime



MEKELE, Ethiopia: Ethiopian Tigrayan reggae singer Solomon Yikunoamlak, poses during an interview with AFP, in Mekele, the capital of Tigray Region, Ethiopia. — AFP

in 1991, the Tigray People's Liberation Front transformed from a rebel movement into the strongest political party of the ruling coalition that remains in charge today.

But the TPLF was undermined by several years of anti-government protests that swept Abiy to power. It remains part of the ruling coalition, though it has been weakened further under Abiy. Tigrayans have been stripped of top positions and in some cases jailed on charges of corruption and human rights violations. Some of those targeted under Abiy have become Tigrayan heroes.

Clothing vendor Zayid Meles said one of her top sellers these days was a T-shirt declaring "I am Getachew Assefa"—a reference to the powerful Tigrayan former spy chief who Abiy fired last year. Despite being the target of an arrest warrant, Getachew remains at large and is believed to be hiding somewhere in the region.

Zayid said the T-shirt—which includes a rendering of Getachew's face shielded by a scarf, hat and sunglasses—is a way of signaling to Abiy that Getachew will never face trial.

"All Tigrayans buy it," she said. "Getachew is a hero." Tigrayan fears for their future override other concerns about the TPLF's shortcomings in promoting democracy and

fighting poverty, said Mahari Yohans, a prominent Tigrayan political commentator. "The politics of Tigray is the politics of security," he said. "We are under threat."

Regional disunity

The situation has become so polarized that Tigrayans are increasingly entertaining the idea of secession, said Wondimu Asamnew, a Mekele native and longtime Ethiopian diplomat. "It's very sad," he said. "They have started even to question whether or not they belong to the country." Even if secession is a far-fetched prospect, it's clear the tensions are coloring everything from Tigrayans' Facebook posts to how they watch football.

Fans of Mekele's Ethiopian Premier League club, Mekele 70 Enderta F C, were dismayed earlier this year when supporters of a rival club tore down a poster of Tigrayan former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi during a match in Addis Ababa. The teams' supporters skirmished again at a follow-up match in Mekele, prompting the Ethiopian Football Federation to temporarily suspend the league. The TPFL has seized the opportunity to turn support for Mekele 70 Enderta F C into a regional cause. — AFP

Afghan rivals conclude talks

DOHA: Dozens of influential Afghans concluded two days of talks with the Taliban on Monday in Doha, laying the foundations for renewed negotiations between the United States and the militants. The encounter ended with a joint statement pledging a "roadmap for peace" based on the opening of a monitored peace process, return of internally displaced people, and non-interference by regional powers in Afghanistan.

"Assuring women rights in political, social, economic, educational, cultural affairs as per (and) within the Islamic framework of Islamic values," also featured in the joint text. "It's not an agreement, it's a foundation to start the discussion," delegate Mary Akrami, executive director of the Afghan Women's Network, told AFP. "The good part was that both sides agreed."

The Taliban's Amir Khan Mutaqi, a former minister during the militant group's 1996-2001 rule of Afghanistan, read a Pashto version of the roughly 700-word statement. Habiba Sarabi, deputy chair of the Afghan High Peace Council established by former president Hamid Karzai to engage elements of the Taliban, read the Dari equivalent. Around 70 delegates attended the gathering at a luxury hotel in Doha and the large meeting room erupted into applause after the joint statement had been read out shortly before 2100 GMT.

"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," said Qatar's counter-terrorism special envoy Mulla al-Qahtani. The so-called intra-Afghan meetings follow six days of direct US-Taliban talks that were put on hold for the two-day Afghan conference.

The flurry of talks will continue with the resumption of direct US-Taliban contact also in Doha on Tuesday as both sides eye a resolution to the bloody 18-

year conflict. 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.

Most productive

US lead negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad has said that the latest round of US-Taliban talks "have been the most productive of the rounds we've had with the Talibs". "We want a stable Afghanistan," he told reporters on the sidelines of the dialogue on Monday. "Afghans meeting with the Taliban was a big success." The Taliban said they were "happy with progress".

The United States did not participate directly in the two-day Afghan summit, which was attended by political heavyweights, government officials and at least six women. The Taliban have steadfastly refused to negotiate with the government of President Ashraf Ghani, members of which only took part 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 was 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. The Taliban, believing they have the upper hand in the war, have kept up attacks even while talking to the United States and agreeing to the Afghan dialogue. A Taliban car bomb in eastern Afghanistan killed at least 12 people and wounded scores more on Sunday, officials said. Despite the violence, both the Taliban and the US have been positive about their engagement. — AFP



DOHA: Amir Khan Mutaqi, the Taliban's former culture and information minister, shakes hands with Ghairat Baheer, left, member of the Meshrano Jirga (upper house of the Afghan assembly), during the second day of the Intra Afghan Dialogue talks in the Qatari capital Doha. — AFP

Internet services restored in Sudan

KHARTOUM: Mobile internet services were restored across Sudan yesterday following a court order, weeks after the ruling generals imposed a blockade in the wake of a brutal crackdown on protesters. Demonstrators were violently dispersed on June 3 by men in military fatigues, who stormed a weeks-long protest camp outside army headquarters in Khartoum where Sudanese had camped to demand that the generals step down.

Armed men, shooting and beating protesters in a pre-dawn raid, killed dozens of demonstrators and wounded hundreds. Days later internet on mobile phones and fixed land connections was cut across Sudan, with users saying it was done to prevent further mobilization of protesters. Khartoum-based lawyer Abdelazim al-Hassan filed a case against the blockade, urging a court in the capital to order telecom company Zain to restore the internet services on his own mobile phone.

Days later internet on fixed land connections was restored, but the mobile 3G and 4G services remained cut. "I returned to court and said that numerous clients of Zain and other telecom companies were impacted due to the cut," Hasan told a news conference yesterday. "Today, the court issued an order to Zain and to MTN and Sudani to restore their mobile internet services," referring to three telecom companies.

Later yesterday the internet services on MTN and Sudani networks were restored, but not on Zain, users said. Several subscribers of MTN and Sudani contacted by AFP confirmed they were able to make voice and video calls through social media networks like the WhatsApp messaging platform. Protesters and rights group say the internet blockade was an attempt to quell protests against the generals, who had seized power after the army ousted longtime ruler Omar al-Bashir in April following nationwide protests against his rule. — AFP

Turkey issues warrants for over 200 soldiers over alleged coup links

ANKARA: Turkish police began nationwide raids yesterday aimed at detaining over 200 military personnel suspected of ties to the group blamed for a 2016 coup attempt, officials and state media reported, in an ongoing crackdown that has seen thousands jailed. The Istanbul public prosecutor said it issued arrest warrants for 176 active duty military personnel, including a colonel, five majors and 100 lieutenants from the different armed forces over alleged links to Muslim preacher Fethullah Gulen's movement.

Turkey says US-based Gulen ordered the failed overthrow of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan but he vehemently denies the charges. The Izmir public prosecutor in the Aegean region issued arrest warrants for 35 suspects including 20 soldiers on active duty and 10 civilians, state news agency Anadolu said. The agency said eight suspects had been detained already.

In the northwestern province of Kocaeli, the prosecutor sought the arrest of 17 suspects including nine current and former soldiers across seven cities, Anadolu reported. Authorities have detained tens of thousands of individuals since 2016, and the raids show no sign of slowing with almost daily reports of arrest warrants issued despite criticism from Western allies and rights defenders. Critics say the government is using the purge to crackdown on dissent but Turkish officials stress the raids are necessary to eradicate Gulen's influence in state bodies. — AFP

International

Alan Kurdi rescue ship picks up another 44 migrants

Malta to relocate migrants on German rescue ship

VALETTA: The migrant rescue boat Alan Kurdi has saved another 44 people, including women and infants from their stricken vessel in the Mediterranean, its operator German charity Sea-Eye said yesterday. Malta has agreed to take in those rescued and is sending a vessel to pick them up, the charity said in a statement.

Malta's coastguard confirmed that it would transfer the migrants to one of its vessels in international waters. Malta's government did not say whether a deal had been reached for the migrants' final destination. The Alan Kurdi last week rescued 65 shipwrecked migrants attempting the perilous journey from North Africa, handing them over to Malta after hardline Interior Minister Matteo Salvini closed Italy's ports to the vessel.

Sea-Eye said it was alerted to the plight of the latest migrants off the Libyan coast by Tunisian fishermen and a civilian search plane. The rescued migrants said they had left Zuwara in Libya early Saturday. Their wooden boat was in Malta's search and rescue area so Maltese authorities asked a nearby freighter to coordinate the rescue, which told Sea-Eye to take the migrants on board.

"Forty-four people, including four women and three children," were brought aboard the Alan Kurdi, Sea-Eye said. The children are 15 months, three and five years old. The people come from Syria, Libya, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Guinea, it said. "A 15-month-old baby should never have to be in such a life-threatening situation," said Sea-Eye spokeswoman Carlotta Weibl.

Italy mulling warship patrols

The 65 migrants the Alan Kurdi handed over to Maltese authorities on Sunday have already been sent on to other European Union countries. An Italian customs vessel on Tuesday separately brought 47 rescued

migrants into Sicily's Pozzallo port, Italian media reported. The migrants had been headed to Lampedusa, an Italian island between Sicily and Libya, but there was no space for them there as hundreds of migrants continue to arrive by their own means or are rescued by authorities.

Salvini has vowed to close Italian ports to charity rescue ships, which he accuses of helping people smugglers. Interior ministry figures showed that 395 migrants have arrived in Italy since the end of June. Italian media reported that this year barely one in 10 migrants and asylum seekers has been brought into Italy by charity vessels—the vast majority arrived by other means. Salvini on Monday said he wanted to deploy military vessels to stop migrant vessels arriving.

Half of the migrants landed in Pozzallo are Tunisian, Italian media reported. Salvini has written to the Tunisian authorities urging a new bilateral deal on handling migrants, including using ferries to repatriate them.

Captains risk Italian ire

Italy and Malta have repeatedly criticized Europe's "case-by-case" approach to migrant rescues, which means shipwreck victims spend days or weeks at sea while countries try to agree where they should go. The Alan Kurdi, which had been banned from entering Maltese and Italian waters, is the third rescue vessel in a week to make headlines. Some 41 people were finally allowed to step off migrant rescue charity Mediterranean's Italian-flagged Alex, which arrived at the port on Saturday in an overnight operation that saw the ship seized by authorities.

The boat's captain Tommaso Stella is being investigated for allegedly aiding illegal immigration. Salvini last month issued a decree that would impose fines of up to 50,000 euros for the captain, owner and opera-



VALETTA: Migrants, part of group of 65 rescued by the German-flagged NGO rescue ship Alan Kurdi, look out from a patrol boat as they are brought into Haywharf, in Valletta, by the Armed Forces of Malta after being transferred onto the Maltese patrol boat. —AFP

tor of a vessel "entering Italian territorial waters without authorization". Authorities on Lampedusa in late June seized a rescue ship belonging to German aid group Sea-Watch, which had forced its way into port with dozens of rescued migrants on board, and arrested its captain, Carola Rackete.

An Italian judge subsequently ordered her freed,

saying she had been acting to save lives, a decision which sparked Salvini's ire but may have encouraged the Alex crew. Libya, which has been wracked by chaos since the 2011 uprising that killed dictator Moamer Kadhafi, has long been a major transit route for migrants, especially from sub-Saharan Africa, desperate to reach Europe. —AFP

Maduro 'optimistic' after opposition talks resume in Barbados

CARACAS: Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro said Monday he was "optimistic" after dialogue between his government and the opposition resumed in Barbados. The South American nation was plunged into political turmoil in January when National Assembly speaker Juan Guaido declared himself acting president in a direct challenge to Maduro's authority. The opposition leader is recognized by the United States and more than 50 other countries, but has been unable to dislodge Venezuela's socialist leader, who is backed by Russia, China and Cuba.

Delegations from both sides arrived in Barbados Monday morning to revive discussions, after a previous round in Norway petered out. "I am very optimistic... Today they had a five-hour session, and I think that step by step, with strategic patience, we can find a path to peace," Maduro said in a broadcast on the state television channel VTV. Without giving details, he said that a six-point agenda was being discussed with "the whole country in mind."

"If you work with goodwill and there is no American interventionism, I am sure that we will reach an agreement," said Maduro, who blames the United States for fanning the crisis. The Barbados talks will be the third round since the Oslo talks in May, although Guaido had originally said last Tuesday there were no plans to reopen talks with Maduro's "murderous dictatorship" following the death of an officer in custody over an alleged coup plot.

The suspicious death of retired naval officer Rafael Acosta Arevalo had sparked international condemnation. Guaido said Sunday he wants the talks to lead them towards Maduro's departure from the presidency he has held since 2013 to a transitional government, and then "free elections with international observers".

Ravaged by crises

Some members of the opposition oppose the Barbados talks, fearing they may reinvigorate Maduro, but Enrique Marquez, vice president of Venezuela's opposition-controlled National Assembly, said they are the best option. "A violent solution... could generate loss of governance even for a new government," he told AFP. Along with the negotiations in Barbados, Guaido had a closed-door meeting on Monday in the capital Caracas with Enrique Iglesias, the European Union's special advisor for Venezuela.

Afterwards, Iglesias met with Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodriguez. "Iglesias has confirmed his commitment to the dialogue process," Rodriguez said on Twitter. Oil-rich Venezuela has been ravaged by five years of recession marked by shortages of food, medicine and other basic necessities, and the economic woes have been exacerbated by the political crisis. 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 nation's multiple crises.

Maduro has repeatedly said that the dialogue will continue with the opposition "for peace in Venezuela." Guaido has called Maduro a "usurper" for staying in power after a 2018 election widely dismissed as a sham. Meanwhile, Panamanian President Laurentino Cortizo stressed in a TV interview that a military intervention is not the solution to the Venezuelan crisis, and offered his country's assistance in reaching a negotiated solution. —AFP

Trump outbursts test US-UK 'special relationship'

LONDON: Donald Trump's refusal to deal with the UK ambassador following the leak of his frank assessment of the US president's chaotic rule raises a big question: can the allies' much-vaunted "special relationship" survive? The Mail on Sunday's publication of Ambassador Kim Darroch's confidential cables set off a furious Trump Twitter storm. Darroch had called Trump "inept" and his administration "uniquely dysfunctional".

Trump tweeted back Monday that Darroch "is not liked or well thought of within the U.S. We will no longer deal with him." He also welcomed the "good news" that Prime Minister Theresa May was stepping down in two weeks. He followed that up on Tuesday by calling "wacky Ambassador" Darroch "a very stupid guy". All of which creates another headache for UK politicians during a tumultuous stretch in which they must decide how- or even if-Britain will leave the EU as scheduled on October 31.

Who leaked?

The hunt is on for the culprit and the "whodunnit" theories are flying. Most concern the nuanced politics at play in the UK leadership fight between Brexit-backing former London mayor Boris Johnson and underdog Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt. One popular theory says the leak

was meant to punish both Darroch and the politician tipped to replace him for allegedly failing to embrace Brexit in full.

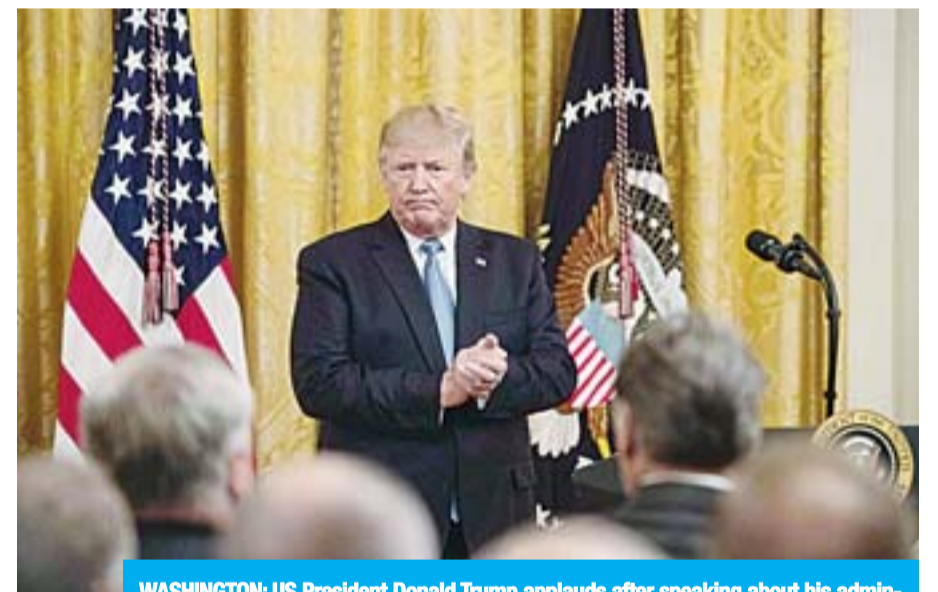
This would suggest that the culprit was trying to make sure Johnson-seemingly assured of May's office-picks someone who shares Trump's far more sceptical view of the EU. But the leak has also damaged Britain's foreign standing and some talk is focused on how much an old rival like Russian President Vladimir Putin stands to gain. "Of course it would be massively concerning if it was the act of a foreign, hostile state," Hunt told The Sun.

Can the ambassador stay?

UK politicians of all stripes have bristled at the thought of Trump simply shoving their man out of Washington. Whether Darroch can still perform his duties depends on what Trump actually meant in his tweets. Darroch has already been taken off one White House dinner guest list. But the UK envoy will be more concerned about maintaining his private contacts and talking to people in Trump's inner sanctum. If Trump means "the whole White House staff is closed to you, including the national security adviser, that would be much more serious," Britain's former US envoy Christopher Meyer said.

How bad is the damage?

UK diplomats worry that the publication of what Downing Street described as Darroch's "unvarnished" views will put off others from reporting similarly delicate matters. "The damage is to the confidence of civil servants to put their frank thoughts to ministers," former Foreign Office number two Peter Ricketts wrote in The Guardian. Ricketts also expressed concern that "Britain's reputation as a country that



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump applauds after speaking about his administration's environmental policies at the White House in Washington, DC. —AFP

knows how to keep its secrets" might suffer. Hunt agreed that it was "very important" that UK ambassadors all over "continue to give us their frank assessments".

What next?

The scandal piles on the pressure for the next UK leader to either bow to Trump's pressure or stick by London's envoy. "Removing Darroch swiftly from office would be seen as a humiliating cave-in to a bullying foreign power," the Politico news site wrote. "But voicing support for the beleaguered ambassador risks damaging relations with Trump from the outset." The choice is made all the more important by the next ambassador's role in negotiating a new US trade agreement that can mitigate the potential dam-

age of Britain's split from the EU.

Will the 'special relationship' last?

The "special relationship" term has always been more widely used in London than in Washington. The United States also enjoyed "special" ties with countries such as Israel and neighboring Canada. But London provides Washington with a vital and reliable European ally that has been by its side through two world wars. The two provide each other with intelligence and share the same global security vision that has spanned decades and which is almost certain to last. "The relationship with Washington is based on strong and deep shared interests," Ricketts wrote. "Those are unchanged by the leaks." —AFP

Washington DC hit by torrential rain, flooding

WASHINGTON: Torrential rain lashed Washington DC and surrounding areas on Monday, flooding many neighborhoods and hobbling electricity and transportation networks. The National Weather Service issued a Flash Flood Warning as the storm hit, drowning roads and forcing closures of many major arteries. Airports and rail networks were also hit, causing delays. The American capital's Ronald Reagan airport received 3.3 inches (around 83 millimeters) of rainfall in just one hour, the NWS added in a tweet.

Dramatic footage aired on local TV stations and posted on social media showed vehicles submerged on roads near major landmarks like the Washington Monument,

and some motorists standing on the roofs of their cars as the floodwaters rose. One such video showed water gushing down through a hole in the roof of a Washington metro station. The main power vault of the National Archives building—which houses some of the most important documents in American history—was flooded, cutting power as the streets around it were submerged.

"The building's flood walls deployed and worked," the institution said in a statement. "The Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights—along with all of the permanently valuable records stored in the building—are safe and not in any danger." The White House was not spared either: Footage posted by several correspondents and outlets showed puddles forming in one of its basements.

Emergency services said they received dozens of calls from citizens seeking help. Despite the widespread flooding, no deaths were reported. The rainfall and floodwaters subsided later in the day, as damage assess-



WASHINGTON: Flood debris from the rain storm is seen on Canal Road in Washington, DC. —AFP

ments began in the District of Columbia—where Washington is located—and neighboring parts of Virginia and Maryland. Hundreds of customers were affected by power outages

because of the rainfall, according to a live map on the website of local utility Pepco. "Stay clear of downed power lines and always assume they are energized," it said in a tweet. —AFP

Russia adopts resolution in favor of Georgia sanctions

MOSCOW: Russian lawmakers yesterday adopted a resolution in favor of introducing economic sanctions against Georgia as tensions between Moscow and Tbilisi rise. Lawmakers in

Russia's lower-house of parliament, the Duma, supported an appeal for the government to "impose special economic measures on Georgia, where anti-Russian provocations continue". Duma chairman Vyacheslav Volodin said the resolution recommends banning Georgian wine and mineral water in Russia, as well as "limiting financial transactions from our country to Georgia."

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. Tensions rose further after a Georgian presenter launched into a live-TV expletive-laden tirade against President Vladimir Putin, sparking fury in Moscow. "We consider the insults to our country, threats to our citizens and insults to our president inadmissible,"

Volodin was quoted as saying on the Duma website.

The Kremlin said the parliament's "tough" and "unified" position followed "the unprecedented behavior of the Georgian TV presenter". "This kind of thuggish behavior fuels Russophobia. This is very dangerous," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. "But, as you know, the decision is made by the government and ultimately the president," Peskov added. —AFP

International

China demands US cancel arms sale to Taiwan

Proposed sale to improve Taiwan's air defense system

BEIJING: China demanded yesterday that the United States "immediately cancel" a potential sale of \$2.2 billion in arms to self-ruled Taiwan, including battle tanks and anti-aircraft missiles, adding fuel to tensions between the two powers. It would be the first big-ticket US military sale to the democratically-governed island in decades, and comes as ties between Washington and Beijing are already strained by their trade war.

China has lodged formal complaints through diplomatic channels expressing "strong dissatisfaction and resolute opposition" to the move, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a regular press briefing. The deal includes 108 M1A2 Abrams tanks, 250 Stinger portable anti-aircraft missiles, related equipment and support at an estimated cost of just over \$2.2 billion, according to the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA).

The proposed sale "will contribute to the modernization of the recipient's main battle tank fleet",

improve its air defense system and "support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security and defensive capability (of Taiwan)," DSCA said. It would not alter the "basic military balance in the region," the agency added, and Congress has been notified. US lawmakers have 30 days to object to the sale but are unlikely to do so.

Geng said the proposed deal "seriously violates the one-China principle" and "grossly interferes" in the country's internal affairs. "China urges the US to... immediately cancel the planned arms sale and stop military relations with Taipei to avoid damaging Sino-US relations and harming peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait," he said. Taiwan has been ruled separately from China since the end of a civil war in 1949, but Beijing considers it a part of its territory to be retaken-by force if necessary.

China has significantly stepped up diplomatic and military pressure on Taipei since the election

in 2016 of President Tsai Ing-wen, whose Democratic Progressive Party refuses to acknowledge that the island is part of "One China". It has staged military exercises near the island, and steadily reduced the already small number of nations that recognize Taiwan.

The United States switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China in 1979, but has remained an important ally-and arms supplier-to Taipei. Laws passed that year by Congress required Washington to provide the island with means of self-defense. But it has been wary of big-ticket military equipment sales to Taiwan in recent years, fearful of stoking anger in Beijing.

Obsolete equipment

President Donald Trump-whose administration is locked in a trade war with China-has however sought to strengthen ties with Taiwan and appears more willing to sell arms. Taiwan would be massively out-

gunned in terms of troop numbers and firepower in any conflict with China, and has sought to upgrade much of its increasingly obsolete military equipment, especially in its air force.

"Taiwan stands in the frontline of China's ambitious expansion and faces enormous threats and pressure from Beijing," the Taiwanese foreign ministry said in a statement. "This arms sale of M1A2 tanks and various missiles will help greatly to increase our defensive capabilities." Abrams tanks and Stinger missiles-which are portable and can be quickly moved by soldiers in the field-would significantly increase Taiwan's ability to counter Chinese armor and warplanes in the event of an invasion.

"The M1A2 tanks are very reliable and will become an essential part of our ground defense" because of their maneuverability, Lieutenant General Yang Hai-ming of the Taiwanese army told reporters. "Having the M1A2 to replace our older tanks will quickly and effectively boost our defense capability." —AFP

Amal Clooney to join legal team of Philippine journalist Ressa

MANILA: Prominent rights lawyer Amal Clooney says she will join the legal team defending Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, whose news site has repeatedly clashed with President Rodrigo Duterte.

Ressa, who was named a Time Magazine "Person of the Year" in 2018 for her journalism, faces several criminal charges along with her website Rappler, in what press freedom advocates have branded an act of "persecution".

"Maria Ressa is a courageous journalist who is being persecuted for reporting the news and standing up to human rights abuses," Clooney said in a statement issued Monday by London's Doughty Street Chambers, where she works. "We will pursue all available legal remedies to vindicate her rights and defend press freedom and the rule of law in the Philippines," added the British-Lebanese lawyer.

Clooney will work with a team of international lawyers based in the US and Britain as counsel to Ressa and coordinate with attorneys in Manila, the statement said. Ressa was arrested twice this year and has accused Duterte of using prosecutions against her-including ongoing cases of alleged tax evasion and libel-to silence critics and intimidate the press. Duterte has branded Rappler a "fake news outlet" and his government insists it is simply enforcing the law as cases pile up against the website, which frequently publishes reports critical of the president's deadly anti-drug crackdown.

"I am delighted that Amal Clooney and her team will be representing me at the international level to challenge the violations of my rights and those of the media organization I represent," Ressa said in the statement. Ressa said on Tuesday she faced at least 11 cases which required her to post bail eight times and pay a bond to travel overseas. "Rappler should not have to face tactics of harassment, intimidation. We are trying to find the best way forward to make sure our rights are protected," Ressa told AFP.

Responding to the announcement, Duterte's spokesman said Clooney could not practise law in the Philippines but added he was "excited" to debate with



MANILA: This file photo shows Philippine journalist Maria Ressa speaking to the media as she arrives at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) headquarters after her arrest in Manila. —AFP

the lawyer whom he described as "beautiful and sexy". "Attorney Amal is misinformed. Maybe when we see each other, I can, to use the word of the president, educate her," Salvador Panelo told reporters.

Clooney, appointed special envoy for media freedom by the British govern-

ment, also defended two Reuters journalists jailed for more than 16 months in Myanmar and freed in May. Clooney's taking on Ressa's case will increase international attention on the journalist and her website, which have received a series of global awards from press freedom advocates. —AFP

India restaurant tycoon begins life term

NEW DELHI: The trailblazing Indian founder of a global restaurant chain surrendered to a court yesterday after losing a last-ditch bid to avoid a life sentence for murdering a love rival. P Rajagopal rose from rags to riches to create the Saravana Bhavan chain which has more than 80 eateries in India and around the world, from Leicester Square to Lexington Avenue via Singapore, Sydney and Stockholm. He had been battling for 15 years to avoid prison since being convicted over the killing of the husband of a woman he wanted to make his third wife, reportedly on the advice of his astrologer.

The 71-year-old, dubbed the "dosa king" after the famous South Indian food staple, was meant to have reported to prison on Sunday but made a final plea on medical grounds. The Supreme

Court in New Delhi turned him down yesterday and the judges ordered the tycoon to "surrender immediately". He later gave himself up at the Madras High Court in Chennai in his native southern state of Tamil Nadu, arriving in an ambulance with an oxygen mask strapped to his face.

Saravana Bhawan owes its success to catering to Indians and the large diaspora abroad with the winning formula of affordable South Indian delicacies like dosa pancakes, deep-fried vadas and idli rice cakes. But Rajagopal's world came crashing down when he made up his mind to pursue the daughter of one of his legions of adoring employees, believing that she would bring him even greater success. "He was obsessed with her," D. Suresh Kumar, a Chennai-based journalist told AFP.

The woman, then in her 20s, was already married and rejected Rajagopal's advances. He targeted the woman with threats, blackmail, and even exorcisms, but when they failed the businessman hired a gunman to kill the woman's husband. One attempt was unsuccessful, but the man's body was later found in a for-



CHENNAI: This file photo shows the image of P Rajagopal, founder of the Saravana Bhavan food chain, on a menu at one of the popular restaurants in Chennai. —AFP

est in Tamil Nadu. In 2004, Rajagopal was found guilty and sentenced to 10 years. When he appealed, the sentence

was increased to life and the punishment was upheld by the Supreme Court in March. —AFP

UK's Labor backs staying in EU in call for referendum

LONDON: Britain's main opposition Labor party yesterday for the first time conditionally backed holding another Brexit referendum, in which it would support remaining in the European Union. Labor will now challenge whoever wins the Conservative Party leadership race and becomes prime minister to put any deal they strike with the EU to a referendum, "with remain on the ballot, in which Labor would campaign for remain," the party said in a statement.

The issue has divided the party. Many of its voters in working-class areas voted to leave the EU in the Brexit referendum of 2016. But the majority of Labor MPs strongly support remaining in the EU. Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, a veteran eurosceptic, had resisted strong pressure to back another vote. But he relented after Labor-affiliated trade unions agreed on Monday to support the move. Labor will now back remaining in the EU over leaving without a deal or supporting a Conservative-brokered deal. Yet what it will do if it takes power before Britain has left is dependent on what type of deal it could agree with Brussels.

Fear over 'no deal' divorce

The party's previous policy was to respect the 2016 referendum, but the chaotic process of leaving the EU has emboldened those hoping to stay in. "As democrats, Labor accepted the result of the 2016 referendum," Corbyn



LONDON: An anti-Brexit activist secures an EU flag to a railing opposite the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, central London. —AFP

wrote in an email to party members. "In our 2017 manifesto, Labor also committed to oppose a No Deal Brexit and the Tories' Brexit plans," he added, calling on the incoming prime minister to hold a general election.

Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May is stepping down this month after failing to get her EU divorce plan through parliament. The two men vying to replace her, Boris Johnson and Jeremy Hunt, have both said they were

willing to take Britain out of the EU with no deal on October 31.

However, the majority of members of parliament-including Labor-are against a "no deal" option, fearing dire economic consequences. Neither Hunt nor Johnson supports the idea of a second referendum. If the political deadlock continues, many in Westminster believe a snap election is inevitable. —AFP

Ex-UN official jailed for child abuse in Nepal

KATHMANDU: A former UN official has been jailed for sexually abusing children in Nepal, officials said yesterday, following a trial underscoring the country's growing appeal for foreign pedophiles. Peter John Dalglish, 62, from Canada, a former high-profile humanitarian worker, was sentenced on Monday to terms of nine and seven years in two cases after being convicted last month. Thakur Trital, a district court official, said that Dalglish had been sentenced for nine years for abusing a 12-year-old boy and seven years for molesting another 14-year-old.

"The judge is yet to decide whether he should serve a total 16 years in jail or be released after nine years. In most cases of a similar nature, sentences get overlapped but it is upon the judge to decide," Trital said. Dalglish has also been told to pay compensation of 500,000 Nepali rupees to each of the victims. Dalglish was arrested in April last year in Kavrepalanchowk district, near Kathmandu, by Nepal's Central Bureau of Investigation.

The two boys were at the house where police detained Dalglish, investigators said. Dalglish denied the charges, and his lawyer could not be reached for comment. The aid worker, who in 2016 was awarded the Order of Canada-the country's second-highest civilian honor-made his name as a humanitarian worker advocating for street children, child laborers and those affected by war. He co-founded Street Kids International in the 1980s which merged with Save the Children. In the last decade, Dalglish held key positions in UN agencies, including a chief for UN Habitat in Afghanistan in 2015.

In Nepal, Dalglish was an advisor in a child program for the International Labor Organization in the early 2000s. Weak law enforcement has made Nepal notorious for sexual predators, with several arrests and convictions in recent years. In 2015 a Canadian orphanage volunteer, Ernest MacIntosh, 71, was sentenced to seven years in prison for sexually abusing a disabled 15-year-old boy, while in 2010 French charity worker Jean-Jacques Hays was convicted of raping 10 children at a Kathmandu orphanage. —AFP

US Dept requests 1,000 soldiers to manage migrant crisis

WASHINGTON: The US Department of Homeland Security requested 1,000 additional soldiers to help manage the migrant crisis in Texas, the Pentagon said Monday, amid growing outcry over conditions in migrant detention facilities. In a statement, the Pentagon said they had been asked to authorize the Texas National Guard to lend support to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials, who say they are overwhelmed by the numbers of refugees crossing the southern US border.

Thousands of active duty and National Guard troops have already been deployed for months along the US-Mexico border to support immigration officials. "DHS requests authorization for 1,000 Texas National Guard members... to provide supplemental holding and Port of Entry (POE) enforcement support to CBP within the State of Texas," the statement said. The Guard members will help manage CBP-run holding facilities for single, adult migrants in the towns of Donna, on the eastern end of the border with Mexico, and Tornillo, which is in the middle of the border. They will also provide support at ports of entry and commercial airports in El Paso and Laredo, in order to improve border security and traffic flow.

While the Pentagon did not specify when they received the request or if they had made a decision, the statement did note that "Texas Governor (Greg) Abbott has consented to the use of the National Guard to support CBP." The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been criticized after a report from its inspector general, a watchdog, last week warned about "dangerous overcrowding" in migrant detention facilities in Texas. The report included images taken at several Texas sites, showing dozens of migrants including young children packed shoulder to shoulder into cage-like holding areas or cells. Most single adults had not had a shower in a month and were being given wet wipes. Some detainees were suffering from constipation after a diet consisting only of bologna sandwiches. The report came a day after a group of Democratic lawmakers toured the detention centers and denounced the conditions as "horrific." —AFP

Analysis

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Business of watching whales overshadows resumption of hunt

People packed the decks of the Japanese whale-watching boat, screaming in joy as a pod of orcas put on a show: Splashing tails at each other, rolling over, and leaping out of the water. In Kushiro, just 160 km south of Rausu, where the four dozen people laughed and cheered, boats were setting off on Japan's first commercial whale hunt in 31 years. Killed that day were two minke whales, which the boats in Rausu also search for glimpses of - a situation that whale-watching boat captain Masato Hasegawa confessed had him worried.

"They won't come into this area - it's a national park - or there'd be big trouble," the 57-year-old former pollock fisherman said. "And the whales we saw today, the sperm whales and orcas, aren't things they hunt. But we also watch minke," he added. "If they take a lot in the (nearby) Sea of Okhotsk, we could well see a change, and that would be too bad for whale watching."

Whale-watching is a growing business around Japan, with popular spots from the southern Okinawa islands up to Rausu, a fishing village on the island of Hokkaido, so far north that it's closer to Russia than to Tokyo. The number of whale watchers around Japan has more than doubled between 1998 and 2015, the latest year for which national data is available. One company in Okinawa had 18,000 customers between January and March this year.

In Rausu, 33,451 people packed four boats last year for whale and bird watching, up 2,000 from 2017 and more than 9,000 higher than 2016. Many stay in local hotels, eat in local restaurants, and buy local products such as sea urchins and seaweed. "Of the tourist boat business, 65 percent is whale watching," said Ikuyo Wakabayashi, executive director of the Shiretoko Rausu Tourism Association, who says the numbers grow substantially each year. "You don't just see one type of whale here, you see lots of them," she said. "Whale-watching is a huge tourist resource for Rausu and this will continue, I hope."

Wakabayashi was drawn to Rausu by whale-watching; a native of the western city of Osaka, she fell in love with the area after three trips there to see orcas. "I thought this was an incredible place," she said. "Winters are tough, but it's so beautiful." Hasegawa, who says he has a waiting list of customers in high season, has ordered a second boat. "Right now, the lifestyle we have is good," Hasegawa said. "Better than it would have been with fishing."

Small industry

The five whaling vessels moored at Kushiro port on Sunday, the night before the hunt resumed, were well-used and well-maintained. Crew members came and went, carrying groceries or towels, heading for a public bath. Barely 300 people are directly involved with whaling around Japan, and though the government maintains whale meat is an important part of food culture, the amount consumed annually has fallen to only 0.1 percent of total meat consumption. Yet Japan, under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe - himself from a whaling district - left the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and returned to commercial whaling on July 1.

Whaling advocates, such as Yoshifumi Kai, head of the Japan Small-type Whaling Association, celebrated the hunt. "We endured for 31 years, but now it's all worth it," he said in Kushiro on Monday night after the first minke was brought in to be butchered. "They'll be whaling for a week here, we may have more."

Everybody acknowledges that rebuilding demand could be tough after decades of whale being a pricey, hard-to-find food. Consumption was widespread after World War Two, when an impoverished Japan needed cheap protein, but fell off after the early 1960s as other meat grew cheaper. "Japan has so much to eat now that food is thrown out, so we don't expect demand for whale will rise that fast," said Kazuo Yamamura, president of the Japan Whaling Association. "But looking to the future, if you don't eat whale, you forget that it's a food," he said. "If you eat it in school lunches, you'll remember that, you'll remember that it's good."

Pro-whaling lawmaker Kiyoshi Ejima said that subsidies were unlikely, but that the government should be careful not to let the industry founder. About 5.1 billion yen (\$47.31 million) was budgeted for whaling in 2019. "If we pull away our hands too soon, a lot of companies will fail," he added. The goal of selling whale throughout Japan may be impractical, said Joji Morishita, Japan's former IWC commissioner. "The alternative ... is to just limit the supply of whale meat to some of the major places in Japan that have a good tradition of whale eating," Morishita said, adding that the meat is difficult to thaw and cook.

In areas for which whaling is a tradition, this niche market could promote tourism, which Abe has made a pillar of his economic plan. — Reuters

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Photo taken on May 17, 2019 shows an aerial view of a chemically deforested area of the Amazon jungle caused by illegal mining activities in the river basin of the Madre de Dios region in southeast Peru, during the 'Mercury' joint operation by Peruvian military and police ongoing since Feb 2019. — AFP

Deforestation + climate change = dead end for wildlife

Climate change combined with galloping tropical deforestation is cutting off wildlife from life-saving cooler climes, heightening the risk of extinction, researchers said Monday. Less than two-fifths of forests across Latin America, Asia and Africa currently allow for animals and plants to avoid potentially intolerable increases in temperature, they reported in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. "The loss of tropical forests between 2000 and 2012 led to an area larger than India losing the capacity to protect species from the effects of climate change," lead author Rebecca Senior, a professor at the University of Sheffield, told AFP. "Not only does forest loss remove habitat directly, it also makes it harder for species to move."

The lack of escape routes to cooler habitats means that warming "will likely result in national and global extinction of vulnerable species", she added. At current rates of climate change, animals and plants moving to the least heat-ravaged spots accessible today would, on average, be exposed by 2070 to an environment 2.7 degrees Celsius hotter than during the second half of the 20th century, the study found. Even under a best-case scenario in which humanity caps global warming at 2 C - an increasingly unlikely prospect - species in tropical regions would still see a jump of 0.8 C by that date.

Extreme fragmentation

The 2015 Paris climate treaty enjoins nations to hold warming to "well below" 2 C. Last year, the UN climate science panel concluded that even this threshold would

From undertakers to princes, Norway motorists go electric

Some want to save the planet even in the afterlife. In Oslo, a funeral home offers the dearly departed a trip to their final resting place in an eye-catching electric hearse, as electric vehicles take over the roads in the Scandinavian country. "Many people drive an electric car in Norway and some want to leave this planet in a green way," says undertaker Odd Borgar Jolstad, demonstrating his customised Tesla in the tranquility of the Grefsen cemetery overlooking the capital. "So this is our little contribution to the environment," he smiles.

Rich or not, young and old, hip urbanites and rural dwellers alike: Norwegians, including Crown Prince Haakon, are increasingly switching to electric cars. The choice is especially green in this country, where most of the electricity produced is environmentally friendly, derived from hydro power. From the affordable Nissan Leaf to the luxurious Tesla, more than half of new cars sold in the country in March were run on batteries rather than fuel. "We will probably pass 50 percent" for the full year as well, says Christina Bu, secretary general of the Norwegian EV (electric vehicle) Association. That is unprecedented in Norway and elsewhere, and the share is expected to increase further with the arrival of new models offering ever-increasing range.

Brexit, stupid: The appeal of Boris Johnson

There is a long charge sheet against Britain's Boris Johnson but among Conservative party activists who will choose the country's next prime minister, Brexit appears to trump everything. The former foreign minister and ex-London mayor is accused of lying, incompetence and using divisive rhetoric, and also faces questions over his colorful private life. But he led the campaign to take Britain out of the EU in the 2016 referendum and his promise to deliver on that vote, come what may, has made him the runaway favorite now to take power in Downing Street.

"Boris has a following in places a long way from London where people are very cross that they've voted for Brexit and it hasn't happened," said biographer Andrew Gimson. Prime Minister Theresa May will

not prevent severe impacts, such as the loss of shallow-water coral reefs, which anchor a quarter of marine life. A single degree of warming since the industrial revolution has already boosted the frequency and intensity of heat waves, droughts and tropical storms. Animal and plant species have always moved up or down mountains, towards or away from the poles, or into cooler or warmer waters when faced with shifts in climate.

But rarely has climate change been so rapid, and never has it been combined with extreme habitat fragmentation. "Tropical species are particularly sensitive to temperature change," Senior said. "Most are found nowhere else on Earth, and make up a huge proportion of global biodiversity." Scores of studies have shown how rising temperatures have forced fauna and flora to adapt their behavior in ways that curtail their ability to collect food, reproduce or both. Some 550 species - more than half already threatened with extinction - are listed as vulnerable to droughts and temperature extremes on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List.

Nail in the coffin

They include mammals such as red-handed howler monkeys, jaguars and giant otters. Amphibians - already besieged globally by mysterious pathogens - are especially vulnerable. "They are highly specialized to particular habitats, can't move very far, and are very sensitive to overheating and drying out," Senior pointed out. "This is another nail in their coffin." Higher temperatures force some tropical hummingbirds to seek shade rather than forage, testing their capacity to adapt. Other research has

Growing green awareness?

While the Nordic country is the biggest oil producer in Western Europe, it is officially aiming for all new cars sold to be zero emission by 2025. "There are of course some challenges but it's definitely possible," Bu says. To meet that goal, Norway will have to switch into higher gear for its recharging infrastructure, setting up stations along motorways, in rural zones and private parking lots, she notes. But do Norwegians, who owe their immense wealth to North Sea oil, really have a greater environmental conscience than others?

Probably not - the speedy electrification of the country's automotive fleet is attributed mainly to generous state subsidies. Electric cars are almost entirely exempt from the heavy taxes imposed on petrol and diesel cars, which makes them competitively priced. A VW Golf with a standard combustion engine costs nearly 334,000 kroner (\$38,600), while its electric cousin the e-Golf costs 326,000 kroner thanks to a lower tax quotient.

Per Kolner, a retired business leader in his late 60s, is already on his fifth electric car. He bought his first one because of the high cost of city road tolls. "First it was actually the cost," he says, standing in front of his spanking new Tesla 3. "Tolls kept popping up all around and on my way to and from my work every day I had to pass them four times, which made about 10 to 15 dollars a day just in toll fees." Electric cars have long been able to whiz through toll plazas without paying.

Social costs

But even denizens of this wealthy state grumble about the cost. As Norway's car fleet grows increasingly clean-



In this file photo taken on Jan 12, 2013, a captive jaguar drinks water in an enclosure at Petro Velho Farm, a refuge of the non-governmental organization NEX in Corumba de Goyas, about 80 km from Brasilia. — AFP

documented species decline and loss due to forest loss and fragmentation, which has created islands of primary forest hemmed in by palm oil plantations, biofuel crops, cattle ranches and the soybean crops used to feed livestock. An area of tropical forest five times the size of England - some 600,000 sq km - has been destroyed since 2014, according to Global Forest Watch, a research unit at the University of Maryland. The new study, however, is the first to investigate the interaction between tropical habitat loss and climate change on a global scale over more than a decade. — AFP

er and is therefore subjected to fewer taxes, the state's revenue from car-related taxes is now 2.6 billion euros lower than in 2007, according to the government. Some benefits have already disappeared: road tolls are no longer completely free, just reduced, and the same goes for parking and recharging stations in public parking lots.

Electric cars are also allowed to use bus lanes freely. However, as their large numbers slow down bus traffic, in the most congested parts of Oslo they can use bus lanes only if there are at least two or more people in the vehicle. The duration of the exemptions - guaranteed until 2021 - is increasingly being questioned. "We subsidize electric vehicles in Norway because they have somewhat lower CO2 emissions than conventional cars," notes Bjart Holtsmark, a researcher at Statistics Norway. "But there are a lot of other social costs related to car driving: congestion, accidents, noise and so forth. And with respect to those types of problems there are very small differences related to these types of cars."

According to Norway's biggest insurer Gjensidige, new electric cars are involved in 20 percent more accidents involving personal injuries than diesel models, in part because of their faster acceleration. Meanwhile, electric cars are attracting more than just private consumers, with commercial clients following the trend as well as taxis and postal and fire services, among others. But on Oslo's streets, the electric hearse still raises eyebrows. "Often, when we drive around, people walking by - and even some drivers - take out their phones to take pictures," says Jolstad, wearing a dark suit as befits the job he has held for three decades. — AFP



Boris Johnson

some in Johnson's team feared the politician with a reputation for unpredictable behavior might do or say something that would ruin his chances. He limited his media appearances during the early stage of the leadership campaign, but that led to accusations that he was ducking scrutiny over his Brexit plan, which critics say remains vague. Johnson has also faced fresh questions over his love life after police were called to the home he shares with his girlfriend following a row. But at a Conservative party meeting in Birmingham shortly after that story broke, many

activists dismissed the scandal. "What's important is what's this guy going to be delivering for you in Brexit," said 23-year-old technology analyst Hasnain Ahmed. Others highlighted Johnson's charisma and wit, which make him stand out among other politicians. "Boris didn't answer the questions very well, but on the other hand Jeremy Hunt was quite boring," said Richard Tasker, vice-chair of a local party association who is backing Johnson.

Johnson's supporters are also backing him as the best man to lead the party if the Brexit deadlock results in an early election. They say he can reach beyond the Conservative base, noting he was elected twice as mayor of cosmopolitan, liberal London. But the Brexit campaign that Johnson led in 2016 was deeply divisive with its focus on limiting migration and its exaggerated claims about the cost of the EU. Last August, he also caused an uproar with an article suggesting that veiled Muslim women look like "letter boxes" - even if the rest of the piece defended the right of religious dress. In painting himself as a national vote winner, Wells said Johnson is "trading on past glories." — AFP

Quite boring
Despite his strong lead from the start,

Business

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2019

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13 Boubyan Bank records net profit of KD 29 million in first half of 2019

14 New Mercedes-Benz V-Class - New design and even greater comfort



NBK reports 12.5% increase in 1H 2019 net profit to KD 209.1m

Total assets reach KD 27.9bn, a growth of 3.4% year-on-year

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait ("NBK", the "Bank" or the "Group") has announced its financial results for the 6-month period ended 30 June 2019. NBK reported a net profit of KD 209.1 million (\$689.7 million), increasing by 12.5 percent compared to 30 June 2018, with total assets increasing by 3.4 percent to reach KD 27.9 billion (\$91.9 billion).

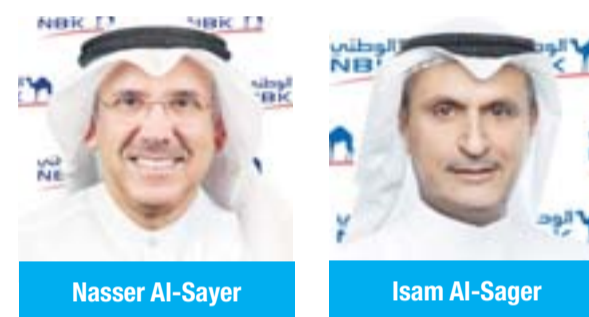
Performance highlights: 1H 2019

- Net operating income reached KD 451.9 million (\$1,490.6 million), growing by 2.2 percent on the first half of 2018
- Customer loans and advances increased by 6.5 per-

cent year-on-year to reach KD 16.2 billion (\$53.5 billion)

- Customer deposits reached KD 15.5 billion (\$51.0 billion) increasing by 5.7 percent year-on-year
- Continued achievement of strong asset quality metrics, with NPL/gross loans ratio at 1.39 percent and an NPL coverage ratio of 234 percent
- Robust capitalization with Capital Adequacy Ratio of 16.6 percent, comfortably in excess of regulatory requirements
- Consistently positive long-term credit ratings reflect conservative approach to risk

Commenting on the interim results, NBK Group Chairman, Nasser Al-Sayer, said: "NBK has delivered strong results for the first half of the year, a consequence of relentless focus on the delivery of our strategy, and by seeking new growth avenues across business segments. We have continued to grow our local and international operations, seeing positive results across consumer, corporate and investment banking units, as well as at our Islamic subsidiary Boubyan Bank. With net operating income growing by 2.2 percent year-on-year, and net profit improving by 12.5 percent, we're in a strong position as we enter the second half of the year."



While the economic environment in Kuwait experienced some headwinds as a result of fiscal pressures, the Group's management expects sovereign ratings to remain stable and for sustained commitments to New Kuwait 2035 to drive economic growth. NBK Group CEO, Isam Al-Sager, commented: "We're pleased to announce solid results for the first half, and to show how our strategy to diversify operations and digitalize our services has supported the Bank in its objectives to mitigate risk and navigate headwinds. Strong performance across business units

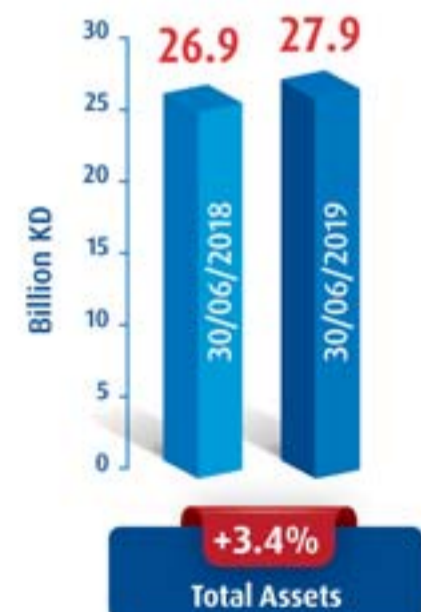
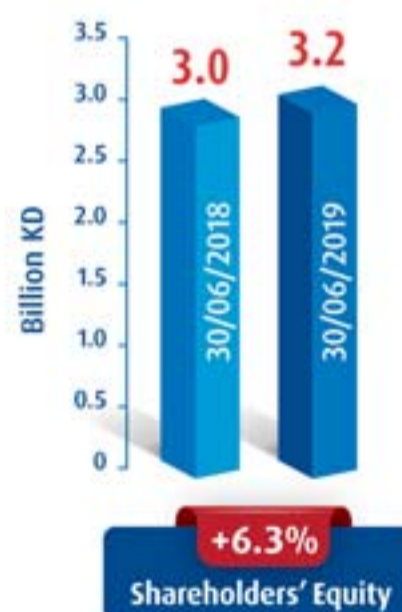
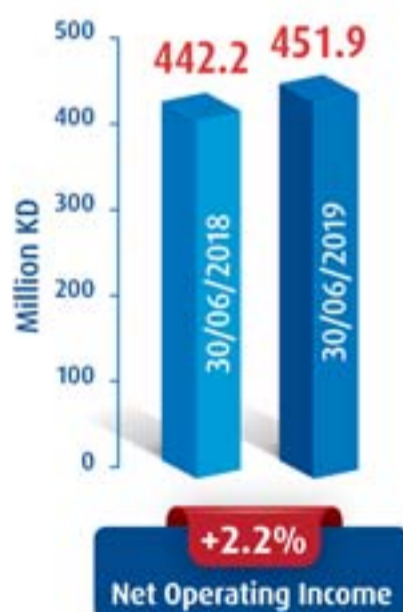
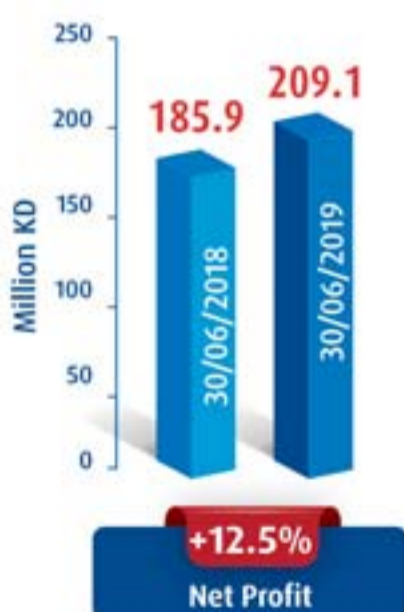
demonstrates our potential for further growth during 2019, particularly as we accelerate the roll-out of our Digital Roadmap, designed to achieve operational efficiencies while tapping exciting new revenue streams."

In 2019, the priorities of the Bank's management remain focused on delivering value to shareholders, growth across business units - including international operations, which contributed to 26 percent to 1H profits - and defending the Group's leadership position in Kuwait. The Group has reaffirmed its commitment to financing large-scale local development projects in support of New Kuwait 2035, contributing directly to the country's socioeconomic growth and development.

The recent confirmation of Kuwait's inclusion to the MSCI Emerging Market Index, effective in 2020, is also expected to stimulate around \$2.8 billion in passive inflows and an estimated \$7 billion in active inflows, further supporting positive investor sentiment towards the local equities market. NBK retains its position as one of the most stable banks in the MENA region, having consistently achieved high credit ratings and being recognized by Global Finance as one of the World's 50 Safest Banks.

209.1

Million KD Net Profit for the 1st Half, 2019



Moody's Aa3 FitchRatings AA- Standard & Poor's A+



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nbk.com

Business

France to tax flights from its airports, airline shares fall

New French airline ticket tax between 1.5 and 18 euros

PARIS: France will introduce a tax on airlines flying from its airports to help support the environment, the transport minister said yesterday, in a move expected to raise around 180 million euros (\$202 million) from 2020.

Shares in airlines across Europe fell on the news, with Air France down 5.2%, Ryanair down 4.8%, easyJet down 4% and Lufthansa down nearly 3% at 1255 GMT.

However, activists said the new tax was unlikely to change consumer behaviour at the proposed levels and was low compared with other countries. Brussels-based NGO Transport and Environment (T&E) estimates airline taxes raise about 1 billion euros per year in Germany and more than 3 billion in Britain.

The new French tax will be 1.5 euros for flights within France or the European Union, 3 euros for economy flights out of the EU, 9 euros for intra-EU business class and up to 18 euros for business class tickets out of the EU. Transit flights will not be taxed.

"We have decided to put in place an eco-tax on all flights from France," Transport Minister Elisabeth Borne told a news conference, adding proceeds would be used to finance daily transport in France, notably local trains.

The French government also said that from 2020 it expected to raise 140 million euros from reducing tax benefits on diesel for trucks.

"The government is finally targeting tax breaks for the most polluting industries such as trucking and air-

lines, but these modest measures will not significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said Climate Action Network's Lorelei Limousin.

Limousin said tax exemptions for jet plane kerosene fuel cost French taxpayers more than 3.7 billion euros per year.

But she welcomed the fact France was taking action at home, rather than waiting for an EU-wide initiative on airline tax.

France said last month it wanted the new European Commission to push for an end to global tax exemptions for jet fuel to reduce CO2 emissions. It has also linked up with the Netherlands to try to convince fellow European nations to tax airline travel more.

Air France said the new tax would significantly hurt its competitiveness and represent an additional cost of over 60 million euros per year.

It said 50% of its flights were operated out of France, notably for its domestic network, where losses amounted to more than 180 million euros in 2018.

French President Emmanuel Macron's government has said it wants to put the environment at the centre of its policies, but late last year it abandoned an attempt to increase tax on diesel fuel following the "yellow vest" protest movement.

Andrew Murphy, air travel specialist at T&E, said the new policy was "a more equitable tax. Driving a car is often unavoidable, but frequent flyers tend to be wealthy urbanites," he said. — Reuters



Exhaustive argument: Airplanes produce more pollution per distance travelled than other forms of transportation. — AFP

IMF says Pakistan bailout sets ambitious fiscal targets

ISLAMABAD: The \$6 billion loan package for Pakistan approved by the International Monetary Fund last week will require "very ambitious" fiscal measures and sustained commitment for the bailout to succeed, IMF officials said on Monday. The three-year agreement approved by the IMF board last week, Pakistan's 13th bailout since the late 1980s, has seen a sharp drop in the value of the rupee currency after the central bank agreed to a "flexible, market-determined exchange rate".

It also foresees structural economic reforms and a widening of the tax base to boost tax revenues that are currently estimated to account for less than 13 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) by 4-5 percentage points. With slowing growth, a budget deficit which has climbed to more than 7 percent of GDP and currency reserves of less than \$8 billion, or enough to cover 1.7 months of imports, Pakistan has teetered on the edge of a debt and balance of payments crisis.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, the Fund's mission chief for Pakistan said the program targets were tough but Prime Minister Imran Khan's government, which came to power last year vowing not to turn to the IMF, was committed. "We certainly think that debt sustainability under the program will be assured," he told a conference call with reporters, adding that it would require "very ambitious" fiscal consolidation, mainly through improved revenue collection.

Pakistan has a notoriously narrow tax base, with less than 1 percent of its 208 million population filing income tax returns, a vast informal economy and several key sectors of the official economy largely exempt from tax. The IMF loan and the associated package of reforms that goes with it will unlock another \$38 billion in loans from other international partners but commitment by Pakistani authorities in pushing through reform was essential, Ramirez Rigo said.

"Consistency and sustained implementation is key." The 2020 budget, passed last month, approved tax measures worth some 1.7 percent of GDP to help cut the deficit and Pakistan has promised a multiyear effort to overhaul its tax and budget system to put its public finances on a firmer footing.

A central part of the program will involve cleaning up accumulated debts in the power and gas sectors and in loss-making state enterprises including Pakistan International Airlines, Pakistan Steel Mills, and Pakistan Railways. Losses built up in the power sector now amount to the equivalent of 4 percent of GDP, posing a serious fiscal risk, while losses in the big three state enterprises amount to 2 percent of GDP, the IMF said in a report on the package.

The tough conditions of the package, which has already seen interest rates hiked by 150 basis points and which will see a raft of tax loopholes closed, has already drawn resentment among households facing inflation running at around 9 percent.

Ramirez Rigo said there was a risk that the difficulties of implementing some of the policies in the package were "more complicated than we have assumed" and that there would be problems in building consensus behind the reforms. He also said any sharp rise in oil prices could unbalance the reform drive given Pakistan's heavy dependence on imported energy. — Reuters

Japan, S Korea raise the stakes in dispute over forced labor

TOKYO/SEOUL: Japan and South Korea raised the stakes yesterday in a diplomatic dispute that threatens to disrupt global supplies of smartphones and chips, with South Korea denouncing Japanese reports that it had transferred a key chemical to North Korea. At the root of the dispute between the US allies is compensation for South Koreans forced to work for Japanese firms during World War Two.

It worsened last week when Japan said it would tighten curbs on exports of three materials crucial for advanced consumer electronics because trust with South Korea had been broken over the forced labor dispute. The restrictions on exports of the material to South Korea could hit tech giants, such as Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix, which supply chips to the likes of Apple and Huawei.

It also underscores Japan's grip on a vital link in the global supply chain that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government is using as leverage days before a parliamentary election.

In some of the sharpest comments yet, South Korean Industry Minister Sung Yun-mo urged Japan to "stop making groundless claims immediately", an apparent response to a Japanese media report last week. Media quoted an unidentified senior member of Abe's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) as saying some hydrogen fluoride exported to South Korea had ultimately been shipped to North Korea.

Hydrogen fluoride, a chemical covered by the Japanese export curbs, can be used in chemical weapons. Japan has said it has seen "inappropriate instances" of South Korea's export controls, but has not elaborated.

Asked about countermeasures, Sung said South Korea was reviewing "every possible plan", but gave no details. The neighbors plan to hold talks on Friday, he added.

Bitter history

The dispute stems from Japan's frustration over what it sees as South Korea's failure to act in

response to a ruling by one of its courts last October ordering Japan's Nippon Steel to compensate former forced laborers. Japan says the issue of forced labor was fully settled in 1965 when the neighbors restored diplomatic ties.

The neighbors share a bitter history dating to Japan's colonization of the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945, which saw forced use of labor by Japanese companies and the use of comfort women, a Japanese euphemism for girls and women, many of them Korean, forced to work in its wartime brothels.

Politicians from both sides have at times over the years factored the lingering ill-will into their calculations. The export curbs come weeks ahead of a July 21 upper house election that Abe's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its junior partner are expected to win with a solid majority.

"Unfortunately, the election is coming," said one person familiar with the Japanese government's thinking. "The LDP will do anything to solidify their support base."

Lee Young-chaee, a professor at Keisen University in Tokyo, also said politics seemed to be a factor. "One issue that could lead to an election win seems to be rallying Abe's conservatives and consolidating swing voters by showing an anti-South Korea, a tough stance toward South Korea," Lee said. "And it seems to be working."

'White list'

Japan yesterday raised the possibility of more measures against South Korea. "Whether Japan implements additional measures depends on South Korea's response," Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko told a news conference.

Japan was "not thinking at all" of withdrawing the curbs, which did not violate World Trade Organization rules, he said. South Korea, meanwhile, would raise the issue at a meeting of WTO member nations yesterday and with US officials in Washington, South Korean officials said.

President Moon Jae-in has said South Korea could not rule out countermeasures for damage to its firms. He is due to meet executives from top conglomerates today. Japan threatened last week to drop South Korea from a "white list" of countries with minimum trade restrictions, hitting supplies of a wider range of items used in weapons production. Japan's halt of preferential treatment for the three materials used in consumer electronics forces exporters to seek permission for each individual shipment to South Korea, which takes about 90 days. — Reuters

Indian tycoon Adani rejects Australian mine criticism

NEW DELHI: Indian billionaire Gautam Adani rejected criticism over the environmental impact of a huge coal mine planned by his company in Australia, saying renewables can't meet all his country's energy needs.

Conservationists have condemned the Adani plan, saying it will contribute to global warming, threaten local vulnerable species, and impact the already-damaged Great Barrier Reef.

Adani aims to import tens of millions of tons of coal annually from the Carmichael mine in Queensland to power India's booming but energy-starved economy. "Renewable energy is good for the nation, but it can't meet our baseload power needs," Adani told Bloomberg News in an interview published yesterday. The project, fiercely debated for almost a decade, comes as investors and even energy companies are moving away from fossil fuels amid concern about climate change.

The vast open cut mine is slated to produce up to 60 million tons of coal a year. Coupled with the construction of a railway link, it could open up a swathe of north-eastern Australia to further exploitation and new mining projects. Adani, who started as a Mumbai diamond trader, also rejected claims that his multi-billion-dollar investment will be unprofitable because of the mine's poor-quality coal and low prices. "If the project wasn't viable, we wouldn't have pursued it," he told Bloomberg. — AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	304.550
Euro	345.990
Sterling Pound	383.580
Canadian dollar	234.000
Turkish lira	53.430
Swiss Franc	309.500
US Dollar Buying	297.200

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.812
Indian Rupees	4.435
Pakistani Rupees	1.967
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.724
Nepali Rupees	2.772
Singapore Dollar	224.760
Hongkong Dollar	39.117
Bangladesh Taka	3.590
Philippine Peso	5.935
Thai Baht	9.980
Malaysian Ringgit	77.890

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.268
Qatari Riyal	83.702
Omani Riyal	791.553
Bahraini Dinar	809.220
UAE Dirham	82.972

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.750
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Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.340
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.223
Tunisian Dinar	109.160
Jordanian Dinar	430.310
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.399

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.640
Canadian Dollar	231.025
Sterling Pound	386.455
Euro	346.375
Swiss Franc	298.070
Bahraini Dinar	807.490
UAE Dirhams	83.070
Qatari Riyals	84.310
Saudi Riyals	81.865
Jordanian Dinar	429.550
Egyptian Pound	18.210
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.719
Indian Rupees	4.379
Pakistani Rupees	1.933
Bangladesh Taka	3.596
Philippines Peso	5.904
Cyprus pound	18.065
Japanese Yen	3.825
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.739
Malaysian Ringgit	74.225
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.515

Thai Bhat	10.825
Turkish Lira	52.785
Singapore dollars	222.971

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.374254	0.388154
Czech Korune	0.005378	0.014676
Danish Krone	0.041710	0.046710
Euro	0.334193	0.347893
Georgian Lari	0.132109	0.132109
Hungarian	0.000963	0.001153
Norwegian Krone	0.031277	0.036477
Romanian Leu	0.055363	0.072213
Russian ruble	0.004762	0.004762
Slovakia	0.009106	0.019106
Slovenia Krona	0.028226	0.033226
Swiss Franc	0.300873	0.311873
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.204391	0.216391
New Zealand Dollar	0.196848	0.205348
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.227436	0.236436
US Dollars	0.300450	0.305750
US Dollars Mint	0.300950	0.305750
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003009	0.003810

Chinese Yuan	0.042729	0.046229
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036973	0.039723
Indian Rupee	0.003859	0.004631
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002725	0.002905
Korean Won	0.000248	0.000263
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070110	0.076110
Nepalese Rupee	0.002679	0.003019
Pakistan Rupee	0.001371	0.002141
Philippine Peso	0.005869	0.006169
Singapore Dollar	0.218271	0.228271
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001353	0.001933
Taiwan	0.009642	0.009822
Thai Baht	0.009566	0.010116
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.801674	0.809732
Egyptian Pound	0.018646	0.022006
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424644	0.433644
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021390	0.045390
Omani Riyal	0.785909	0.793808
Qatar Riyal	0.082996	0.083830
Saudi Riyal	0.080127	0.081427
Syrian Pound	0.001291	0.001511
Tunisian Dinar	0.102178	0.110178
Turkish Lira	0.046779	0.056624
UAE Dirhams	0.082286	0.083111
Yemeni Riyal	0.000990	0.001070

Business

Boubyan Bank records net profit of KD 29 million in first half of 2019

Al-Majed: This year marks 10-year milestone since the start of our journey of success

KUWAIT: Boubyan Bank has announced a net profit of KD 29 million for the first half of 2019, at a growth rate of 12 percent compared with the same period of the previous year, with an earnings per share of 9.55 fils compared with 8.72 fils for the comparative period of the previous year.

Adel Abdul Wahab Al-Majed, the Bank's Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, commented on such positive results by stating: "Thanks to Allah, the Almighty, the efforts of our staff, and the trust of our customers, we managed to achieve great results in the first half of the year. These are positive indicators showing that this year will be another successful year despite the increasing challenges in Kuwait and the region."

He added: "This is a special year as we celebrate the bank's 15-year anniversary, and as it marks the 10-year milestone since the start of our transformation strategy back in 2009, leading to this level of excellence."

Al-Majed stated that all of the bank's main indicators witnessed a remarkable growth for the first half of the year where the total assets increased to KD 4.8 billion at a growth rate of 15 percent while the operating income increased to KD 74 million at a growth rate of 5 percent in addition to the increase in customers' deposits by 12 percent, amounting to KD 4.0 billion. He further added that the total equity of the bank increased to KD 549 million compared with KD 378 million last year and that there was a notable increase in the financing portfolio to KD 3.5 billion at a growth rate of 13 percent in addition to the continuous growth of the bank's customers' base.

In May 2019, the capital increase of KD

132 million was successfully completed via a rights issue which is expected to strengthen our capital to support growth.

Al-Majed stated as well that the market share, in financing, increased generally to approximately 8.7 percent in the meantime, while Boubyan Bank's share of the retail finance increased to approximately 11.3 percent. Besides, the bank recorded outstanding growth rates in the corporate credit portfolio at 15 percent. This was achieved by attracting a number of operational companies known for their financial and economic creditworthiness while continuing to maintain the highest standards of credit quality, studying and diversifying risks.

The best in Kuwait

Al-Majed added: "The bank continues its local achievements and has followed the journey it started many years ago, the latest achievement being named the Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait by the Banker, the renowned international financial publication, for the second year in a row due to the growth witnessed by the various indicators of the bank as well as the growth in market shares."

"The bank takes pride in its record of awards and recognitions, especially the ones received in the recent years, where we have been recognized by regional and global institutions which are renowned for their fairness and the credibility of their choices that are based on numbers, financial results, and market achievements", he added.

Al-Majed went on to add: "Such global recognitions put more responsibilities on the management to commit to the remarkable service levels we provide to our customers.



Adel Abdul Wahab Al-Majed

We believe that creativity and innovation are the way to continue in our path of success."

Furthermore, Boubyan Bank has continued to top the pyramid of customer service in Kuwait, supported by earning two awards from Service Hero, the international consumer-driven customer satisfaction index. The bank received the First Place Award in Customer Service as a Country Winner, for the fourth time in addition to being named the Best Islamic Bank in Customer Service for the ninth year in a row since 2010.

Al-Majed stated: "The confidence of our customers was well-placed, and this was fruitful as it contributed to earning those two special awards in Kuwait. The bank will surely continue at that remarkable level of customer service."

Al-Majed went on to explain: "Customer service is an integral part of the bank's culture. It is not secret that almost all competitors offer similar products and services, however, the excellence and outperformance come through service and the way of dealing with customers, especially in Kuwait where cus-

Boubyan Bank's Key Financial Indicators

Indicator	In KD million		
	First Half 2019	First Half 2018	Growth
Net profits	29	26	12%
Operating income	74	71	5%
Customers' deposits	3,981	3,552	12%
Financing portfolio	3,541	3,132	13%
Assets	4,793	4,167	15%

tomers have high expectations."

He went on to add: "Upon reviewing our products and services, one can see that aside from contributing to our profitability, they also most importantly constitute a part of our social responsibility. This is because we contribute to emphasize the concepts of innovation and creativity in the first place besides minimizing the effort and time dedicated to obtaining the service or the product, thus, saving our customers the time which they may spend in doing more valuable activities such as family activities."

Boubyan lifestyle campaign

Al-Majed also stated that the first half of this year witnessed the bank's launch of the "Boubyan Lifestyle" new campaign which conforms to the bank's clear vision and long-term strategy to reinforce its status as a major influencer in the banking sector that supports the values of transparency, innovation and

customer service excellence.

He added: "The campaign focuses on what distinguishes Boubyan Bank and makes it stand out from other banks such as the work methodology which is focused on customers, service quality and interaction with the needs of the society while fostering a culture marked by constant and strong commitment to and leadership in customer service. This is added to being customer focused, and providing customers with a complete package of products and services."

"We also stand out by our never-ending passion for innovation while adopting a realistic approach towards customers' needs, giving due attention to their expectations and maintaining a transparent relationship with customers based on trust, confidence and mutual respect as we aspire to distinction and uniqueness through leadership in innovation of simple solutions which are more convenient to customers", Al-Majed concluded.

US stocks continue retreat ahead of Powell testimony

NEW YORK: Wall Street opened in the red yesterday, leaving US stocks down for the third straight session as investors awaited this week's testimony from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell. Stock prices have retreated from last week's record highs as hopes faded that the Fed will make an unusually deep cut in interest rates this month, following a strong employment report.

While all eyes are on Powell's comments today and tomorrow, markets also were expecting stalled US-China trade talks to restart this week. About 25 minutes into the trading day, the Dow Jones Industrial Average had lost 0.5 percent to 26,684.15. The broader S&P 500 dropped 0.3 percent to 2,967.08 while the tech-heavy Nasdaq slipped 0.1 percent to 8,087.11. A robust report on US job creation in June last week dampened hopes the Fed could cut interest rates by as much as 50 basis points later this month.

Meanwhile, top White House economic advisor Larry Kudlow said yesterday that Powell's job was not in danger despite Trump's very public displeasure with the central bank. Analyst Patrick O'Hare wrote at Briefing.com that Wall Street was also concerned the federal government could run out of money sooner than expected amid fraught congressional efforts to raise the borrowing limit.

European and US stock markets retreated yesterday, with the biggest declines in share prices seen in Frankfurt following a profit-warning from German chemicals giant BASF. Asian indices mostly closed down as investors awaited the start of testimony from US Federal Reserve head Jerome Powell. Clues on the outlook for US interest rates are keenly awaited after the country's recent strong jobs report threw into doubt expectations for a deep cut in American borrowing costs later this month to help boost the economy.

"Equities are weaker and the dollar firmer as the prospect of the Fed not being as dovish as the market wants it to be takes the shine off things," said Neil Wilson, analyst for Markets.com. Frankfurt was down a hefty 1.1 percent in afternoon trading, while London slid 0.3 percent and Paris shed 0.4 percent compared with the closing levels on Monday.



NEW YORK: Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York. Wall Street stocks fell for a second straight session yesterday as investors reassessed the prospects for lower interest rates ahead of key Federal Reserve congressional testimony. — AFP

Wall Street opened lower, with the Dow dropping 0.5 percent in the first minute of trading. The euro and pound dropped versus the dollar, while oil prices rose.

Shares in BASF slumped over six percent after the company slashed its earnings forecast for the full year, blaming the impact of trade conflicts on the industry, before clawing back some of the decline.

"European stocks have resumed their downward move... with a warning from BASF providing another indication that the economic picture remains gloomy," said Chris Beauchamp, analyst at IG trading group. "In this context, a rate cut from the Fed may have little impact."

Shares in Deutsche Bank, Germany's embattled biggest lender, continued to decline, as analysts said the jury was still out on the massive restructuring announced at the weekend. Deutsche Bank stock was down 3.8 percent in afternoon trading, also among the worst performers on Frankfurt's DAX index of blue-chip companies. — AFP

Topping London's FTSE 100 index meanwhile was UK online supermarket Ocado, whose shares jumped 6.8 percent after the company posted strong revenues. — AFP

Virgin Galactic seeks space tourism boost with market launch

LONDON: Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic will merge with a New York-listed company to become the world's first publicly-traded space tourism venture, the British billionaire's group announced yesterday. "By embarking on this new chapter, at this advanced point in Virgin Galactic's development, we can open space to more investors and in doing so, open space to thousands of new astronauts," Branson said in a statement.

Virgin Galactic and public-investment vehicle Social Capital Hedosophia will merge, with SCH expected to own up to 49 percent of the combined company, the statement said. "Upon closing of the transaction, which is expected in the second half of 2019, VG will be introduced as the first and only publicly traded commercial human spaceflight company," it added.

The total value of the merger is \$1.5 billion, the parties said. The Wall Street Journal earlier reported that SCH planned an investment of \$800 million (714 million euros).

The capital injection from the special-purpose acquisition company, or SPAC, will enable British billionaire Branson to fund Virgin Galactic until its spaceships are able to commercially operate and become profitable, the paper added. Virgin Galactic is up against Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and Tesla's Elon Musk to be the first to send tourists into space.

"Great progress in our test flight program means that we are on track for our beautiful spaceship to begin commercial service," Branson said in yesterday's statement. "We are at the dawn of a new space age, with huge potential to improve and sustain life on Earth."

"I am delighted that SCH has decided to become such an important part of our amazing journey. They share our dreams and together we will make them reality," the entrepreneur added.

SCH founder and chief executive Chamath Palihapitiya meanwhile expressed confidence that VG "is light years ahead of the competition". Palihapitiya is investing \$100 million of his own money in the merger and is set to be the new partnership's chairman.

"I cannot wait to take my first trip to space and become an astronaut," he added yesterday. Branson has already invested more than \$1.0 billion in the project since 2004, while a similar proposed Saudi capital injection was suspended last year. Virgin Galactic's last test flight was in February when its spacecraft reached an altitude of more than 55 miles following a launch from California's Mojave desert. To date VG has space tourism reservations from more than 600 people across 60 countries, earning it about \$80 million in paid deposits and \$120 million in potential revenues, the group said yesterday. — AFP



In this file photo, flags bearing the logo of German chemical giant BASF fly during the presentation of the group's financial results for 2018 at BASF headquarters in Ludwigshafen am Rhein, Germany. — AFP

BASF shares plunge on profit warning

FRANKFURT: Shares in German chemical giant BASF tumbled at the start of trading yesterday, after the group slashed its earnings forecast for the full year, blaming the impact of trade conflicts on the industry.

After plunging more than five percent at the open, the stock was showing a loss of nearly six percent at 58.87 euros (\$65.98) just before 10:00 am (0800 GMT), making it the second-worst performer on the DAX index of blue-chip companies.

In a statement late Tuesday, BASF had warned that it expects to report a 71-percent year-on-year slump in operating profit for the second quarter, to 500 million euros. Over the full year, operating profit before

special items could be as much as 30 percent lower than the 7.6 billion euros booked in 2018. The forecast cuts were "a consequence of the considerably weaker-than-expected business development in the second quarter of 2019 and the slowdown in global economic growth and industrial production, mainly due to the trade conflicts" between the US, China and Europe, BASF said.

A long-awaited breakthrough in Washington's face-off with Beijing has so far failed to materialize, despite a meeting between presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping at the G20 gathering in Japan. "The G20 summit... has shown that a rapid detente is not to be expected in the second half of 2019," BASF said, but "uncertainty remains high". As well as the impact on manufacturing, particularly car production, adverse weather in North America has weighed on agriculture — lowering demand for the chemical maker's pesticides. The headwinds strike BASF as it is tackling a far-reaching restructuring, including 6,000 job cuts by the end of 2021. — AFP

US slaps new duties on steel from Mexico and China

WASHINGTON: The United States announced fresh duties on some Mexican and Chinese steel goods on Monday, saying those countries helped their manufacturers with unfair subsidies.

The decision comes two months after President Donald Trump agreed to lift tariffs on steel and aluminum from Mexico and Canada after the three nations agreed on a revised North American free trade pact. The Commerce Department found that imported steel used in construction benefited from subsidies in China, Mexico and Canada, but in the case of Canada the subsidies were negligible, so no retaliatory duties were imposed.

The action was in response to a grievance lodged in February by US steel producers. In its preliminary findings Commerce found Mexican and Chinese exporters of fabricated structural steel benefitted from subsidies ranging from 30.3 percent to 177.43 percent. Structural steel imports from China and Mexico together amounted to \$1.5 billion in 2018, the Commerce Department said in a statement.

US customs agents will begin collecting import duties based on the subsidy rates, but the funds could be returned if officials later reverse the finding. The independent US International Trade Commission sometimes blocks Commerce Department actions if they find American firms were not harmed by the subsidies. Citing purported threats to US national security, Trump last year announced global tariffs of 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminum but in May agreed to lift them for Mexico and Canada.

Trump has hailed the tariffs, claiming they have breathed new life into a moribund but crucial US metals industry. But the US steel industry has continued to suffer, with production halted at blast furnaces last month and overall employment edging downward at mills and foundries. — AFP



WASHINGTON, DC: In this file photo taken on February 07, 2019 Virgin Galactic founder Sir Richard Branson speaks during a ceremony to award test pilots Mark "Forger" Stucky and Frederick "CJ" Sturckow their FAA commercial astronaut wings during a ceremony at the Department of Transportation in Washington, DC. — AFP

Trump again attacks India, says tariffs 'unacceptable'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump yesterday fired a new Twitter salvo at India, accusing the giant Asian economy of unfairly blocking American imports. "India has had a field day putting tariffs on American products," the president tweeted. "No longer acceptable."

Trump's sparring with Delhi over trade has heated up just as Washington seeks to resolve its year-long trade battle with China. Earlier this year he stripped India of benefits which allowed some duty-free exports to the United States, claiming that India had refused to grant wider access to American-made goods. India also was hit by worldwide tariffs on steel and aluminum that Trump imposed last year and lodged a dispute against the United States in the World Trade Organization with about 30 other economies. Last month, India slapped duties on dozens of US products, including hundreds of millions of dollars in almonds from California as well as other US fruits and nuts. — AFP

Business



New Mercedes-Benz V-Class - New design and even greater comfort

V-Class, the successful model, even more attractive

DUBAI: The Stuttgart-based designers of the Mercedes-Benz V-Class, have revealed an impressive new look of the passenger family car, which is now available with a revised front-end design, exterior colors, updated interior and a range of cutting-edge driver assistance features. With a redesigned front bumper, the V-Class appears wider by incorporating a broad intake into the lower fascia - an optional AMG Line Package is now available with a new, chrome-accented, diamond radiator grille offering a sportier appearance. The interior of the new V-Class focuses on passenger comfort with a simpler, elegant design with new upholstery and trim options. Building on its position as a class leader in safety, new Active Brake Assist and Highbeam Assist Plus features are now available.

Thomas Greipel, General Manager of Mercedes-Benz Vans Middle East and North Africa (MENA), said: "The new V-Class builds upon the style and appeal that has led the way within the MPV segment - for both private and business owners, while maintaining the Mercedes-Benz standards of quality and robustness. With an updated look and feel, the new V-Class is a powerful and dynamic vehicle that we're confident will continue to fascinate our customers."

Updated exterior design features with a range of new colors

The new V-Class has a broader appearance and an even stronger visual presence thanks to its new front end. This comes courtesy of a new bumper design with striking cooling air inlets and an AMG Line with a

new diamond structure in the radiator grille. The Mercedes star is positioned centrally in the radiator grille and framed by two silver slats. The personalization concept with the attractive AVANTGARDE and EXCLUSIVE lines continue to exist, while the AMG line is available as a complement to any of the V-Class lines and features a new diamond radiator grille with chrome pins.

New paint colors are now available for the V-Class, including graphite grey metallic and selenite grey metallic - expanding the spectrum of the well-received black and white tones. Equally new are the steel blue and hyacinth red metallic paint colors, allowing owners of the new V-Class to make an especially emotive statement. At the same time, the four new light-alloy wheel designs ensure a powerful and avantgarde appearance. They include 5-twin-spoke 17-inch light-alloy wheels painted in black with a high-sheen finish, as well as 18-inch light-alloy wheels in tremolite grey with a high-sheen finish and 5-twin-spoke design or in black with a high-sheen finish and 5-spoke design. At the upper end of the new wheel portfolio are black-painted 19-inch 10-spoke light-alloy wheels with a high-sheen finish.

Interior updates that focus on passenger comfort

In the interior, too, the designers have ensured the design philosophy of the current Mercedes-Benz passenger car models is transposed in to the new V-Class. The interior of the new V-Class follows the trend of modernity and clarity, with new air vents in a more-sporty turbine look as well as new



dials in the instrument cluster. Thanks to the simplified design, drivers can orientate themselves much more easily. The new upholstery and equipment color tartufo (brown) nappa leather makes a modern and elegant statement. With Lugano leather and nappa leather, each available in black and silk beige, not to mention Santos black fabric, a total of six different upholstery options in light and dark colors are now available. The new trim element in twin-stripe delivers a modern and elegant look to the instrument panel and the side paneling. The trim elements in the piano lacquer, ebony wood, carbon fiber and brushed aluminum remain.

As part of the facelift, rear passengers can enjoy an especially comfortable space. The optionally available luxury seats for the first rear row are a real treat and, just like in

the S-Class, they offer a fully reclining function, back massage and climatization. A journey in the new V-Class, for example as a VIP shuttle, turns into a spa-like treatment after a stressful flight or business meeting.

Safety features that give you added peace of mind

New safety features can be ordered optionally and continue to build on the Mercedes-Benz V-Class position as a leader for safety standards in its segment. The new (optional) Active Brake Assist can recognize when there is a risk of collision with a vehicle ahead and gives an initial visual and acoustic signal. In addition, the Active Brake Assist can break autonomously up to standstill, if the driver does not react independently and adequately. In urban traffic, the Active Brake

Assist can also react to stationary obstacles or pedestrians crossing.

Another new (optional) safety feature is the Highbeam Assist Plus. It supports the driver in the high beam mode through a continuous illumination of the lane. If there are vehicles in front of the V-Class or if there is oncoming traffic, the LEDs of the main-beam module are partially deactivated to create a U-shaped cut-out in the cone of light. The remaining areas of the roadway continue to be illuminated with the main-beam headlamps (partial main beam). The already successful safety features continue to remain - Crosswind Assist, which supports the driver in keeping the vehicle on track even in the case of heavy crosswinds, and ATTENTION ASSIST, which can detect when drivers start to become drowsy and prompt them to take a break when needed.

Expansion of the global eDrive@VANS strategy

Within the MPV segment, globally, Mercedes-Benz Vans will soon be taking the next step - being the first premium manufacturer to offer a fully-electric model. Thus Mercedes-Benz Vans will consistently expand its comprehensive eDrive@VANS strategy. With the eVito already available in selected overseas markets and the eSprinter due to be revealed in the second half of 2019.

Mercedes-Benz Vans has extended the fully-electric range to include the V-Class and has provided an initial outlook on the electric future of its MPV, celebrating the premiere of the near-series study "Concept EQV" at the Geneva Motor Show, in March.

Gulf Bank congratulates winner of monthly salary draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced the winner of its sixth monthly Salary Account draw of the year. This month's lucky winner, Yousef Yaqoub Ali Mohammad, will take home a cash prize of 12 times his salary.

The draw, which took place at Gulf Bank's Shaab Branch in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, is the sixth Salary Account draw this year. To date, Yousef Mohammad, is one of six winners of this year's monthly draws, each of whom took home cash prizes.

With the new 2019 Kuwaiti salary offer, new customers who transfer their salaries to



Gulf Bank are automatically enrolled in the monthly draws, giving them the chance to win cash prizes of up to 12 times their salary. Customers are also enrolled in a yearly draw of Kuwait's largest salary prize, a cash prize of up to 100 times the winner's salary.

Gulf Bank's Salary Account also gives new customers the opportunity to receive either a KD 100 cash gift upon transferring their

salaries to Gulf Bank, or an interest-free loan of up to KD 10,000. Customers must have a minimum salary of KD 500 and are eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank. Customers can also enjoy additional benefits like a Visa or MasterCard credit card free of charge for a year. They can also apply for a loan of up to KD 70,000 or a consumer loan of up to KD 25,000.

KFH offers international toll-free service in 7 countries

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) offers "International Toll-Free Service" to its customers in seven countries outside Kuwait (USA, UK, Canada, Spain and France, in addition to Turkey and Germany) without any additional fees. This comes as part of the bank's strategy of delivering superior customer service, supporting the bank's continuing efforts to improve innovation and reinforcing the network of its banking services. To use this service and reach KFH's Allo Baitak Call Center 1803333, customers can call and of the following toll-free numbers.

Calls from those numbers have priority to pick up from the Call Center agents. This service in conjunction with

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

KFH prides itself in delivering the best and highest standards in service quality. This new addition to KFH services allow for further enhancing these standards at the Call Center. It also has the added benefit of building trust with KFH customers by making it easy for them to contact the Call Center." KFH is continually striving to deliver the best and most convenient in banking technology, in efforts to meet customers' aspirations.

Can your smartphone do this? Here are some of Huawei P30 Pro's cool features

KUWAIT: Huawei's latest flagship champion, the Huawei P30 Pro, has been recognized for its amazing Quad Leica Camera and solid performance features. However, there is a lot more hidden in this smartphone powerhouse which can make your daily life easier, while also being simply cool to use. Here are some of the surprising features that you can find on the Huawei P30 Pro and just how exactly you can use them.

In screen fingerprint reader

Fingerprint sensors housed in home buttons or behind the phone are old news. Thanks to the In Screen Fingerprint Reader on the Huawei P30 Pro, unlocking your phone is as simple as just tapping the screen. All you have to do is register your fingerprint and then tap to unlock. Not only does this make it easy to use, but gives the phone a stunning display without any interruptions.

Navigation made easier

The standard navigation bar consisting of the Home, Back and Recent Apps is present on every modern smartphone. If you are not a fan of it you can easily hide it from the Navigation Settings, clearing the way for a larger display. However, thanks to the intuitive features of the EMUI 9.1, you can also opt for gesture navigation options that make it easier while using your phone. When switched on, you just have to swipe up from the bottom to return to the Home screen, swipe inward from left or right edges to go back then swipe up and hold to access Recent Apps.



Do more with your knuckles

Taking screenshots are made easier with this cool hidden feature, embedded in the operating system of the Huawei P30 Pro EMUI 9.1: Just knock twice using your knuckles to take a screenshot or draw an "S" with your knuckles for a scrolling screenshot. Drawing a straight line across the display will also split the display for multitasking.

The unique video ringtone

Bored with the traditional musical jingle when you get a call? With the Huawei P30 Pro, you can customize your ringtone to be a video ringtone, where a short video will fill up the screen while ringing. Found in the Ringtones and Vibration menu, all you have to do is select a video and enjoy the clip when your phone rings.

Multiple accounts? Use App Twin

A unique feature found on the Huawei P30 Pro, App Twin allows users to easily clone an application for multiple login options. Used most commonly on social media apps, or other apps that allow only for one account, App Twin is the best way to handle multiple accounts without having to sign out. Setting up App Twin is pretty simple. In the Apps menu found in Settings, scroll down to App Twin and locate the application that needs to be cloned and toggle the button next to it. Then once you head back to your home screen or app drawer, you can find a second icon for the app next to the original with a number two in the bottom corner.



Country	Number
USA, Canada	18008188608
UK	08000148898
France	0805086620
Germany	08001817080
Spain	900 905 440
Turkey	+90503902170 (Local tariff charges may be applied in Turkey by local Turkish telecoms companies when calling this number)

What's On



Al Hamra observes World Refugee Day

Al Hamra joined UNHCR and other prominent organizations to commemorate World Refugee Day, an annual ceremony that aims to highlight the refugee cause, along with the strength and resilience of more than 70 million refugees, and forcibly displaced persons around the globe. To mark the international day, senior government officials, business leaders, academia, civil society activists and media persons came together in a ceremony held under the auspices of H E Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al Hamad Al-Sabah - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was represented by H E Ambassador Nasser Al Hain -

Assistant Foreign Minister for International at UN House Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah building on June 20, 2019.

First started 19 years ago, World Refugee Day is observed in more than 100 countries to raise awareness of the plight of refugees and those internally displaced due to conflict or natural disasters. This year's theme is #StepwithRefugees, inviting everyone to take big and small steps in solidarity of refugees. As every year, Al Hamra Business Tower was lit in blue to demonstrate its continued support of World Refugee Day. Its observation of the World Refugee Day is in line with its commitment to Sustainable Development

Goal 17 aiming to build partnerships for the global goals. This is the 3rd year Al Hamra joins the global movement and it reflects its long-term commitment to vulnerable communities more broadly.

Recognizing its contribution to the refugee movement, Al Hamra was awarded with a UNHCR plaque of appreciation by the Head of Office of UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the State of Kuwait, Dr. Samer Haddadin. Receiving the honor, Abdullah Al Mansour, Marketing and Public Relations Manager at Al Hamra Real Estate Co., said: "Every minute, 20 people leave everything behind to escape war, persecution or terror. In this light, we believe it is

our collective duty to voice support and call for humanitarian support for those who live in dire circumstances. We are proud to join UNHCR and other like-minded organizations and will continue to be a champion for vulnerable communities worldwide."

Kuwait, recognized by the United Nations as the International Humanitarian Center in 2014 has been a leader in the movement raising substantial funds to alleviate the situation of many. His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al Jaber Al-Sabah was proclaimed as 'Humanitarian Leader' for fulfilling his role in providing aid and support to refugees in different regions.



ACK awards Junior Aviation Camp participants

As part of its efforts to help the youth of Kuwait, the Center for Continuous Education (CCE) at the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) and the School of Aviation at ACK, held a ceremony awarding the students who participated in their first ever Junior Aviation Camp. The ceremony was held on July 4, 2019, and awarded eight students who took part in the Junior Aviation Camp. The camp was meant as a gateway for teens, aged 14 and up, to enter the aviation industry. During the camp, students were taught about airplane maintenance, got to work with a live aircraft, and were taught about flying using a flight simulator.

The camp lasted for two weeks, during which the students' had a mixture of theoretical learning and practical lessons. The stu-

dents learned how aircrafts operated, the different parts of the plane, and the science of flight. As for the practical aspect, the students were taught to fly using a flight simulator in order to experience what it is like to be a pilot. The students also experienced hands-on learning in the workshop and on a live aircraft to learn the responsibilities of an aircraft engineer.

According to David Reuben, Aviation Teaching Assistant at ACK, the camp was a valuable experience for the students because of the hands-on learning which helped them apply what they have learned in the classroom. "The unique opportunity that we have offered is for students to learn using all five senses. They got to read, they got to watch, they got to learn, and they got to work with

their hands," said Reuben. "We, as educators, know that this is one of the best lessons that students get to have. This is an experience that no student will ever forget."

The students enjoyed the practical training of the camp, and said it made the camp stand out to them compared to the traditional learning methods. "We're not only sitting down to learn here," said Ahmad Khaja, one of the students at the camp. "We are getting moved around the hanger, the plane, and the workshop. The workshop was probably the most fun." "Thanks to the camp, me and my colleagues can now get into the plane with confidence," Khaja said. ACK would like to thank the students who participated in this camp for challenging themselves and helping make the camp a success.

Marina Hotel Kuwait welcomes summer with special promotions

Take a break from fast-paced city life and enjoy some downtime this summer in a resort-esque environment at Marina Hotel Kuwait, where a Summer Package is on offer that makes letting loose even easier. Staycate in bliss in a Superior Room with balconies that overlook the glittering Arabian Sea, and gain access to the hotel's secluded private beach, trinity of outdoor pools, and Coral Reef Health Club. Included in the offer is breakfast at the Six Palms Restaurant buffet, where guests can start their morning with steaming cups of coffee and heaped plates of food.

For lunch and dinner, guests may avail of 20 percent off their bill when they dine on a premium spread of traditional Arabic and international dishes at the Atlantis Restaurant, where a tempting selection of Arabic sweets and mouth-watering desserts are also available. Guests may compliment their stay at the Marina Hotel with a visit to the Marina Mall and Marina Crescent, which are both within walking distance to the hotel, and offer a movie theatre, beach side sites and activities, and a range of locally and internationally renowned shops, restaurants, and cafes.



British Academy of Sport organizes summer camps

British Academy of Sport (BAS) completed the academic year with their last events which were the Annual Summer Sports Camp and the Swimming Camp. At both the camps more than 150 students between 3-13 years old from different schools from Kuwait participated. The BAS Summer Sports Camp has a unique combination of activities in Kuwait including swimming, zumba, karate, gymnastics, table tennis, bubble football, team building and treasure hunt.

This is also the third consecutive year when BAS included also a very healthy lunch from Prime Bites for the students to help them to understand how important is for them



to have a high nutrition energy meal in combinations with Sports Activities. The children also had many surprises from the organizers including Magician Show, Talent Show, Cooking Class and the Ceremony Awards. The Camps were sponsored by KIB, Royale

Hayat Hospital, 4 FEST, ABC, I.T.L World and Crowne Plaza Hotel. BAS will start the new academic year 2018-2019 from September 28, 2019, with the traditional carnival, where they will launch the new schedule for the sports courses.



Announcement

Celebratory Events for 40th Diplomatic Anniversary between Korea & Kuwait

On the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of diplomatic ties between the Republic of Korea and the State of Kuwait in 2019, the Korean Embassy in Kuwait is pleased to announce that it will be organizing varied activities and events in conjunction with this auspicious anniversary. They are held in collaboration with Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre and the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letter. These activities are as follows:

Function	Date	Time	Venue
Korean Traditional "Hanbok" Fashion Show & Exhibition	24 & 25 Jul	Exhibition: 11 am to 7 pm	Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre
		Fashion Show: 7:30 pm	
2019 Changwon World K-pop Festival Kuwait (preliminary)	Jul 29	7:30 pm	Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre
International Youth Arts Troupe - Korean Traditional Performance	Jul 31	7:30 pm	Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre
	Aug 1	7:30 pm	Abdulhussain Abdulridha Theater, Salmiya

Notes:

- Further details on each event will be provided in due course.
- Seating is limited, so please plan to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to performances.

'Medical respite' offers a place in US cities battling homelessness

WASHINGTON: Henry Jones had been living on the streets of Washington, DC for more than a decade when his health finally started failing. Sick, suffering from alcoholism, and increasingly unable to walk, he sought to check into an emergency room in the US capital - but intake workers there refused to admit him, he said, because he did not have an acute condition. He was at risk of falling through a major hole in the social safety net.

A case worker told him he could go to a shelter, where he could at least get a bed for a few nights. Or he could try another option: a small organization that offered medical services to the homeless, as well as a place to simply rest. Jones went with the second option, an organization called Christ House that gave him medical care and a bed to sleep in. Later, it helped him stop drinking, get a permanent home - and even a job. "Being on the street, people look down on you, thinking that's the way you're going to live the rest of your life," said Jones, who now works at Christ House.

"And that's what makes Christ House much different from any other place: The people help you get back up on your feet," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, sitting next to the showers that he oversees for use by homeless people. Founded in 1985, Christ House was one of the first places in the country to offer a service that is increasingly being embraced in cities nationwide: medical respite, or recuperative care, which seeks to fill a gap between what emergency rooms and shelters can provide.

"This is a gray area: If you're housed, you'd be discharged from a hospital and given instructions to stay off your feet," said Julia Dobbins of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) umbrella group, which published standards on the issue in 2016. "But people without homes don't have a safe, clean place to recover, and that's a gap in care," she added.

While homeless shelters exist across the United States, these typically close during the daytime, Dobbins said: "We criminalize homelessness in this country, so people can't lay around - they have to be up and moving." Respite facilities offer rest and recuperation, but also give workers a chance to see what support patients might qualify for, connect them to other services, and generally offer them "time to think about what is the next step in their life," she said.

Complicated cases

Christ House said it is an unusually expensive operation, offering 24-hour medical care, housing and more. Medical director and co-founder Janelle Goetcheus recalled one resident last year who before coming to the centre had been living on a park bench near a local hospital - and going back and forth for cancer radiation treatment.

Christ House gave the man a place to stay during his treatment and facilitated his trips to the hospital. Some patients' needs are straightforward, said Goetcheus: for instance, a woman has surgery on her leg and needs a

place to mend for a few weeks, the type of rest she would not be able to get at a shelter or on the street. Other cases are far more complicated, involving multiple acute and chronic illnesses and mental health problems, often exacerbated by years of sleeping rough, substance abuse and lack of medical attention.

Goetcheus said that since the early days when Henry Jones came to the organization, the health problems plaguing Washington's homeless population have worsened. This is particularly true for the increasing numbers of homeless elderly people, those with mental health problems and undocumented migrants, for whom complex medical care is often impossible, she added. "For the hospitals, there is a lot of pressure to have very discreet (specific) admissions for acute medical needs and then get people discharged," she said. "So more people are ending up on the street."

Struggle for funding

Medical respite programs have grown by about a third since 2012, going from 60 to 80 initiatives nationwide, according to the NHCHC. Yet nationally, programs vary widely, with little agreement even on what medical respite means, although that is starting to change.

But there is growing consensus among researchers that the approach appears to offer significant cost savings for hospital systems and public coffers. In one 2018 study, researchers with Brandeis University in Massachusetts

found that respite programs could save several thousands of dollars per hospital patient by cutting down on expensive readmissions. As yet, however, long-term funding remains the single biggest obstacle for respite programs, according to health and homelessness experts.

Most respite projects have an average of three funders, said Dobbins, and the vast majority of respite centers are unable to bill the federal government as medical providers, so they depend on philanthropy and a patchwork of public and other funding sources. Sean Barry, a spokesman for the American Hospital Association, said the industry group does not have a public stance on medical respite, but noted it has referenced "improved care transitions and reduced readmissions" as two benefits of such programs. The federal government does support respite programs, to some extent.

A spokeswoman for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services said that although respite programs are not covered as a matter of course, states can apply for federal assistance under Medicaid - a joint federal and state health program for the poor - on a case-by-case basis. "REALLY DIFFICULT PLACE" Interest in respite is growing significantly, said Dobbins, whose office oversees a respite network of more than 1,000 members, up from 840 in 2015. A respite initiative at Portland's Central City Concern, a non-profit, will soon include a specific focus on mental health - a factor that is largely missing among respite programs, Dobbins said. — Reuters

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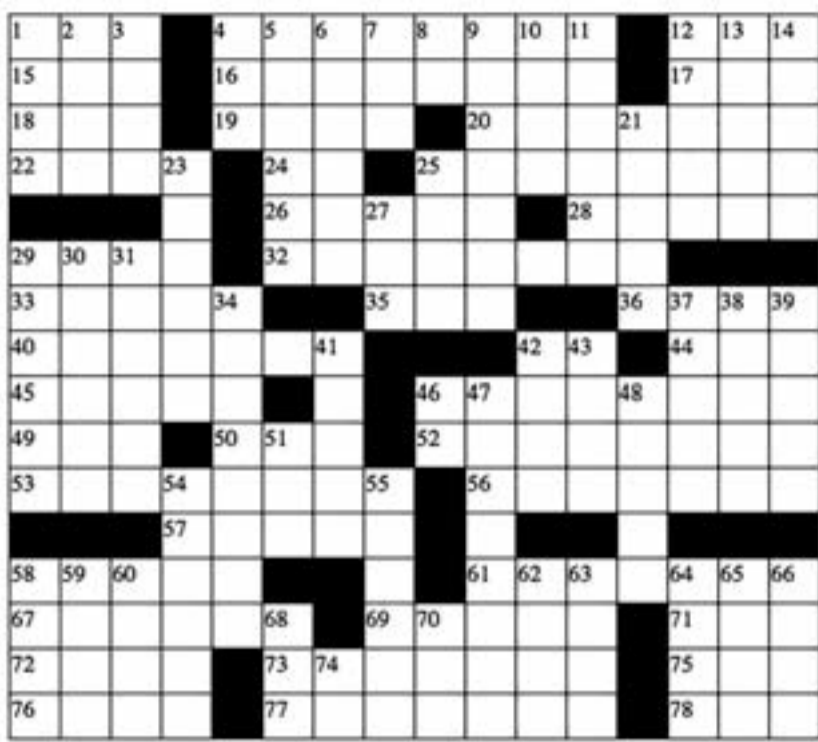
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2253



ACROSS

1. The federal agency that insures residential mortgages.
4. Call forth.
12. What you can repeat immediately after perceiving it.
15. A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
16. A mountainous island in eastern Indonesia.
17. The starting place for each hole on a golf course.
18. The most common computer memory which can be used by programs to perform necessary tasks while the computer is on.
19. Make editorial changes (in a text).
20. Genus of American of east Asian perennial herbs with yellow to orange or red flower rays.
22. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
24. (Greek mythology) A maiden seduced by Zeus.
26. Slanderous defamation.
28. Lower in esteem.
29. The basic monetary unit of most members of the European Union (introduced in 1999).
32. Cassava with long tuberous edible roots and soft brittle stems.
33. Marked by quiet and caution and secrecy.
35. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
36. (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
40. Of or relating to fish.
44. Being one hundred more than two hundred.
45. An association of nations dedicated to economic and political cooperation in southeastern Asia.
49. A sign of assent or salutation or command.
50. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
52. A sulfonamide (trade name Gantanol) used to treat infections (especially infections of the urinary tract).
53. A detested person.
56. The largest island of Denmark and the site of Copenhagen.
57. Measuring instrument in which the echo of a pulse of microwave radiation is used to detect and locate distant objects.
58. A domed or vaulted recess or projection on a building especially the east end of a church.
61. One who attacks the reputation of another by slander or libel.
67. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
69. (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
71. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
72. The United Nations agency concerned with civil aviation.
73. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
75. Informal terms for a mother.
76. The time during which someone's life continues.
77. A state in the southeastern United States on the Gulf of Mexico.
78. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.

DOWN

1. A card game in which players bet against the dealer on the cards he will draw from a dealing box.
2. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
3. The highest level or degree attainable.
4. The compass point midway between east and southeast.
5. The practice of living without clothes for reasons of health.
6. A tumor of the brain consisting of neuroglia.
7. Take in solid food.
8. The compass point midway between north and west.
9. Classification used for 5 species of terrestrial ferns usually placed in other genera.
10. (Old Testament) The eldest son of Isaac who would have inherited the Covenant that God made with Abraham and that Abraham passed on to Isaac.
11. A narrow zigzag ribbon used as trimming.
12. An ancient upright stone slab bearing markings.
13. Either of two muscles in the shoulder region that move the shoulders and arms.
14. English economist noted for his studies of international trade and finance (born in 1907).
21. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
23. A waste pipe that carries away sewage or surface water.
25. Remove with or as if with a ladle.
27. An inflammatory complication of leprosy that results in painful skin lesions on the arms and legs and face.
30. Corresponding exactly.
31. Any plant of the genus Reseda.
34. The capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the Congo river opposite Brazzaville.
37. Type genus of Ochnaceae.
38. A descendent or heir.
39. A burn cause by hot liquid or steam.
41. Swelling from excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue.
42. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.
43. The officer below the master on a commercial ship.
46. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
47. An early Christian church designed like a Roman basilica.
48. Colony of the United Kingdom located on a limestone promontory at the southern tip of Spain.
51. A piece of furniture that provides a place to sleep.
54. Final honors degree examinations at Cambridge University.
55. A large fleet.
59. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
60. Kill intentionally and with premeditation.
62. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
63. A small cake leavened with yeast.
64. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
65. Very dark black.
66. Avatar of Vishnu.
68. An accountant certified by the state.
70. Horny projecting mouth of a bird.
74. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a great time for your close relationships. They seem to take on more emotional depth, power, and mean more to you now. You are finally starting to realize you need the support of those closest to you for you to thrive. No one should take on as much responsibility as you attempt to handle on your own. Remember to be humble. It is ok to ask for help and to admit you can not do everything on your own. This is a difficult thing for you to do, due to the desire you have to be totally independent. No man is an island.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have always had a soft heart. There is a special place in your heart for children. You seem to be drawn to their innocence. Today you may find the opportunity to spend some special time with a child who is special to you. This is a great opportunity to spend some of your creative energy to express your feelings. An art project with this child would be a wonderful way to spend your time this evening. Nothing compares to time spent with a child with a paintbrush in their hand. You may see an undeniable sense of admiration in the eyes of this child. Little things mean a lot to little ones.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are able to see what future brings very clearly now. You can see the road ahead and you are ready to move forward. You are able to make clear decisions and things really seem to be falling into place for you. Progress at this time is easy. You may feel invincible. Be careful not to bite off more than you can chew now. You tend to be overconfident and not put much thought into your decisions. You are very optimistic and may find yourself taking chances you would usually refrain from taking. You may spend much time exploring your emotions and this could be a time you get in touch with your roots and find purpose in your life.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

A need to be respected seems to be a very emotionally charged issue in your life. You will not settle for anyone to treat you any other way. They can either treat you with respect or they have no place in your world. It seems you have a knack for not only organizing things but also organizing the people around you. You are able to put each person into the position they will be most productive. This does not go unnoticed in the workplace. It seems as if your upper management may have their eyes on you. You exhibit management qualities and may soon find yourself offered a new position or you may be asked to lead a new project. Shoot for the stars.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your independence is not always looked at with envy. At times others feel as if you may think you are above them. They see it as an insult that you refuse to include them in your projects and exclude them from the decision making process in the work place. We are all surrounded by someone who looks for reasons to be offended. These are not the most pleasant people to have in our lives. Do not take offense to their attitude. Instead push on and do your thing.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Contrast is evident in your life today. That's doesn't have to mean conflict. There is a difference. Cultivate your fun-loving, romantic side. But, don't ignore your uncomfortable, needy feelings. Your insecurities make you more compassionate toward those who are looking for comfort. They will find you reassuring. You will bring peace into the lives of others today.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Love and expressing all the deep emotions you have for others becomes very important to you. You may be feeling a need to be needed. Never doubt that you are. You may find yourself in deep appreciation of everyone and everything around you. You are able to find beauty in every situation and in everything that surrounds you. This is time in your life filled with love and others are drawn to your loving ways and kind heart. Be careful today, as all around you becomes so appealing. You may want steer clear of the mall to resist the urge to bring all that catches your eye home with you. Libra, a shopping spree could not only find you loving all you see, but also wanting to bring home everything you see!



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

The sky is the limit. You feel unstoppable. It seems you are deep in reflection and past experiences are helping you deal with your present circumstances. You may realize there is someone in your life you need to forgive in order to be able to move forward. You're experiencing a more sensitive side and putting more thought into seeing things from other people's point of view. This helps you understand those close to you better and helps dissolve boundaries that have been standing in your way.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 18)

You may feel as if the sky is the limit today. There are no limits to what you can accomplish when you set your mind to it. Focus and determination are your friends today. You are optimistic and have faith in yourself and your abilities. You may find this to be a great time to explore your emotions and feelings. You may be feeling some sort of restlessness. An emotional experience, a sort of divine wanderlust is what you crave.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This may be a great day to enjoy a good book or catch a movie. An escape from reality may be just what you need. This could clear your mind and leave you feeling refreshed and rejuvenated. You feel your most secure when surrounded by friends. You may be feeling a real need for a change in your life. You may feel as if you want to throw out the old and bring in the new. You have had this on your mind for a while and today seems the day you really begin to act on it. It seems a change in the right direction may bring great reward into your life. You will send enjoy world you have no desire to escape from.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a great time of understanding in your world. You could find yourself really enjoying a special time with someone you love. Your world is full of love, optimism, and faith. What a wonderful time full of wonderful feelings! You may feel led to take a chance on a deep emotional level. This risk could bring great reward into your world. This is a time you are truly exploring your feelings, you are experiencing a new emotional experience. This is a wonderful feeling and a wonderful time in your life. You are ready to experience all the world has to offer you.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Things really seem to be going your way. You find this a time you are filled with appreciation. You can truly enjoy your life situation now. Your senses are heightened. Your taste is impeccable. You will be able to use this to your benefit in any decorating you do or any purchases you make now. You may find others seek your opinion in many aspects of their own life. If anyone is trusted to make the right choices and right decisions, it is you.

Wordsearch Puzzle

70's Songs

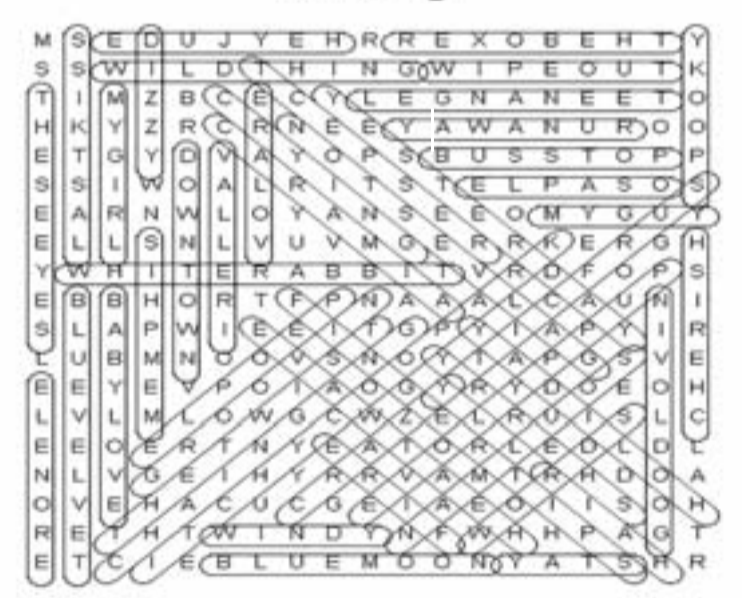
Find and circle all of these songs from the 1970's that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional song from the 70's.



- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| ANGIE | FAME | LOVIN' YOU | RICH GIRL |
| BABE | FREE BIRD | LOWDOWN | ROXANNE |
| BAD BLOOD | GREASE | MACARTHUR PARK | SAD EYES |
| BETH | HEART OF GLASS | MAGGIE MAY | SIR DUKE |
| BROWN SUGAR | HOT STUFF | MISS YOU | STAYIN' ALIVE |
| CAR WASH | HOTEL CALIFORNIA | MONEY | SUPERSTITION |
| CONVOY | ISLAND GIRL | NIGHT MOVES | THE JOKER |
| CRACKLIN' ROSIE | JIVE TALKIN' | OHIO | TRAGEDY |
| CROCODILE ROCK | LAYLA | POP MUZZIK | VENUS |
| DANCING QUEEN | LE FREAK | RHIANNON | WATERLOO |
| DREAMING | LOLA | RHINESTONE COWBOY | YOUR SONG |

Yesterday's Solution

60's Songs



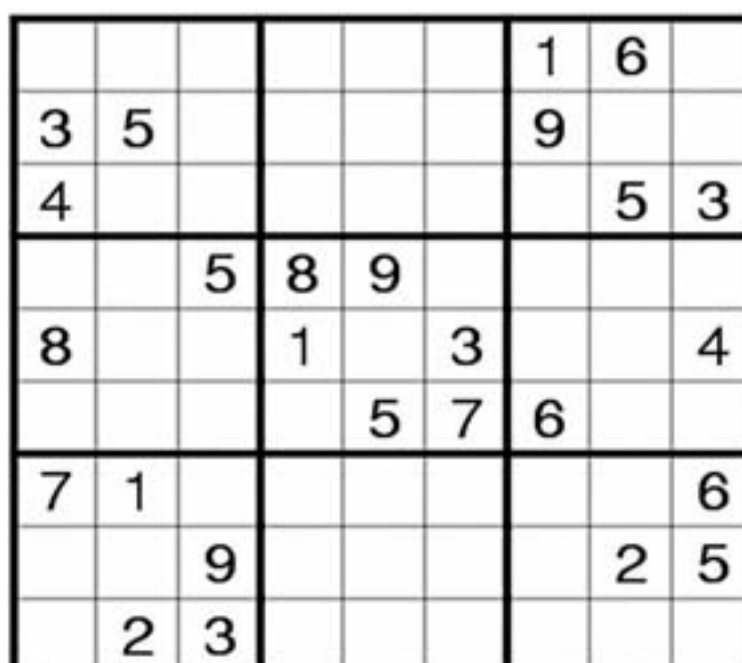
- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| BABY LOVE | ELENORE | MEMPHIS | TEEN ANGEL |
| BLUE MOON | FINGERTIPS | MY GIRL | THE BOXER |
| BLUE VELVET | FIRE | MY GUY | THE TWIST |
| BUS STOP | GALVESTON | PEOPLE | THESE EYES |
| CARA MIA | GOOD LOVIN' | PUPPY LOVE | VALLERI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

The hidden song is: MRS. BROWN YOU'VE GOT A LOVELY DAUGHTER

Yesterday's Solution



Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2019



People parade during the Tropical Carnival on July, 7 2019 in Paris. — AFP

Birds just wanna have fun: Like humans, cockatoos love to dance

Snowball, a sulphur-crested cockatoo, shot to YouTube stardom a decade ago for his uncanny ability to rock out to the Backstreet Boys. Now Snowball's back-alright! — having taught himself a dizzying array of new moves that might put you to shame, and have scientists excited about parrots' ability to process music and respond creatively. His rhythmic body-rolls, headbangs, shimmies, and many variations thereof were documented in a new paper published in *Current Biology* on Monday.



This handout from Irena Schulz at the Bird Lovers Only Rescue Service Inc shows Snowball the dancing cockatoo lifting a foot as he "dances" to music. — AFP

"This shows for the first time that another species truly dances to human music, spontaneously and without training, just based on its own development and social interaction with humans," senior author Aniruddh Patel, a psychologist at both Tufts and Harvard universities, told AFP. This isn't the first time Snowball has rendered his services for the noble pursuit of scientific discovery.

An earlier study by Patel in the same journal confirmed our feathered friend could groove to the beat-though at the time, his dancing was confined to head-bobbing and lifting his feet, actions long associated with courtship. Soon after, Snowball's owner Irena Schulz, who takes care of him at a bird sanctuary in Duncan, South Carolina, noticed he was making movements to music she hadn't seen before.

The development was all the more remarkable for the fact that she hadn't attempted to train him, save for providing some verbal encouragement with words like "Good Boy!" as she swayed back and forth and waved her hands. Had Snowball lifted his game to another level and taught himself some slick new moves? To answer this vital question, the scientists played him the 1980s classics "Another One Bites the Dust" and "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," each three times, for a total of 23 minutes.

The study's lead researcher, R. Joanne Jao Keehn, who is a cognitive neuroscientist as well as a classically and contemporarily trained dancer, then studied video footage frame-by-frame. She confirmed that he had indeed acquired a diverse repertoire of 14 distinct moves, and two combination moves. "Here, we're looking at highly complex movements, many of which are not part of natural parrot behavior," Patel told AFP, adding that this suggests cognitive planning of actions and the willingness to choose between alternatives to respond to a stimulus. "I wish I could dance like Snowball," he added.

Social context

While the internet is replete with videos of parrots dancing, suggesting Snowball's abilities are far from unique, the ability is notably absent from primates, our closest genetic relatives, and our close companions dogs. What sets parrots apart might be their unique capacity for complex vocal learning, which is then paired with other advanced cognitive abilities and the tendency to form long-term social bonds, the paper said. Looking ahead, Patel and his colleagues are keen to explore this social context and determine if Snowball dances to strengthen his bond with people.

"When it comes to dancing, people don't just dance by themselves. They typically seek out other people and they act socially," said Patel. To find out whether that is also true of Snowball, they are carrying out new experiments in which he is either left alone with music and recorded on camera; has a human present who doesn't encourage him; or has a human present who encourages him and dances along. — AFP

Egypt asks Interpol to trace Tutankhamun relic over ownership docs

Egypt has asked international police agency Interpol to track down a 3,000-year-old Tutankhamun artefact that was sold in London for \$6 million despite fierce opposition from Cairo, government officials said. Christie's auction house sold the 28.5-centimetre (11-inch) relic for £4,746,250 (\$5,970,000, 5,290,000 euros) to an unknown buyer in early July at one of its most controversial auctions in years. But less than a week after the sale, Egypt's National Committee for Antiquities Repatriation (NCAR) said after an urgent meeting that national prosecutors had asked Interpol "to issue a circular to trace" such artefacts over alleged missing paperwork.

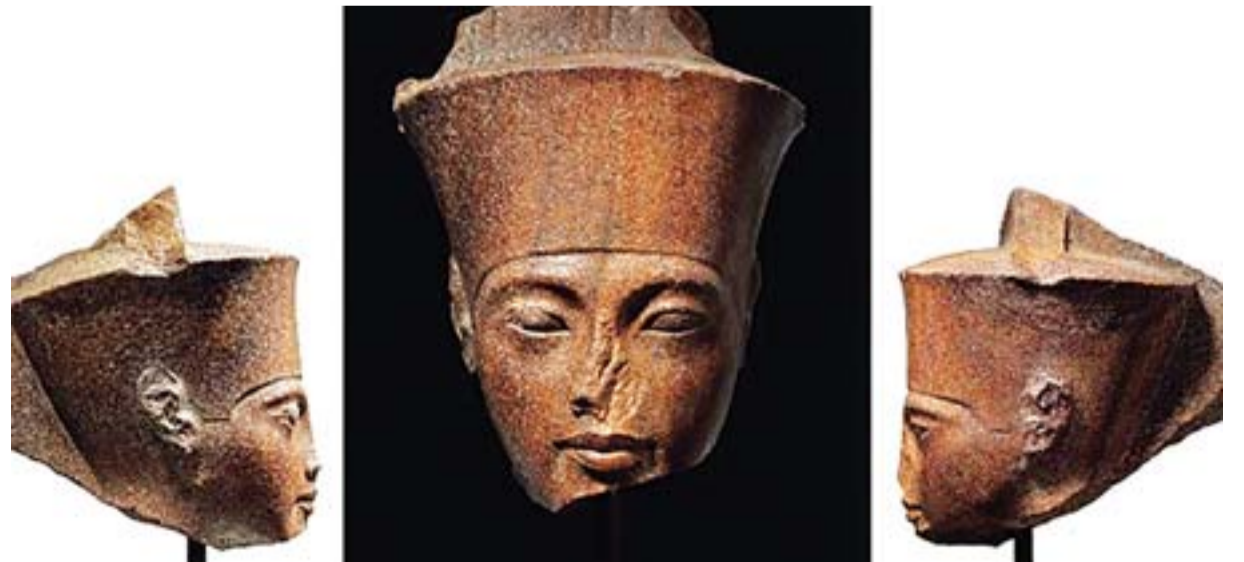
"The committee expresses its deep discontent of the unprofessional behaviour of the sale of Egyptian antiquities without providing the ownership documents and the evidences that prove its legal export from Egypt," the NCAR said in a statement. The committee-headed by Minister of Antiquities Khaled El-Enany and attended by his predecessor Zahi Hawass as well as officials from various ministries-also called upon Britain to "prohibit the export of the sold artefacts" until the Egyptian authorities were shown the documents. It suggested the issue could have an impact on cultural relations, by referencing "the ongoing cooperation between both countries in the field of archaeology, especially that there are 18 British archaeological missions are working in Egypt". The NCAR added

it had hired a British law firm to file a "civil lawsuit" although no further details were given.

'Stolen from Karnak'

The London sale of the head of "Boy King" Tutankhamun angered Egyptian officials at the time and sparked a protest outside Christie's by about a dozen people who held up signs reading "stop trading in smuggled antiquities". Hawass told AFP that the piece appeared to have been "stolen" in the 1970s from the Karnak Temple complex just north of Luxor and the Egyptian foreign ministry asked the UK Foreign Office and the UN cultural body UNESCO to step in and halt the sale.

But such interventions are rare and made only when there is clear evidence of the item's legitimate acquisition by the seller being in dispute. Christie's argued that Egypt had never before expressed the same level of concern about an item whose existence has been "well known and exhibited publicly" for many years. "The object is not, and has not been, the subject of an investigation," Christie's said in a statement to AFP. The auction house has published a chronology of how the relic changed hands between European art dealers over the past 50 years and told AFP that it would "not sell any work where there isn't clear title of ownership". — AFP



Black music fest halts double-price tickets for whites after uproar

A Detroit music festival cancelled plans to charge white people double the price for tickets paid by African-Americans and other non-whites late Sunday after an uproar over the policy. The AfroFuture Fest planned for August 3 originally announced that tickets for "people of color" would cost \$10 while those for "non-POC" or "white people," could cost \$20 if purchased early, and \$20 or \$40, respectively, if sold closer to the date of the festival. "Our ticket structure was built to insure that the most marginalized communities (people of color) are provided with an equitable chance at enjoying events in their own community (black Detroit)," they explained in a

festival announcement. But the policy drew sharp criticism from whites and some blacks, and a biracial Detroit rapper known as Tiny Jag announced she would not appear at the show because of the policy. That forced the organizers in the majority African-American city, a community group called Afrofuture Youth, to reverse course Sunday and set all ticket prices at \$20. Organizer Adrienne Ayers said the original pricing was set to "promote equity over equality" for blacks. "The ticket structure is set up to support the most marginalized. Often times when dope events happen in Detroit the cheapest tickets are bought and then sold by people not from the community (because) they can afford

them first, leaving higher price tickets as the only options left," she said on Twitter on July 2.

The policy was changed Sunday. Afrofuture Youth announced. "For the safety of our community, family, elders who received threats from white supremacists, & youth who were subjected to seeing racist comments" on social media. All tickets will be \$20, but the group suggests additional donations from "nonPOC" attendees. The controversy came amid growing talk of the US government and communities paying reparations to African Americans for centuries of slavery, discrimination and abuse. A leading advocate for reparations, Ta-

Nehisi Coates, told a hearing in Congress in June that African-Americans continue to suffer the consequences of that legacy. Today, he said, "The typical black family in this country has one-tenth the wealth of the typical white family."

"Black women die in childbirth at four times the rate of white women. And there is, of course, the shame of this land of the free boasting the largest prison population on the planet, of which the descendants of the enslaved make up the largest share." — AFP

Marilyn Manson hangs out with 'real deal' Machine Gun Kelly

Marilyn Manson hung out with Machine Gun Kelly after he told him he was a fan of his performance in the Motley Crue biopic 'The Dirt'. The "Tainted Love" singer has revealed he sent the 'Rap Devil' rapper a message on Instagram after he was impressed by his portrayal of drummer Tommy Lee in the Netflix movie and the pair recently hung out and watched films together. The shock rocker thinks Machine Gun - whose real name is Colson Baker - is "the real deal" and also revealed he's a big fan of another rapper, Lil Uzi Vert. Asked who he thinks "embodies rock 'n' roll" these days, he told Revolver magazine: "Well, you've got people like this guy I just met a couple weeks ago, Machine Gun Kelly - he's the real deal. And he's also a cool guy, and he was great in 'The Dirt', where he played Tommy Lee. And there's the other rappers that I'm friends with, guys like Lil

Uzi Vert and Bill Saber, who you should check out. I used his track "Creepin n Lurkin" as my intro music to walk out [to] on the last tour. I asked Lil Uzi Vert why he liked me. He has all these followers [on Instagram], but I was the only one he was following. And he said it was because he knew I was the real deal." And asked how they became friends, Manson said: "I sent him a message on Instagram, and told him that I liked his performance in 'The Dirt'. He said thanks, and asked me if I wanted to hang out, something like that. It was sort of me being a fan of his. And he came over, we watched some movies and got along, so it was cool." Manson also revealed his new "Southern" album - which he's been working on with outlaw country rock star Shooter Jennings - is "full of drama" and is like a "wax museum of [his] thoughts". Quizzed on whether the follow-up to 2017's 'Heaven Upside Down' has a name yet, he

said: "It's still to be determined, but I think it's the album that should be called Marilyn Manson. I'm in a mode in life where I wanted to tell stories with this record, and it's sort of like a wax museum of my thoughts, a study of the chamber of horrors in my head. "All the romance and hope you can have in the world, here in the End Times where it can be a different kind of apocalypse for each person listening to the record. I tried to paint it with words, and Shooter with sounds, so you can see and hear all of your longing, your passion and despair. That's sort of a dramatic explanation of it. [Laughs] But it is full of drama. I wouldn't compare it to any of my other records, but you hear a bit of everything - it's like I've focused everything into one spot, finally."



Boyle says Creation Stories was 'casting heaven'

Danny Boyle was in "casting heaven" with 'Creation Stories'. The 62-year-old filmmaker is serving as an executive producer on the upcoming biopic, which will bring to life the story of Creation Records boss Alan McGee, and has praised the movie's stellar cast - which includes 'Trainspotting' star Ewen Bremner as the music mogul - as well as Nick Moran, who is on board to helm the project. Speaking to Sky News, he said: "Nick Moran's making it, it's written by Irvine Welsh and his writing partner Dean Kavanagh, and they're people who I admire enormously. "But, they've also cast Ewen Bremner as Alan McGee, which is casting heaven. I can't think of a better piece of casting that I've ever heard." The movie will see 'Trainspotting' author Irvine Welsh reunite with Danny, who helmed the 1996 cult classic, as the 60-year-old writer has penned the screenplay based on Alan's book 'The Creation Records Story: Riots, Raves and Running a Label' with his partner Dean Kavanagh. The movie will tell the story of the record label owner as he signs the likes of Oasis, Primal Scream, My Bloody Valentine and Teenage Fanclub. The cast will also include Jason Fleming - who starred alongside Nick in the hit 1998 Guy Ritchie crime thriller 'Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels' - Rupert Everett and Suki Waterhouse. Steven Berkoff, Leo Flanagan, Ed Byrne, Paul Kaye, Thomas Turgoose, Rufus Jones, Perry Benson and Mel Raido have also joined the cast. In a statement, 'Filtch' author Irvine admitted he couldn't be happier to be writing the movie. He previously said: "I've been lucky to work with both Danny and Nick over the years and to have the two of



them together on this project, along with Ewen, feels like a lottery win." And Moran added: "Working as a team with Danny on this film is a dream... The last time him and Irvine worked together they changed the world of cinema. Who wouldn't be excited to be part of that team!"

Lambert's new album inspired by frustration at charts

Adam Lambert's new album 'Velvet' is "partially" inspired by him being "frustrated" with chart music. The 37-year-old pop star has admitted that he became fed up with the songs in the top 40 all sounding the same and so he started listening to alternative bands such as Tame Impala and The Black Keys and late music legend Prince. Speaking about the album's lead single 'New Eyes' and the rest of the record's influences on the 'Official Charts: Take The Hit' podcast, Adam said: "There's a little bit of Prince and there's a blues thing going on. "This song and the rest of the album is influenced partially by that, and partially by me seeing and playing the Top 40 game over the last 10 years and getting a little bit frustrated how everything starts to sound the same. So much of the industry tends to follow and copy. "I started listening to a lot more alternative music. "They might not be huge giant hits, but it's still widely regarded as great music and great bands." He added: "It's not necessarily about one song but about them as a group or artist and the big picture and their influence as an artist. "Bands like Tame Impala or The Black Keys ... they've had their moments with songs but they're known for creating a [certain] style of music that's in their own lane, and they've influenced a lot of other artists, including me." 'Velvet' is a two part release and so far Adam has released three singles, also including 'Comin In Hot' and 'Feel Something'. The first part of 'Velvet', 'Side A', is due out in September. It's the first studio effort from the 'American Idol' alumni - who will embark on an extensive North American stadium tour with Queen in 2020 - since 2015's 'The Original High'.



Blood Orange EP dropping this week

Dev Hynes is set to release new EP 'Angel's Pulse' under his Blood Orange moniker on Friday. The 32-year-old producer, who returned with the new album 'Negro Swan' last year, made the surprise announcement on Monday and revealed he has produced and mixed the mini album all by himself. Alongside the artwork, he wrote on Instagram: "'Angel's Pulse' (mixtape). Produced arranged & mixed by me. Friday 12th July (in 4 days) (sic)" Dev explained that he always has a bunch of tracks that never see the light of day after he releases an album and he usually doesn't bother releasing them, but this time he decided to let his fans hear the "epilogue" to his studio effort. He said in a statement: "I have a habit through the years of making records that I just give to friends, or on tape to people on the street, or no one. "Usually this material is made directly after the album I've just put out. "Somewhat of an epilogue to the thing I've made before. This time ... I decided to release it. "I put as much work and care into it as I do with the albums I've released, but for some reason trained myself into not releasing things the rate at which I make them. "I'm older now though, and life is unpredictable and terrifying ... so here you go mates." 'Negro Swan' focused on his difficult childhood growing up in Essex, England, as one of few African immigrants at the time. He said previously: "If 'Freetown' was delving into my parents from my eyes, being younger and now, this one is definitely me looking at my younger self, growing up in that setting. So yeah, it's a little dark." As well as releasing his own music, Dev has produced tracks for the likes of Charli XCX, Solange Knowles, Kylie Minogue and Haim. Dev plays Barclaycard presents British Summer Time Hyde Park on Saturday with Florence + The Machine.

Chastain reveals production has begun on 355

Jessica Chastain has confirmed production has started on spy thriller '355'. The 42-year-old actress will executive produce and star in the upcoming female-led ensemble movie, which will also feature the likes of Lupita Nyong'o, Penelope Cruz and Fan Bingbing, and the 'Molly's Game' star is excited that director Simon Kinberg has launched principal photography on the film. Sharing a video montage on Instagram of the actresses discussing the script, gun training and boxing she wrote: "Principal photography for @355movie has officially commenced! #High5for355 (sic)" Speaking in the video, the 'X-Men: Dark Phoenix' star said: "As Simon and I were doing 'X-Men', I had this idea of doing this female ensemble action film and called all the actresses and we are the studio. Everyone owns the film and now we're making it." The 'Help' actress previously teased that the new film - which recently added Sebastian Stan and Edgar Ramirez to its cast - will feature some "eye candy" for female viewers to enjoy much in the same way that the 007 franchise has its iconic Bond girls. When asked whether the film could have some hunky Bond boys, she said: "Oh yeah. We've got some eye candy. I'm going to allow the female audience to sit there and go, 'Wow, isn't he beautiful!' " '355' - which was written by Theresa Rebeck - will follow top agents from agencies around the world who are forced to co-operate with each other when a new threat emerges involving a weapon that could throw the world into total chaos. The new agency's numerical name is inspired by the codename of the one of the earliest spies in the American Revolution, a woman whose identity remains unknown to this day. — Bang Showbiz



Samuel L. Jackson joins Chris Rock's 'Saw' reboot

Samuel L. Jackson has joined the cast of Chris Rock's 'Saw' reboot. The 70-year-old actor will star alongside the 54-year-old comedian in the re-imagining of the \$1 billion horror franchise, which will be helmed by director Darren Lynn Bousman and will begin filming this week, according to Bloody Disgusting. It was previously announced that Chris had partnered with Lionsgate to create "a really intense and twisted" reboot of the series, which already comprises eight feature films and was created by James Wan and Leigh Whannell. Bousman, 40, previously teased that "no one is ready" for the "insanity" in the forthcoming remake. The filmmaker previously posted on Twitter: "Start shooting the new Saw film in just a few days. Something I never thought I be typing again! Gotta be honest. No one is ready for the insanity about to bleed out on screen!" The original series follows psychopathic serial killer John Kramer, known as the 'Jigsaw Killer' or 'Jigsaw', who traps his victims in horrifically perilous situations that he calls "games" to test their will to live through physical and psychological torment in a bid to rehabilitate them for their perceived sins. Announcing the reboot, Rock said: "I've been a fan of 'Saw' since the first film in 2004. I am excited by the opportunity to take this to a really intense and twisted new place." The Lionsgate motion picture group chairman Joe Drake, added: "This upcoming film will still be as mind-bending and intense as all the previous 'Saw' films. Chris conceived this idea and it will be completely reverential to the legacy of the material while reinvigorating the brand with his wit, creative vision and passion for this classic horror franchise." The remake is slated for release on Halloween 2020 and the screenplay will be penned by Pete Goldfinger and Josh Stolberg, who wrote the script for the eighth installment of the franchise, 'Jigsaw', based on a story by Rock.



Eilish praises 'idol' Lavinne

Billie Eilish says Avril Lavigne was her idol growing up. The 17-year-old singer has heaped praise on the 'Complicated' hitmaker - who has become a friend - and credited her with inspiring her to be unique through her music, along with the likes of Lana Del Rey, Childish Gambino and Tyler, the Creator. Speaking to the Daily Star newspaper's Wired column, she said: "Avril was everything to me. I love Avril. I only love her. There's nothing else there, just love. "There is almost no other artist like that. Her, Tyler, Gambino, [Justin] Bieber made me and Lana, probably. "They made e. I would not be me. [Avril] has my number though and she texts me sometimes, it's so cool. She'll be like: 'Hey babe it's Avril'. Oh my God." Meanwhile, the teenage pop superstar has already earned herself some famous fans with the likes of Thom Yorke and Sam Smith amongst those who enjoyed her chart topping debut album 'When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?' And most recently, Sir Elton John has spoken out to shower her with compliments as he said "talent like hers doesn't come along very often". The 'Your Song' star said: "Her album was amazing. She's come a long way very quickly. She's an incredible word-of-mouth artist. "I can't wait to see her live because she has something very special

going on. Talent like hers doesn't come along very often." However, the 'Bad Guy' singer previously admitted she nearly pulled her debut album on the eve of its release because she didn't want to be told how other people "feel about this thing I love". She explained: "[It's rare] to actually really care with what you make and create. I didn't want the world to be able to tell me how they feel about this thing I love."





This picture shows model Choi Soon-hwa (second left) and her colleagues during a modeling class at a model academy in Seoul. — AFP photos



Model Choi Soon-hwa (second right) and her colleagues during a modeling class at a model academy in Seoul.



Model Choi Soon-hwa (left) and her colleagues during a modeling class at a model academy in Seoul.

VINTAGE FASHION: SENIOR MODELS BRIDGE S KOREA'S AGE DIVIDE

Aged 70 she was working 20 hours a day in a hospital just to make ends meet. Now at 75, Choi Soon-hwa is an unlikely fashion star and model in South Korea, one of a handful of seniors who have become social media and fashion celebrities in a country where intergenerational conflict is mounting as the population ages. "I think of having this job at this age as a miracle," Choi says. She is now the oldest professional model in the South, and has walked runway at Seoul Fashion Week. It is a far cry from her life even just a few years ago when she was a care worker, forced to take long shifts often seven days a week.

"It was hard to even get myself lunch. The stress was excruciating—it was as if a volcano was about to erupt inside me," she confesses adding that she was in heavy debt and all her earnings were spent paying off loans. Around 45 percent live of older people in South Korea live in relative poverty and the country has one of the weakest social safety nets among developed nations. By chance Choi saw a TV commercial about senior models and saw an opportunity to make a change.

She decided to enroll in classes and was snapped by agency The Show Project and made catwalk debut soon after. When she worked at the hospital, she says she had to dye her hair as patients didn't want someone who "looked too old" to look after them. Now her pale locks have become an asset to a new generation of designers who value distinctiveness.

Life of hardship

"I make clothes for those in their 20s and early 30s," explains Kim Hee-jin, a 32-year-old designer who hired Choi for her Seoul Fashion Week show last year, where the senior model donned a bright purple padded jacket, red-flame tights and a dress adorned with an English-language obscenity. "There is something very unique about Choi—she has a quality that is different from anyone else (in her generation), and I thought it goes well with the kind of originality that I strive to achieve when making clothes," she adds.

This echoes a new-found trend in Western markets, where brands now choose models who reflect the diversity in society and social media. In the past five years, catwalks globally have seen greater age diversity and models

such as Jacky O'Shaughnessy, Jan de Villeneuve, and Elon Musk's mother Maye Musk, making names for themselves as fashion stars in their 60s and 70s. South Korea's elderly have lived through Japanese colonial rule, the Korean War, severe post-war poverty and the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis.

"This country was very poor when I was young," says

Demographic crisis

Today South boasts a 43 trillion won (US\$ 37 billion) fashion industry but Koreans aged 60 or older spend an average of 38,000 won (US\$33) a month on clothes and shoes, while those under 40 spend three times as much. Now in her mid-seventies, Choi says her generation had been "forcing themselves to be too frugal" and says now is

of working age set to soar, tensions are mounting. Usage of derogatory terms to describe senior citizens—such as teultakchung, meaning a "denture-wearing insect" and yeongeumchung, a "pensioner insect" —has become more common.

A study by the state-run Human Rights Commission found more than half of those aged 19-39 were worried



Model Choi Soon-hwa (third left) and her colleagues during a modeling class at a model academy in Seoul.



Model Choi Soon-hwa (right) during a modeling class at a model academy in Seoul.

Choi, who confesses she grew up admiring clothes worn by children at orphanages—children in such establishments in post-war South Korea were the beneficiaries of donations from the US. Her adult life was also one of hardship.

After her husband abandoned her and their two children—simply leaving home one day and never returning—she was forced to juggle working full time while being a lone parent in a nation that can be hostile to single mothers. "During my years as a single parent of two kids I would wear the same clothes for as long as 20 years," she adds.

the time to try and live her own life. Choi and other older celebrities have captured the imagination of South Korea's youth and garnered large numbers of acolytes online, providing a small link between generations that are increasingly divided both politically and socially.

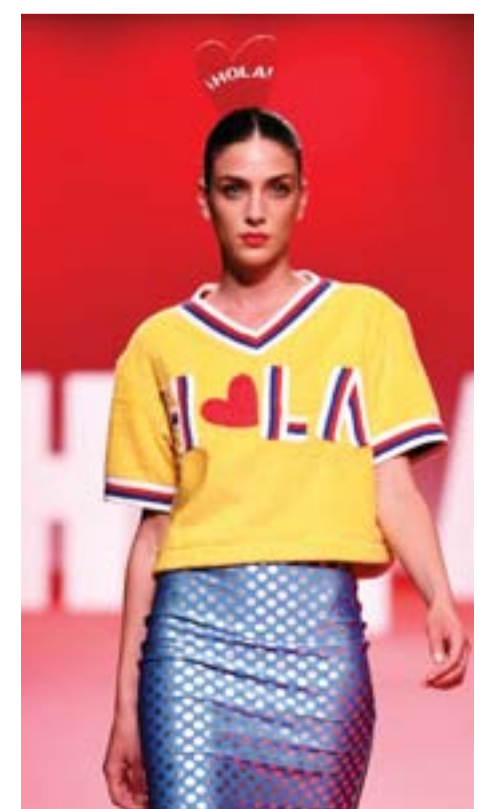
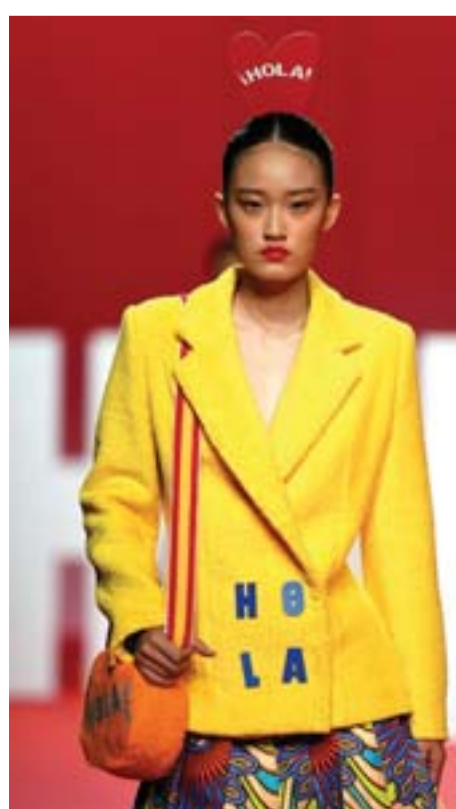
Fellow senior model Kim Chil-doo, age 64, has some 75,000 followers on Instagram, while 72-year-old Park Mak-rye, whose posts include make-up tips, is a YouTube sensation with more than 400,000 fans. But with the nation facing a demographic crisis, and the ratio of elderly to those

measures to encourage job creation for the old would reduce opportunities for the young. But for many older people, making a life change like Choi is not "even imaginable" says Michael Hurt, a sociologist at the University of Seoul. He adds: "Opening a social media account while photographically documenting yourself all the time isn't something they know even exists, let alone something that they would actually do." — AFP

The Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week



Spanish designer Agatha Ruiz De La Prada (center) acknowledges the audience after presenting creations from the Spring/Summer 2020 collection during the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in Madrid. — AFP photos



Lifestyle | Features

Story of writer Woolf's wild affair hits the big screen

Their love shocked and scandalized the English upper classes—two married women conducting an affair in front of their husbands. What is more, the novel that came out of their tempestuous relationship changed literature forever. Now a movie tells the story of novelist Virginia Woolf's all-consuming passion for her fellow writer and adventurer, Vita Sackville-West, who she immortalized as the gender-shifting, time-travelling hero of her masterpiece, "Orlando".

Which is why theirs is a romance for our gender fluid times, argues Chanya Button, the director of "Vita & Virginia". The aristocratic and bohemian poet Sackville-West was already famous when Woolf met her in 1925, a bestselling writer and free spirit notorious for her bisexual relationships with a string of other blue-blooded socialites. Despite her brilliance, Woolf was by contrast dogged by fragile mental health, tightly shepherded by her husband Leonard Woolf, with whom she had founded the Hogarth Press, which published the poet T. S. Eliot and the first English translations of Freud. Yet when they came together there was a spark that pushed both on to create some of their very best work, Button told AFP.

Free living and loving

Virginia introduced Vita to the free-living and -loving Bloomsbury set, the hugely influential group of artists and intellectuals that also included E.M. Forster, the



Chanya Button, the British writer-director behind 'Vita & Virginia'.

economist John Maynard Keynes and the trail-blazing biographer Lytton Strachey. British filmmaker Button said she wanted to make "an adult love story" about two women "in the chaos and intoxication of falling in love and negotiating that through their marriages." "So many of the films about love I grew up with feel adolescent," she added. "They are all about the getting together.

"I wanted to make a mature love story, to explore how they lived the relationship in regard to their marriages. They were both women who broke all the rules—in Virginia's case the whole form of the novel—so I had to break the rules of period drama in my own small way. Period dramas are usually about a lovely chat in a lovely room. I tried to make it be about how it felt." Button also paints a sympathetic portrait of the pair's husbands, the rather upright political theorist Woolf and the debonair bisexual writer and diplomat Harold Nicolson. "There are some historians who say that Leonard Woolf was very controlling. But I think he had an incredibly progressive approach to supporting her mental health. "In order to remain healthy Virginia needed a particular routine and her husband was a huge part of that.

'Captivating and earthy'

"As for Vita and Harold Nicolson, they loved each other so much. There was a long and great marriage," Button said. "They both had needs and desires outside the confines of a heterosexual marriage and they let each other have the freedom to have those relationships. They had their open, unconventional marriages, but they had feelings about it. They weren't robots. "Harold had struggles with the relationship with Virginia," and Leonard Woolf suffered too, as Button discovered when she read one of his letters.

"He talks about jealousy and says that he doesn't recognize it as an emotion. 'Wow!' I thought as I read it. "If you need to know only one thing about a person, that is him," she added. Woolf clearly realized that Vita was essential for his wife's creative life, Button believed. "You can understand how Vita was muse-like to Virginia because she was incredibly captivating and earthy, and her body was there for her in a way that Virginia's wasn't." But their passion helped free her.

Vita's son, the writer Nigel Nicolson, later described Woolf's "Orlando" as "the longest and most charming love letter in literature". Button used CGI in the film to reproduce "the moments when Virginia broke from reality", often prompted by Vita, when her mind walked the thin "boundary between vulnerability and creativity. She wobbles but she also has a brilliant idea," the director said, adding that she tried "to capture the full 'Technicolor' of the instances Woolf described, those 'vulnerable moments sometimes we are most alive'. It's not the first time Virginia Woolf has been depicted on film. Nicole Kidman won a best actress Oscar for her portrayal of the groundbreaking novelist in the 2002 psychodrama "The Hours". — AFP

'Operaholic' Domingo powers into record books

When Peter Gelb took over New York's legendary Metropolitan Opera in 2006, one of his jobs was to organise a farewell for Plácido Domingo. But 13 years later the indefatigable Spanish tenor is still "the king of opera", headlining France's oldest musical festival at Orange at the weekend. "Since it was unimaginable that he could possibly be singing for much longer after an unmatched Met career that was soon to span four decades of starring roles," Gelb told AFP, "one of the responsibilities I was preparing for was Plácido's farewell." With many singers' voices withering by the time they hit their forties, the unfailingly modest 78-year-old has somehow managed to keep performing at the top level. "Instead of retiring, Plácido apparently discovered his own fountain of youth, reinventing himself as a baritone," Gelb said.

'Impossible to achieve again'

"This past season, we held ceremonies for Plácido on several occasions in honor of his five decades of leading roles on the stage of the Met—an accomplishment that is impossible to imagine ever being achieved again," Gelb added. Indeed the singer, who was one of the Three Tenors alongside Luciano Pavarotti and Jose Carreras, set a new record in May by singing his 151th role. A month earlier he had celebrated his 4,000th performance in a career that stretches back 60 years. But Domingo knows he has to look after himself, cancelling interviews after rehearsals on Friday in the southern French town of Orange to preserve his voice having recently pulled out of appearing in "La Traviata" in Munich.

He was in Orange for a "Spanish Night" to celebrate zarzuela, the particularly Hispanic music theatre genre which his parents—both singers themselves—did so much

to preserve. Backstage at the ancient Roman theatre, he joked and chatted with the dancers from the Antonio Gades company who were also taking part in the show.

Punishing schedule

But even for a man half his age, his schedule is punishing. In July alone, as well as Orange, he will sing the title role in "Simon Boccanegra" at Baden-Baden in Germany, then star in Verdi's "Giovanna d'Arco" (Joan of Arc) at the Teatro Real in Madrid, before moving on to Prague for Operalia, the international opera competition he founded in 1993. Domingo will finish the month in Verona's ancient theatre singing "La Traviata".

"Even though he is near 80, as far as Plácido is concerned, there is still no hard stop in sight," Gelb told AFP. "We recently planned performances for him through the 2021/22 season. But that doesn't stop him for pressing for even more roles in the future." "As Plácido gently points out, the house is always fuller when he is performing on our stage... Indeed, it's a successful argument for letting Plácido call the shots as far into the future as he wishes," he added.

'Operaholic'

Glorying in being called an "operaholic" in the United States, where he has spent most of his later career as director general of both the Washington and Los Angeles operas, Domingo has made more than 100 albums and picked up 14 Grammy awards. "Besides his record longevity, Plácido's place in opera history is secure as one of the greatest dramatic tenor voices of all time," Gelb said of the singer, who grew up in Mexico singing with his parents' zarzuela company, playing the piano as an accompanist to supplement his income. — AFP



Spanish opera singer Plácido Domingo, 78, performs on stage during the dress rehearsal of 'Spanish Night' at the 150th Choregie in Orange. — AFP



Heather Unruh (right) and her family leave the court house after a pre-trial hearing in the Kevin Spacey sexual assault case at Nantucket District Court in Nantucket, Massachusetts. — AFP

Sexual assault case against Kevin Spacey on shaky ground

Kevin Spacey may avoid trial for sexual assault, as the case against him suffered a serious blow Monday when his accuser declined to testify due to fear of self-incrimination. William Little accused the actor of groping him in a Massachusetts bar in July 2016. The actor, 59, was charged in January with indecent assault and battery. The Massachusetts District Court judge for Nantucket, the posh island community where the alleged aggression took place, called on Little Monday to testify. Spacey was not present in the court.

But Little chose to plead the Fifth Amendment, which allows citizens not to testify so as not to incriminate themselves, after it was revealed his cell phone—a key piece of evidence in the case—may have been compromised. Little has said he took a smartphone video of the incident, which he says took place when he was an 18-year-old busboy in a Nantucket bar and restaurant. The smartphone images, which Little said he shared with a then-girlfriend and a group of friends, allegedly show Spacey shoving his hand into the teen's pants and fondling him.

But the phone—which the defense wanted to examine—has disappeared, as confirmed by Little and his parents, who were also called upon to testify Monday. A police officer said he returned the phone to the family after extracting all the information but admitted he neglected to ask for a receipt upon return. The family said they never received the phone. Interrogated at length about what he did with the phone and the messages on it, Little insisted that he had not deleted anything.

But when warned that manipulating the information on the phone could result in charges being brought against him, Little pled the fifth. Little's mother Heather Unruh, a television news anchor known in the Boston area, admitted she had deleted some potentially embarrassing photos before giving the phone to the police but said she had not erased anything related to the alleged assault. Spacey's lawyer Alan Jackson insinuated that text messages from Little—who was a fan of the actor—that implied his consent in the situation had been deleted. "This entire case is completely compromised," said Jackson.

"This case needs to be dismissed and it needs to be dismissed today." Although the judge did not make a decision, Spacey's defense team added it would promptly request that the case be dropped. The prosecution did not rule dropping the case, but asked the judge for a week to decide. Spacey has insisted on his innocence in the matter. The charges carry a penalty of up to five years in prison.

The allegation of sexual misconduct against the two-time Oscar winner was one of more than a dozen to emerge since 2017 in the wake of the #MeToo movement—in both the United States and Britain—with devastating effect on his acting career. He was dropped from the cast of the popular "House of Cards" series and from a leading role in director Ridley Scott's "All the Money in the World," Christopher Plummer was brought in as a last-second replacement. — AFP

German producer of 'Europa, Europa' Brauner dead at 100

One of postwar Germany's most successful film producers, Holocaust survivor Artur Brauner, has died in Berlin aged 100, Culture Minister Monika Grütters said. Brauner, a Jew born in Poland, made more than 500 pictures for the cinema and television, including masterpieces grappling with the Nazi past such as 1990's "Europa, Europa". "Germany has lost one of the most important film producers of the young federal republic," Grütters said after Brauner's death in Berlin on Sunday.



In this file photo German film producer Artur 'Atze' Brauner arrives on the red carpet upon arrival at the Berlinale Palace for the opening ceremony of the 68th Berlinale film festival with the premiere of 'Isle of Dogs'. — AFP

"The fact that he, as a once persecuted Polish Jew, went to the country of his family's murderers after World War II to produce films and commit himself to working toward Germany's democratic reconstruction was truly a gift for our country." Born in 1918 in Lodz as the son of a wood merchant, Brauner escaped death in the Nazi extermination camps by hiding in the Soviet Union, one of 800 survivors out of 250,000 Jews from Lodz. But 49 members of his extended family were murdered. Sensing an opportunity to revive the legendary German cinema of the pre-war Weimar Republic, Brauner went to Berlin in the 1946 and started the CCC production company in the city's American occupied sector. On the way to Germany he met his future wife Maria, a Jewish girl from Warsaw travelling on a fake passport. She died last year aged 92.

'Gave the dead a voice'

Among his biggest successes was the US-style Western series Winnetou, beloved by generations of Germans. "I produced more films than anyone else around the world. And I knew them all," he said, referring to the greats of international cinema, Berlin daily Der Tagesspiegel quoted him as saying. The success of his early crowd pleasers allowed him to finance wrenching dramas that dealt with German guilt and remembrance of the six million Jews slaughtered by the Nazis. "Europa, Europa" by Polish director Agnieszka Holland told the story of a Jewish orphan who survives the Holocaust by masquerading as a Nazi. It became an international art-house hit. — AFP

Infiniti Al Babtain art gallery event displays local artists handiworks
'Depicting culture infused with authentic creativity mesmerize audiences'

Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain Co. (AABC), the authorized dealer for Infiniti vehicles in the State of Kuwait recently held its second art exhibition within the Infiniti showroom located in Al Rai.

The unique collection of paintings that decorated the showroom were installed next to the vehicles to present an artistic backdrop to the powerful and elegant Infiniti models. Distinctive in style and expression, participating Kuwaiti artists, Suzan Bushnaq, Suhaila Al-Najdi, Mohammed Al-Kouh and Abdel Hamid Al-Rabah showcased their masterpieces, which were filled with a blend of radiant colors and lines. The paintings depicted the Arabian culture and people, infused with calligraphy and abstract art forms.

Infiniti is more than merely a company that makes cars. It is an organization rooted in a passion to create automobiles with

significance beyond their physical presence. Infiniti is a globally recognized luxury auto brand with a unique vision - one that is bold, vibrant and distinctive.

The Infiniti showroom that is conveniently located in Al-Rai area, marks the triumphant combination for the brand identity. It is given a unique character with its sleek lines and artful luxury expression that fosters privacy and makes it a true masterpiece in the region. The indoor design elements embrace the artful expression of refined power, state of the art responsiveness and ownership experience. Everything was designed to exceed customers' expectations. From the first moment, customers enter the INFINITI showroom or service center they will experience the sleek lines and appealing contours of luxury automobiles.



Classifieds

Wednesday, July 10, 2019

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 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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 Fax: (+965) 24348714
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 40 km/h.

BY NIGHT: Hot to relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 32 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 09/07/2019 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	47 °C	36 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	47 °C	30 °C			
ABDALY	47 °C	29 °C			
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C			
JAHRA	48 °C	32 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	47 °C	30 °C			
SALMIYAH	45 °C	35 °C			
AHMADI	46 °C	36 °C			
NUWAISIB	45 °C	32 °C			
WAFRA	47 °C	31 °C			
SALMY	47 °C	29 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	07/10	Very hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas	47 °C	31 °C	NW	12 - 42 km/h
Thursday	07/11	Very hot	48 °C	33 °C	NW	12 - 40 km/h
Friday	07/12	Very hot with a chance for rising dust	48 °C	33 °C	NW	15 - 45 km/h
Saturday	07/13	Very hot and rising dust	47 °C	34 °C	NW	20 - 55 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:22
Sunrise	04:56
Zuhr	11:53
Asr	15:27
Sunset	18:51
Isha	20:22

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	48 °C
MIN. Temp.	36 °C
MAX. RH	21 %
MIN. RH	06 %
MAX. Wind	N 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MARIA JOSEFINA BARRETO, OLD NAME R/O H.N.O. 989 BELBHAT CHORAO TISWADI NORTH GOA HAVE CHANGED FROM MARIA VAZ TO MARIA JOSEFINA BARRETO HEREINAFTER IN ALL MY DEALINGS AND DOCUMENTS I WILL BE KNOWN AS MARIA JOSEFINA BARRETO.

I, CONCEICAO FREDI VAS, R/O H.N.O. 989 BELBHAT CHORAO TISWADI NORTH GOA 403102 HAVE CHANGED FROM CONCEICAO FREDY VAZ TO CONCEICAO FREDI VAS. HEREINAFTER IN ALL MY DEALINGS AND DOCUMENTS I WILL BE KNOWN AS CONCEICAO FREDI VAS.

I, MARGARIDA CARON VAS, R/O H.N.O. 989 BELBHAT CHORAO TISWADI NORTH GOA 403102 HAVE CHANGED FROM MARGARIDA CARON VAS. HEREINAFTER IN ALL MY DEALINGS AND DOCUMENTS I WILL BE KNOWN AS MARGARIDA CARON VAS. (C 5657)

I, SUSAN JOHN (given name) holder of Indian Passport No. 53697819 do hereby change my name to SUSAN JOHN (given name) MATHEWS (surname) for all purposes. I also undertake to effect the change in all my other public documents. (C 5658)

The public is hereby notified that NIKKI ANGEL ANDALLO INES has filed with the Embassy of Republic of the Philippines, State of Kuwait, a Migrant

petition for Change of First Name of her daughter, from AMIRA ANDALLO INES to AMIRA in the Report of Birth filed with the Embassy on 16th July 2018 under Registry number ROB-KT-1974-2018. Passport No. P7973187A. Any person having knowledge and/or claiming interest or may be adversely affected by the said petition, file a written opposition with the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait within ten (10) working days. (C 5659)

I, Samson Glateena Elsa, (Given name: Samson and Sur name: Glateena Elsa) holder of Indian Passport No. T4010890 wish to correct my name as (given name) Glateena Elsa (Surname) Samson. Hereinafter in all my documents, my name will appear as Glateena Elsa Samson. (C 5660)

8-7-2019

EMERGENCY



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Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is

1889988

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:

Call MSALHOTLINE

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

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 10/7/2019				Departure Flights on Wednesday 10/7/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	RBG	554	Alexandria	13:10
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	JZR	115	Doha	13:25
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	MSR	611	Cairo	13:45
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KAC	102	London	00:50	RJA	645	Amman	14:15
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	CLX	7912	Hanoi	14:20
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	RBG	218	Asyut	14:35
MSR	633	Alexandria	01:35	FDB	8192	Dubai	14:50
KLM	446	Dubai	01:40	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	191	Tbilisi	15:00
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
JZR	262	Beirut	02:05	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	JZR	103	Bahrain	15:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
THY	1404	AYT	02:45	JZR	125	Dubai	15:50
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	KAC	563	Amman	16:00
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	KZCH	405	Kochi	16:00
JZR	502	Lahore	02:55	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:55	KAC	775	Riyadh	16:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:20
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	KAC	619	Doha	16:25
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	FEG	242	Alexandria	16:55
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:55
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	SVA	505	Madinah	17:00
KAC	796	Madinah	04:25	FDB	052	Dubai	17:10
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
KAC	382	Delhi	04:55	KAC	155	Istanbul	17:35
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:40
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	KAC	503	Beirut	17:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	KAC	343	Chennai	17:50
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	381	Delhi	17:55
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	SAW	706	Damascus	18:00
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	OMS	226	Muscat	18:00
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	615	Bahrain	18:10
JZR	708	Luxor	06:15	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:10
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	KAC	127	Alexandria	18:15
KAC	714	Sohag	06:20	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	JZR	127	Dubai	18:20
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	JZR	733	Cairo	18:35
MSR	601	Cairo	07:00	JZR	253	Amman	19:10
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	JZR	261	Beirut	19:10
IGO	1755	CNN	07:10	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	FDB	064	Dubai	19:45
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	354	Bengaluru	08:00	KAC	331	Trivandrum	19:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	RJA	641	Amman	20:05
JZR	706	Asyut	08:25	KAC	351	Kochi	20:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:30
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
GFA	209	Bahrain	09:05	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:40
KAC	384	Delhi	09:10	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:50
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:15	DLH	624	Dammam	20:55
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	RBG	1155	Alexandria	21:20
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	10:00	MSC	402	Alexandria	21:30
SYR	341	Damascus	10:00	RBG	214	Sohag	21:35
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:50
JZR	252	Amman	10:20	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
JZR	1736	Cairo	11:05	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
JZR	114	Doha	11:10	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KIS	6032	Mashhad	11:30	THY	1413	Trabzon	22:25
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
TBZ	6605	Mashhad	11:55	UAE	860	Dubai	22:40
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	JZR	407	Ahmedabad	22:40
JZR	410	Delhi	12:00	KAC	547	Alexandria	22:45
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:30	KAC	551	Cairo	23:00
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:00
MSR	610	Cairo	12:45	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
CLX	7912	Luxembourg	12:45	JAV	622	Amman	23:15
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				SVA	515	Riyadh	23:25
				SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45
				JZR	701	Asyut	23:45



A heifer jumps over revellers in the bullring after the second bull run at the San Fermin festival in Pamplona, northern Spain on Monday. On each day of the festival, six bulls are released at 8:00 am (0600 GMT) to run from their corral through the narrow, cobbled streets of the old town over an 850-m course. Ahead of them are the runners, who try to stay close to the bulls without falling over or being gored. — AFP

Firm microchips bed sheets after cleaning scandals

BEIJING: Bugs in the bed might be the last thing guests want from a hotel stay, but a new microchipping service in China that tracks every sheet and towel has proved popular online. A laundry service catering to hotels in the central Chinese city of Wuhan has started installing wafer-thin microchips on bed sheets, pillow covers and towels - allowing travellers to scan a QR code on each item and check precisely when it was last washed. The service, which also allows management to track each individual item, has become an online hit following a series of recent scandals over poor hygiene at high-end hotels.

The Ritz-Carlton in Shanghai and other five-star establishments in China - including The Peninsula in Beijing and the Waldorf Astoria Shanghai - were forced to apologize last November after a video exposing unhygienic cleaning practices viral online. The clip, which quickly racked up tens of millions of

views, showed cleaning staff wiping down in-room cups with the same towels and sponges used to clean showers and toilets.

On social media, people broadly welcomed the Wuhan laundry's move with many calling for the system to be rolled out nationwide. "This system needs to be implemented throughout the country," wrote one user on China's Twitter-like microblogging site Weibo. "I take my own bed sheets every time I travel. Once I got a bad rash after a hotel stay and was covered in red spots."

But some were more skeptical, saying the QR code could be easily damaged or data in the chip could be tampered with. "What's the point in knowing how many times a bed sheet has been washed or the time when it was last in a washing machine without knowing whether the sheet was actually changed after the previous customer checked out?" wrote another.

Last year 79 of Wuhan's 110 commercial laundries were shut down after being deemed substandard by government inspections, state-run Xinhua news agency reported, citing an unnamed official from the city's economic planning body. The chips can withstand temperatures of up to 180 degrees Celsius and be washed 200 times, according to Bluesky TRS, the Beijing-based company that developed the technology. — AFP

Perot, billionaire who sought US...

Continued from Page 1

Disenchanted that his bosses did not like his ideas, Perot started his own company, Electronic Data Systems Inc in Dallas, a move that would make him a billionaire by age 38 by handling data processing for customers such as the Medicare system, NASA and other government entities. When General Motors bought controlling interest in EDS in 1984, Perot became the largest single shareholder of the world's largest corporation. But he quickly clashed with top GM officials and two years later was paid \$900 million to quit the GM board and relinquish control of EDS.

In 1988 Perot started another data company, Perot Systems Corp. He took time off from the company for his political forays but when he returned to it in 1998 he saw the company's profits nearly quadruple and long-term debt slashed by about half. He turned the company over to son Ross Jr and Dell bought it in

2009 for \$3.9 billion.

Perot said he liked to hire military veterans, especially those with combat experience, because of their leadership ability and ability to deal with pressure. American prisoners of war and those listed as missing in action in the Vietnam War became a key issue for Perot and he made several trips to Vietnam on their behalf. At the Perot Systems headquarters he kept mementoes, including his childhood bicycle and a walking stick believed to have belonged to Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

One section of the building was dedicated to the rescue of two EDS workers imprisoned in Tehran on suspicion of bribery before the shah of Iran was overthrown in 1978. According to the non-fiction book "On Wings of Eagles" by Ken Follett, an Iranian EDS employee helped lead a revolutionary mob's attack on the prison, allowing the EDS employees to escape. They were then sneaked out of the country, along with other EDS employees.

In 1984, Perot's foundation purchased a copy of the Magna Carta dating to 1297 for \$1.5 million. It was sold in 2007 for \$21.3 million. Perot's survivors include his wife, Margot, who he married in 1956. They had five children. — Agencies

cialists including Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri have predicted a promising summer for tourism this year.

"The numbers of people travelling to Lebanon in first six months of 2019 are very encouraging," Guidanian said yesterday. More people were arriving from Europe and Gulf states including Saudi Arabia, which lifted its travel warning against citizens going to Lebanon this year, the minister said. Guidanian said the expected rise in tourists would bring in big revenues which Lebanon direly needed. "Imagine if we stopped shooting ourselves in the foot - the politicians I mean." — Agencies

US puts Hezbollah lawmakers on...

Continued from Page 1

added to the sector's woes. The slump in tourism has played a part in years of weak economic growth and a hike in the huge public debt, which the government now pledges tough reforms to bring under control. As relations with Gulf Arab states and security improved, offi-

Instagram rolls out new AI features to...

Continued from Page 1

The other new feature - "Restrict" - is aimed at limiting abusive comments on a user's feed. "We've heard from young people in our community that they're reluctant to block, unfollow, or report their bully because it could escalate the situation, especially if they interact with their bully in real life," Mosseri said. Now they will be able to make posts from an offending person visible only to that person. "Restricted people won't be able to see when you're active on Instagram or when you've

read their direct messages," Mosseri added.

Instagram's move is the latest in a series of steps taken by social networks to protect users, especially from younger segments of society. According to a survey published by the Pew Research Center last year, 72 percent of US teenagers said they used Instagram. Bullying is just one of the many fronts on which social media titans have faced scrutiny in recent years.

There have been growing calls for regulation of such platforms over the spread of hate speech and fake news - including allegations of states using social media to try and influence elections in rival countries - as well as more oversight of how they collect and use customer data. Firms like Facebook, in response, have rolled out policy changes and features aimed at increasing transparency and safety. — AFP

Ransomware hits hard; cyber attacks...

Continued from Page 1

This so-called "business email compromise" resulted in some \$1.3 billion in losses last year, according to the report.

The annual report aggregates data from security firms such as Symantec and Trend Micro, law enforce-

ment agencies including the FBI, and international organizations. Among the high-profile data breaches were the 1.1 billion records of Aadhaar, India's national ID database, and the attack on the Marriott/Starwood hotel chain which impacted 383 million people.

Wilbur said that while some incidents show growing skills of attackers, the methods have been consistent over the years - generally inducing someone to respond or click on false pretenses. "The way they get in continues to be relatively constant," he said. "You hear about super-sophisticated attacks and for the most part they are not that sophisticated. For the most part they could have been prevented." — AFP

Trump slams May's 'foolish policies,' ...

Continued from Page 1

Kim Darroch - and by default his prime minister - in Trump's crosshairs.

If the US president initially reacted with restraint over the cables' weekend publication, the tone has changed and heated passions do not seem about to subside. "The wacky Ambassador that the U.K. foisted upon the United States is not someone we are thrilled with, a very stupid guy," Trump tweeted Tuesday, mirroring a furious barrage of insults the day before. The US president's early morning wrath was not solely reserved for Darroch, however. Trump doubled down in attacking May and her fraught Brexit negotiations, saying he told her "how to do that deal, but she went her own foolish way - was unable to get it done. A disaster!"

London has been scrambling to stem the damage caused by the leaked documents, in which Darroch described the US leader as "inept" and his White House as "uniquely dysfunctional". Visibly angered by May's continuing support for her ambassador - which Downing Street reiterated on Monday - Trump welcomed the prime minister's impending departure from office. "The good news for the wonderful United Kingdom is that they will soon have a new Prime Minister," he wrote Monday, declaring that he would have no further contact with Darroch.

By yesterday, Trump was demanding that Darroch "speak to his country, and Prime Minister May, about their

failed Brexit negotiation, and not be upset with my criticism of how badly it was handled". The cables' publication in the Mail on Sunday newspaper came just a month after Trump enjoyed a state visit to Britain punctuated by a 41-gun salute at Buckingham Palace and a banquet dinner with the queen. The incident threatens to complicate London's efforts to strike a new trade agreement with the United States, seen as key to mitigating potential damage from Britain's withdrawal from the European Union. It also comes as British politics are in for a major revamp once May ends her three-year spell in power later this month.

British officials defended Darroch as carrying out his duties by providing "frank" accounts of developments in Washington. "We have made clear to the US how unfortunate this leak is. The selective extracts leaked do not reflect the closeness of, and the esteem in which we hold, the relationship," the government spokesperson said. Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said the culprit, if identified, would face "very serious consequences".

The immediate suspicion of the London papers fell on Brexit-backing players in a power struggle within the governing Conservative Party. Former foreign minister Boris Johnson, a hardliner on Brexit, is the favorite to replace May in a leadership contest against Hunt. During a stop at the Manchester airport, Johnson told reporters he had "no embarrassment" in saying he had a good relationship with the White House.

"I think it's very important that we have a strong relationship with our most important ally," he said, adding that he himself had been critical of the Brexit negotiations. "That's one of the reasons I am standing tonight and one of the reasons I am putting myself forward," he said. "I think there is a chance to do things differently, a chance to break away from the failed old can-kicking approaching." — AFP

Sports

Women World Cup victory a 'big win' for gay community

Final draws 14.3 million US viewers, but misses record

WASHINGTON: The US women's soccer team's 2019 World Cup victory is an especially huge win for the line-up's gay players, who have spoken proudly of their sexual orientation in a sport where homosexuality is still a taboo. "Go gays!" cheered Megan Rapinoe, the US team's star striker, who was awarded the Golden Boot and Golden Ball and who scored one of the side's winning goals in the final on Sunday. "You can't win a championship without gays on your team—it's never been done before, ever. That's science, right there!" she quipped.

The line may have been tongue in cheek, but it still carried a lot of significance, noted Dawn Ennis of Outsports, a media outlet specializing in sexual minorities in sports. "Being authentic, being yourself, being true, makes you a better person," Ennis said. "It must make you a better athlete when you are not worrying about hiding a secret about who you are."

Football federations "need to make sure that players are their authentic selves," said Ryan Adams, president of the North American Gay Soccer Association, which pushes for the inclusion of members of the LGBTQ community in US soccer. "It's in their own interest, when people are their own authentic selves, they are not distracted about being in the closet," he said. Rapinoe is far from being the only openly gay member of the team. As well as coach Jill Ellis, five of the American world champions are lesbians, including Ashlyn Harris and Ali Krieger, who are engaged and are soon to marry.

Their defeated opponents, the Netherlands, also had five lesbian players in their line-up. According to Outsports, around 40 of the women who played in the World Cup are members of the LGBTQ community. Adams said the trend would only continue to grow: "They showed other countries that have closeted people and athletes that you can be your most authentic self and play among the best. It does amazing things for visibility."

Where are the men?

That visibility—partly due to the 2019 World Cup coinciding with massive Gay Pride parades around the world—was enhanced by the fact that the tournament was the most-watched in the history of women's soccer. "I'm motivated by people like me, who are fighting for the same things," said Rapinoe. "I take more energy from that than from trying to prove anyone wrong. That's draining on yourself. But for me, to be gay and fabulous, during Pride month at the World Cup, is nice." "What's amazing is that the women who are out are not only out, they are out and loud and proud," said Ennis. "They are owning their identity and their orientation."

Does that mean the US will now be ready to totally accept gay players? Adams thinks that it is well on the way, although powerful stereotypes still remain. "In the US, there is an unfortunate assumption that very good athletes are lesbian. It's unfair and it's untrue," he said. For men, there is a different standard. French star Antoine Griezmann said recently that male "players do not come out of the closet because they are afraid," a fact borne out by homophobic comments on social media and chants in the stadiums.

"There are a lot of bad people in football and players can be afraid to go to stadiums and get abused," Griezmann said in an interview. "We know there are gay and bisexual men in sports, but there is a double standard," said Ennis. The number of professional male footballers around the world still playing after coming out as gay can easily be counted on the fingers of one hand. And the men's World Cup last year had no openly gay players on the pitch.

Misses record

More than 14 million Americans watched on television as the US women's soccer team clinched their fourth World Cup title, broadcaster Fox said on Monday, but the TV audience failed to break records. Sunday's match in Lyon, France, in which the United



RHONE: United States' forward Megan Rapinoe poses with the Golden Ball next to United States' midfielder Rose Lavelle with the Bronze Ball after the France 2019 Women's World Cup football final match between USA and the Netherlands on July 7, 2019. — AFP

States beat the Netherlands 2-0, was seen by 14.3 million Americans on Fox and its cable sport channels, the broadcaster said.

The record for the most-watched soccer match in US history is held by the 2015 Women's World Cup final between the United States and Japan, which was played in Canada. That match drew a television audience of 25.4 million Americans, according to Nielsen data. Sunday's television viewing figures do not include audiences in bars and those who watched on large outdoor screens across the United States.

Fox said that across streaming platforms, Sunday's final delivered an average minute audience of 289,000 viewers, making it the most-streamed Women's World Cup final in history. The television audience reflected surging popularity for soccer in the United States, where interest in the sport has lagged behind American football, baseball and basketball. In Britain, almost 12 million people tuned in to watch England's 2-1 defeat by the United States last week, making it the most watched television program of the year so far in Britain. — Agencies

Briton, American injured in Spain's Pamplona bull run

PAMPLONA: Half-ton fighting bulls knocked over thrill-seekers yesterday in a fast, adrenaline-fuelled chase through the winding streets of Pamplona in northern Spain that sent an American and a Briton to hospital. There were no gorings but a 49-year-old British man fractured his ankle, requiring surgery, and a

42-year-old man from Chicago suffered a head injury in a fall although he was expected to be discharged from hospital later on, regional health officials said.

Six bulls and six steers that keep the herd together, charged through the narrow, cobbled streets of the city, clearing a path through a sea of hundreds of runners mostly dressed in white with red handkerchiefs around their necks in the third bull run of the famed San Fermin festival.

The bulls from the Jose Escolar Gil ranch in the central province of Avila completed the 848.6-metre (928-yard) course from a holding pen to the city bull ring in two minutes and 13 seconds, the fastest run so far this year. They were to be killed in bullfights later. Some people sought safety by crowding close to the walls of the winding route but others dared to touch the rear of

the bulls or to race a few steps in front of the sharp horns. Two Americans and a Spaniard were on Sunday gored in the first run, which is usually the most crowded of the festival. All three remain in hospital.

People from around the world flock to the city of 200,000 residents to test their bravery and enjoy the festival's mix of round-the-clock parties, religious processions and concerts. Sixteen people have been killed in the bull runs since records started in 1911. The most recent death took place in 2009 when a bull gored a 27-year-old Spaniard in the neck, heart and lungs. The nine-day fiesta, which dates back to medieval times and was immortalized in Nobel Prize-winning author Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel "The Sun Also Rises", ends on July 14.—AFP

Doping scandal guru believes drugs still used in baseball

LOS ANGELES: The mastermind of the notorious BALCO doping scandal believes the explosion in home runs seen across baseball this season shows that athletes are continuing to use performance-enhancing drugs, a report said Monday. Victor Conte, the founder of the Bay Area Laboratory Co-operative, told USA Today that baseball players had worked out how to elude drug-testers by varying the time and dosage of performance-enhancing substances.

Conte, 69, was jailed for four months in 2005 for his role in a notorious doping scandal which implicated baseball stars Barry Bonds and Jason Giambi and led to the downfall of Olympic track and field star Marion Jones. However, Conte has continued to speak out on the subject of doping in baseball, and believes a recent spike in home runs is explained by drug use. At the current pace, Major League Baseball is on target to record 6,668 home runs this year, nearly 1,100 more than last season, and 500 more than the all-time record of 6,105 set in 2017.

Some players and critics believe changes to baseballs used by the league are responsible for the rising homer rate. Conte, however, believes drugs are behind the boom. "There are guys using these drugs, really as many or more than ever before," Conte told USA Today. "The difference is these guys not only understand how and when to take it, but they've figured out how to circumvent the system rather easily, and are flying under the radar. That's why you have so many guys (on pace for) 40 homers, but nobody is hitting 80." Conte said testing players at stadiums was ineffective. Some performance enhancing drugs (PEDs) "are simply undetectable, and there are other ways that you can use PEDs and circumvent the testing," Conte said.

"In the old days, before testing, you can load up on testosterone and it will keep your levels high 24 hours a day. Now, they use a fast-acting testosterone. You can take a little (lozenge), take a cream, and after four hours, it peaks, and comes down six or eight hours later. "If baseball really wanted to bust their ass, you'd go to their house in the middle of the night or the first thing in the morning." Baseball has one of the toughest anti-doping regimes of any professional sport in the United States.

The league carried out more than 11,526 drug tests last year, and tested 2,244 blood samples for human growth hormone. According to league figures, 11 adverse analytical findings were reported from the drug testing which led to sanctions. Eight cases were for performance-enhancing substances, two for the diuretic furosemide and one for the stimulant amphetamine. The performance-enhancing substances found included the steroid stanozolol and banned blood booster erythropoietin.—AFP



Kuwait becomes main sponsor of UCI MTB Eliminator series

BRUSSELS: Yesterday the newly established Kuwait Cycling Club signed a cooperation with the Belgian sport company City Mountainbike. The agreement was announced in the framework of the second Tour de France stage, which departed in Brussels, Belgium's capital. The ceremony was attended by dozens of CEOs active in the Belgian sport and cycling ecosystem.

With this deal Kuwait will become the principal sponsor of the UCI MTB Eliminator series, a spectacular mountainbike race with already 12 professional

cycling races around the world. The official title of the international cycling event would be branded UCI MTB Eliminator series powered by Kuwait Cycling Club. This gives Kuwait an enormous visibility and credibility in the international cycling world.

In addition, parallel negotiations are also underway to organize an international mountainbike race in Kuwait-city, in the framework of the Middle East games or even the World Cup. Belgium's economic counselor in Kuwait Sam SERVAES, who attended the ceremony,

welcomed the deal as a positive example of the new dynamic in Kuwait's professional sport landscape.

Recently the International Olympic Committee (IOC) repealed the suspension of Kuwait International Committee. With this deal Kuwait makes a large step further with the internationalization of its cycling ambitions. Furthermore, he continued, "Belgium is famous for its cyclists and sport organizations. Our companies are ready to collaborate with Kuwait, at mutual benefit for the sports economics of our both countries".

as do all the other title contenders." South Africa have consistently battled against Nigeria, with a shock 2019 Cup of Nations qualifying triumph in Uyo their lone competitive victory over them.

Benin v Senegal
Liverpool star Mane does not want to take any more penalties at the Cup of Nations after missing two of three he was entrusted with during the tournament. The 27-year-old missed and scored from spot-kicks in a convincing group win over Kenya and fluffed another penalty when he edged Uganda in a last-16 encounter.

"I missed penalties in two games and that it is not a good ratio," admitted the forward who shared the last Premier League Golden Boot award with team-mate Mohamed Salah and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang of Arsenal. Benin shocked Morocco, considered one of the strongest title contenders, by winning on penalties after playing most of extra-time a man short when Khaled Adenon was red-carded. "This was the greatest achievement in Benin football history," said veteran forward Mickael Pote. "We may not be the best team in Egypt, but our team spirit is second to none." — AFP

Nigeria goal poacher Ighalo could burst S African bubble

CAIRO: Former English Premier League forward Odion Ighalo could be the Nigerian who bursts the South African bubble when the countries clash today in an Africa Cup of Nations quarter-final. The 30-year-old, who played for Watford before moving to China two years ago, has scored three goals at the African football showpiece in Egypt. That tally gives him a share of the lead in the Golden Boot race with Senegalese Sadio Mane, Congolese Cedric Bakambu and Algerian Adam Ounas. Two of his goals came in the 3-2 second round defeat of defending champions Cameroon, and he could have finished with four having hit the woodwork and been foiled by a superb save. A few hours after Nigeria triumphed last Saturday, South Africa stunned hosts and pre-tour-

Nigeria v South Africa

Ighalo says the 2-0 group stage loss to outsiders Madagascar was a massive wake-up call that worked in favour of the Super Eagles. "Any thoughts we had of an easy passage to the closing stages vanished after that defeat. We realized that many teams were motivated by playing Nigeria and raised their game against us."

"While I have enjoyed scoring three times in Egypt, it is irrelevant who puts the ball in the net as long as he is a Nigerian. "We want to win the title a fourth time, but South Africa also want to get their hands on the trophy,

Sports

Zaha sends Ivory Coast into last 8; Mali fluff their lines

Victory sets up quarter-final against Algeria

SUEZ: Ivory Coast forward Wilfried Zaha secured a 1-0 win over Mali with a late goal in their Africa Cup of Nations last 16 clash on Monday after their opponents had dominated most of the game and missed a flurry of chances. Zaha, who had barely featured until then, took advantage as the Mali defence got into a terrible mess from a free kick deep in the Ivorian half in the 76th minute to earn his side a barely deserved win and quarter-final tie against Algeria.

Mali, unbeaten in the group stage, had not beaten their southern neighbours in a competitive match since 1977 but for most of the contest seemed to believe they could end that run. They played with verve and skill and bossed the first hour with Moussa Djenepo and Abdoulaye Diaby causing endless trouble down the flanks and Moussa Marega a constant threat in attack while Ivory Coast keeper Sylvain Gbohouo lived a charmed life.

He allowed a comer to slip through his fingers but Diaby could not react quickly enough at the far post and turned the ball wide. Moments later, Gbohouo was nearly caught out by a long-range Diaby free kick but managed to turn the ball over. Hamari Traore surged into the Ivorian penalty area only to blast his shot towards the Suez Canal before Djenepo created Mali's best first half chance with another run down the

left but Marega missed from six meters. "We let the storm pass during the first half before we reorganised in the second," said relieved Ivory Coast coach Ibrahima Kamara.

Another opportunity went begging at the start of the second period as Marega slipped the ball to Djenepo who had a free run on goal but lost his footing when he seemed poised to score. Mali began to run out of gas as the Ivory Coast, whose current side is a shadow of the so-called golden generation which won the tournament in 2015, came back into the game. Jonathan Kodjia should have put the Ivorians ahead when he was sent clear but sent his shot straight at goalkeeper Djigui Diarra who was already on the ground fearing the worst.

But there was no let off shortly afterwards. Gbohouo took a free kick deep inside the Ivorian half, the Malian defense missed the ball and it bounced into the path of Crystal Palace forward Zaha who scored his second goal at the finals. Adama Traore had a shot blocked by Gbohouo in stoppage time but by then Mali's confidence had been replaced by desperation. "I am disappointed like all my team mates because we deserved more," said man-of-the-match Marega. "We were the better side in the game. We could have gone to the break with a good lead but that's a pity for us. We feel disappointed." — Reuters



SUEZ: Ivory Coast's forward Jonathan Kodjia (left) fights for the ball with Mali's defender Molla Wague during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Round of 16 football match between Ivory Coast and Mali on July 8, 2019. — AFP

No Neymar, no problem as Brazil begin Copa reign

RIO DE JANEIRO: As Brazil geared up for the Copa America last month, a Neymar-induced pall of doom and gloom threatened to scupper the host nation's chances before a ball had even been kicked. The unrelenting circus surrounding the captain and talisman of the Selecao had included lurid rape revelations before an ankle injury in a warm-up game left the Paris Saint-Germain striker on crutches and out of the tournament.

It was an eerie echo of Brazil's disastrous 2014 World Cup on home soil, when Neymar was injured in the quarter-finals and missed his team's traumatic 7-1 humiliation against eventual champions Germany in the last four. Yet as this year's Copa campaign unfolded, Brazil demonstrated that it might have finally cast off the longstanding criticisms of "Neymar-dependency."

While Neymar's creative spark was sorely missing in a dour 0-0 draw with Venezuela during the group stage, Brazil gradually grew into the tournament. And by the time captain Dani Alves hoisted the trophy — Brazil's first major honor in 12 years — following the 3-1 victory over Peru in the final at the iconic Maracana stadium on Sunday, Neymar had at last been shoved aside as the Copa's major talking point.

What's more, Brazil had proved in finishing with the tournament's best attack, best defense, top player in Alves, top scorer in Everton and top goalkeeper in Alisson — a clean sweep of every award going — that they could thrive without Neymar. Its importance was not lost on Liverpool's Alisson, no matter how diplomatically he put it. "It was difficult without Neymar because he's very talented and also brings a lot to the collective," said Alisson. "It was important to win to show the strength of the group. Sometimes he gets all the attention and we're a bit left out... but he's much loved."

Led by example

Crucially, two of the players thrust into the spotlight by Neymar's absence and indiscretions sparked in the limelight. In May, Alves was named captain for the tournament after Neymar hit the headlines — pre-rape allegations — for the wrong reasons with his club, picking up European and domestic bans for petulant behavior.

He had an altercation with a fan after PSG lost the French Cup final to Rennes while the month before he insulted a match official after the French side's Champions League elimination by Manchester United.

Alves led by example and was named player of the tournament, while his skill and trickery in starting the move that led to the first goal in Brazil's 2-0 semi-final victory over Argentina was sublime. The other player to take his chance was Everton, the crowd-pleasing winger who regularly lifted fans onto their feet with his direct running and determined dribbling. He finished the Copa as top scorer and a star for the present rather than the future. But he may never have been given the chance to shine had Neymar been there.

Had Neymar been available, Everton may have found himself further down the pecking order and given fewer opportunities to impress. Instead, the Gremio forward established himself as the undisputed crowd favorite. He was the only one of three domestic-based players in the 23-man squad to get a game during the tournament and drew the biggest cheer every time his name was announced or he touched the ball.

In Everton — who at 23 is a rumored target for European giants Manchester City, Manchester United and PSG — Brazil have perhaps found a long-term replacement to the troubled and flawed Neymar as the country's football icon. For some fans, like Elaine Vieira Pessoa de Sousa, Brazil don't need Neymar any more. "We're champions! And the best thing is that it was without Neymar," the 43-year-old told AFP from the streets of Sao Paulo as she celebrated Brazil's victory. "This proves that we don't rely on him any more, it's not all down to him. This is Brazil, no matter who plays." — AFP

Women's football 'forbidden' unless all-female: Aceh

JAKARTA: Less than a week after the women's world cup football final drew record crowds and global TV audiences, clerics in a hardline Islamist Indonesian province said attempts to revive the game in the country were "forbidden" unless men were excluded entirely. "We are not against female soccer at all, however, if the facilities are not ready, female soccer is considered haram (forbidden)," Teungku Faisal Ali, vice-chairman of the Islamic clerical body in Aceh said yesterday.

Aceh, on the northern tip of Indonesia's Sumatra island, is the only province in the world's most populous Muslim nation to officially practice Islamic Sharia law. Considered the 7th Century landing place for Islam on the archipelago, it was granted semi-autonomous status in 2001 after decades of rebellion against the moderate national government.

Indonesian sports authorities are attempting to revive the sport among women in the country by forming a national league, but the Ulema Council in Aceh called on the government to cancel the plan, citing the lack of facilities for female-only matches. The council

said it should only be allowed if the province had a special stadium where only women players, match officials and spectators were present, arguing it would otherwise trigger public anger. "We demand the women's league be postponed so the players will not get a negative response from Aceh people," Teungku said.

Already in Aceh, some 30 enthusiastic women players have participated in a selection trial, and a team is due to be picked shortly to represent the province in the national league. Organizers said the players had complied with sharia regulation including wearing long-sleeved shirts and head-covering hijabs. "They dressed properly in Muslim attire and they played soccer normally, they did not violate sharia law," committee head Ishak Rizal said. He said some young female players had trained for two years and even participated in regional competitions where they had won a trophy.

Organizers were still trying to convince the clerics and the public that female soccer does not breach Islamic sharia law, Rizal said. "However, we will accept whatever is decided by the local government. We will comply if they follow the ulemas' recommendation," he said. Aceh is the only region in Indonesia with Islamic law and where public flogging is a common punishment for a range of offences, including selling alcohol, adultery, and gay sex.

Last month the ulema council issued a fatwa against a hugely popular but brutal online game PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG) over fears it incited real-world violence. Indonesia, with a popula-



BANDA ACEH: A woman takes part in rock-climbing at a sports centre in Banda Aceh. — AFP

tion of around 270 million people, is football mad and the top professional men's league attracts sell-out crowds of men and women. On Sunday the United States beat the Netherlands 2-0 in France to win their fourth consecutive women's cup final. In the US alone, more people watched the match on TV than watched the 2018 men's world cup final. — AFP

PSG get tough with Neymar

PARIS: French club Paris Saint-Germain said they would take "appropriate action" after Neymar failed to show up for pre-season training with the French champions. Neymar, the world's most expensive player after moving to PSG for 222 million euros (\$252 million) two years ago, had watched his country win the Copa America in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday night.

But when PSG players including France World Cup-winning striker Kylian Mbappe reported back for training and pre-season medical checks in the French capital on Monday, Neymar was nowhere to be seen. PSG said in a statement: "On Monday 8 July Neymar da Silva Santos Junior was due to return to pre-season activities with the Paris Saint-Germain senior squad. "Paris Saint-Germain notes that Neymar Jr was not in attendance at the agreed time and place. This was without the club's prior authorization. "The club regrets this situation and will therefore take appropriate action."

Brazilian media quoted Neymar's father as saying that PSG "were aware" the striker would be unable to return to the club for another week. "The reason was known and planned for a year as part of his activities for the Neymar Institute (charity foundation)," said Neymar Senior. He added: "We couldn't postpone them and he will return (to PSG) on July 15. "It's as simple as that, no drama. PSG are aware and take part in the Institute's activities." Neymar, 27, is undergoing treatment on the torn ankle ligaments that ruled him out of the Copa America.

'PSG won't sell'

His absence is likely to fuel rumors that he could make a surprise move back to Barcelona, the club he left to join PSG, this summer. Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu downplayed that speculation on Tuesday ahead of the unveiling of new signing Frenkie de Jong at Camp Nou.

Bartomeu said Paris Saint-Germain president Nasser Al-Khelaifi was not prepared to sell Neymar this summer, so a deal was unlikely to happen. "We know that he wants to leave Paris Saint-Germain but we know that they don't want him to leave, so there is no case," he said. "I know what I have read in the press. We have contact with Nasser in meetings and committees but he has not told us himself. What we know about Neymar we know from the press."

French media noted that what was striking about Neymar's latest refusal to toe the line was PSG's lack of tolerance of his behavior. After the club said it would take action, PSG's newly installed Brazilian sporting director Leonardo told Le Parisien newspaper that "Neymar can leave PSG if there is an offer that suits everybody." Sports daily L'Equipe's head-



Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian forward Neymar

line was: "With Leo (Leonardo), there's no longer any joking around."

Despite the denials, Spanish sports newspaper Diarior Sport reported that intermediaries for the two clubs have negotiated a five-year contract with Neymar accepting a cut in salary from around 36 million euros a year at PSG to the 24 million euros he received at Barca in 2017. In four years in Catalonia, Neymar won the Champions League in 2015 and two La Liga titles, forming a brilliant attacking trio with Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez.

Any return would likely require Barca to raise funds through sales. De Jong has already signed for 75 million euros from Ajax. Griezmann is expected to join from Atletico Madrid for 120 million euros, although that deal has hit snags. Neymar's time at PSG has been punctuated by injury and controversy. He was questioned by Brazilian police last month over allegations he raped a woman he met through social media in a Paris hotel. He has denied the accusations and his father says it was a blackmail attempt.

Neymar will miss three Champions League matches next season as punishment for insulting a referee following PSG's Champions League collapse against Manchester United. Al-Khelaifi has warned Neymar and his other highly-paid stars that they must shape up or ship out, claiming "celebrity behaviour" will not be tolerated. "The players will have to assume their responsibilities even more than before," Al-Khelaifi told France Football last month. — AFP

Manchester City, Chelsea to host women's games

LONDON: Manchester City and Chelsea will play their opening matches of the new Women's Super League (WSL) season at the Etihad Stadium and Stamford Bridge respectively as the Football Association (FA) seeks to build on the interest sparked by the women's World Cup. City's derby meeting with Manchester United on September 7 and Chelsea's clash with Tottenham the following day will both be staged at the Premier League grounds with the men's top-flight on an international break. The matches will be the first in the WSL for Manchester United and Tottenham who were both promoted from the Championship last season.

England's World Cup semi-final defeat to eventual champions the United States was watched on television by 11.7 million people, a record for a women's match in the United Kingdom. "Following an exciting summer of women's football and the Lionesses' impressive form in France, we wanted to kick off the new season with a bang," said City's head of women's football Gavin Makel. "Having the Manchester derby as our home opener was the perfect opportunity to play a game at the Etihad Stadium and welcome our seven Manchester City Lionesses home."

Fans can claim up to four free tickets for the London derby between Chelsea and Tottenham, while City are offering up to three free tickets for under-16s per paying adult, with adult tickets priced at £7 (\$9). City reportedly decided against making the game completely free of charge as they want fans to view the WSL as a product worth paying for. Average attendances in the WSL last season were below 1,000. It will be only the second time City's women's team have played at the Etihad, with the first coming during their successful Women's League Cup run in 2014.

England manager Phil Neville has previously called on Premier League clubs to open their grounds to women's games after the success of hosting matches in big stadia across Europe. Over 60,000 spectators saw England international Toni Duggan score in Barcelona's 2-0 win over Atletico Madrid in March to set a new world record for a women's club match. "The big teams in England have got to open their big stadiums and fill it," Neville told AFP before the World Cup. "Let's blow the rest of Europe away because I think our game in this country is in a far better place than in Spain, Italy or Portugal." — AFP

Sports

Federer eyes 100th Wimbledon victory and Nadal showdown

'He can be very, very dangerous on all surfaces'

LONDON: Roger Federer can rack up his 100th win at Wimbledon today and set-up a blockbuster semi-final against Rafael Nadal. In a quarter-final line-up which features five players over 30, there is a growing anticipation of a potential 40th career match-up between the sport's two most successful players. If it does happen, it will be their first at the All England Club since 2008 when Nadal triumphed in what is widely regarded as the greatest final ever played at the tournament.

However, before they reach that stage, eight-time champion Federer has to get past Kei Nishikori while Nadal, a two-time winner, tackles big-hitting Sam Querrey. Whoever battles through that side of the draw is likely to find defending champion and four-time winner Novak Djokovic waiting in the final. At 37, Federer is the oldest quarter-finalist since Jimmy Connors in 1991.

He reached his 17th quarter-final at the All England Club—and 55th at the majors—with a 74-minute demolition of Italy's Matteo Berrettini, dropping just five games. Between them, Federer, Nadal and Djokovic lost only 19 games in their fourth-round ties and faced just one break point. "I think the best guys now are fully engaged, they know exactly what to expect from the court and the conditions," said second seed Federer.

'Nishikori great talent'

"That helps us to play better. I think with experience, that's good. We haven't dropped much energy in any way." Federer will take a 7-3 record over seventh-seeded Nishikori into his quarter-final. Nishikori defeated the great Swiss in the ATP Finals last year, ending a drought which had stretched to almost five years. "I'm a big fan of his game," said Federer of the Japanese star, who is into his second successive quarter-final at Wimbledon. "I think he's got one of the best backhands in the game. He's a great return player. Solid mentally. I always thought he was a great talent." Nadal, playing in his seventh Wimbledon quarter-final, faces Querrey backed up by a 4-1 record over the 65th-



LONDON: Switzerland's Roger Federer attends a training session on day eight of the 2019 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis Club in Wimbledon yesterday. —AFP

ranked American. Querrey made the semi-finals in 2017, beating then world number one Andy Murray in the last-eight before falling to Marin Cilic. The American has pounded down 100 aces so far at the tournament, dropped serve just once and accounted for fifth seed Dominic Thiem in the first round.

"When he plays well, he can be very, very dangerous on all surfaces," said Nadal, whose recent 12th French Open title took him to 18 majors, just two back from Federer's record. Top seed Djokovic has a 5-1 record over his quarter-final opponent David Goffin who, at 28, is the youngest man left. Belgian 21st seed Goffin beat Djokovic the last time they met in 2017 but that was on the clay of Monte Carlo.

Goffin is playing in his first All England Club quarter-final but was runner-up to Federer on the grass of Halle on the eve of Wimbledon.

"He's one of the quickest players on the tour. I think his footwork is probably his biggest asset," said Djokovic ahead of his 11th Wimbledon quarter-final and 45th at the Slams. Today's other quarter-final pits Argentine 26th seed Guido Pella, who had never previously got into the second week of a Slam, against Spanish 23rd seed Roberto Bautista Agut. Whereas 29-year-old Pella is in uncharted territory, Bautista Agut is in his second Slam quarter-final of the season having also gone to the last eight at the Australian Open.—AFP

Indonesian pleads for help after tennis courts replaced by baseball field

LONDON: Christopher Rungkat is ploughing a lone furrow for tennis in one of the world's most populous nations: a task made all the harder after Indonesia turned a top tennis facility into a baseball field. Rungkat, 29, is one of Asia's top doubles players, riding on a career high in the rankings and making his main draw debut at Wimbledon.

The 2018 Asian Games mixed doubles gold medalist hopes his exploits can inspire a new generation to take up tennis - but said it could only happen if the Indonesian authorities build the facilities. "There are younger guys trying to come up. I know it's tough; I've been there," Rungkat said. "But we don't really have a good facility back home in Jakarta. "We had a good facility with a lot of clay courts and hard courts - but the government decided to convert them to a baseball field, which is very sad for me. It's right in the centre of Jakarta."

The doubles world number 69 said Indonesia's prospects in the sport could be bright, with its population of more than 250 million people and love of the fellow racquet sport badminton. "We have a good future in tennis. I really hope I can inspire younger kids," he said. "I really hope the government can help them. "We have to start, at least, by having courts and a proper facility."

Rungkat has been playing men's doubles with Taiwan's Hsieh Cheng-Peng for 18 months. They are two of the top six men's doubles players from Asia on the tennis circuit. "We've had so much history with Asian doubles players like Leander Paes," said Rungkat. "Being there on top

with them is a great achievement. It's the new generation we have coming up.

"Me and Hsieh are among the few still under 30. "All the work that we've been putting in is paying off this year." The pair lost their Wimbledon first round encounter to the experienced 14th seeds Jurgen Melzer and Oliver Marach of Austria, 11-9 in the final set. "I was very excited, especially playing in the main draw at this most prestigious event. I've waited so long for this moment and I'm very proud of myself for getting to this stage," said Rungkat.

He is the sole figure on the men's tour from the world's fourth most populous country. There are no Indonesians at all in the world men's singles rankings - and just him in the top 700 in the doubles. There are three Indonesian women in the singles rankings, all outside the top 400. However, Rungkat is not the sole Indonesian at Wimbledon. Priska Madelyn Nugroho, 16, is in the girls' competitions, winning her first round singles match in three sets.

"She's been doing well, she's a very talented young girl and I see a good potential in her," said Rungkat. "I think she's going to be the next Indonesian hope in tennis." Rungkat said winning medals at the Asian Games and breaking into Grand Slam events was making people sit up and notice tennis back home. As part of his vision for inspiring a new generation of players in Indonesia, Rungkat would love to back up his Asian Games success with a spot at Tokyo 2020. "I would love to play in the Olympics. It's my dream since I was a child," he said.—AFP

Red Bull Athlete, Ahmad Daham, becomes first Arab drifter to participate in the renowned Drift Masters European Championship & Goodwood Festival of Speed

The five-time Middle East drift champion already has over 75 podium wins to his name. This summer, the UAE-based, Jordanian athlete is taking on Europe, including a special debut in the United Kingdom.



Ahmad Daham is gearing up for a summer of international participation, making history in the process. The five-time Middle East drift champion is currently taking part in the 2019 edition of the renowned Drift Masters European Championship. Considered the "Champions League of professional drifting", this year's competition sees 42 drivers from 18 countries compete over six rounds, hosted in different locations across Europe, battling it out for a coveted top three position.

And the 32-year-old Red Bull athlete - who is already a Guinness World Record holder - is creating more history by becoming the very first Arab to participate in Drift Masters. Additionally, the UAE-based, Jordanian

is also the only participant from outside of Europe to take part in the distinguished event.

The latest round (Round 3) of the 2019 Drift Masters European Championship took place between 28-29 June in Plock in Poland, where Daham is quickly moving up the ranks.

Round 4, which marks the second half of the season, commences 23- August at Biernieku Trase in Riga, Latvia. The Latvia leg will be followed by Round 5 in Ferropolis, Germany (16-17 August), before concluding in Mondello Park, Ireland for Round 6 between 21-22 September. The season finale - known as Ireland's biggest automotive event - is set to attract over 15,000 fans.

GOODWOOD FESTIVAL OF SPEED

In the interim, Daham will be making another first by making his Goodwood Festival of Speed debut this month between 4-7 July in the United Kingdom. The annual event is a hill climb featuring historic motor racing vehicles, as well as F1 machines and other cars and motorbikes. Daily attendance is estimated at between 100,000 to 150,000 motorsport fans. And what makes his inaugural participation extra special is that it will be the first time his custom Lexus RC F Pro Drift spec car - which was unveiled by Al-Futtaim Lexus in the UAE in May - will make an appearance in Europe.

Daham, recently teased this announcement on his official Instagram page by posting: "While I'm heading to the airport for @driftmasters.gp round in Poland, the @lexusuae RC F is also getting ready for her first flight to Europe! Who can guess where?" Stay tuned for more events featuring Daham. Commenting on his latest participations, he said: "A lot of hard work leads up to big events, and it's such an honour to be representing the Middle East region at these world-renowned competitions. 2019 has brought a lot of good fortune and I look forward to continuing momentum."

26 Zaha sends Ivory Coast into last 8; Mali fluff their lines



26 PSG get tough with Neymar after pre-season no-show



27 Federer eyes 100th Wimbledon victory and Nadal showdown



Tunisia end 54-year Ghana dominance

Ghana's Cup of Nations woes continue; Tunisia win on penalties



ISMALIA: Ghana's players react to their defeat during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Round of 16 football match between Ghana and Tunisia at the Ismailia Stadium on July 8, 2019.

ISMALIA: Tunisia defeated Ghana 5-4 on penalties Monday with Ferjani Sassi converting the decisive spot-kick to end a 54-year Africa Cup of Nations losing streak against the Black Stars. After a 1-1 draw following extra time in Ismailia, Tunisia scored from all five penalties while Ghana substitute Caleb Ekusan had his attempt saved by Farouk Ben Mustapha, who came off the bench especially for the shootout.

Victory was sweet for Tunisia as they had lost six times to Ghana in the African football showcase from 1965 after drawing the first meeting between the nations two years earlier. On Thursday, the Carthage Eagles play giantkillers Madagascar in a quarter-final in Cairo with the winners meeting Senegal or Benin for a place in the July 19 final. Losing on penalties ended a Ghana run of six consecutive top-four finishes in the Cup of Nations and puts the future of coach Kwesi Appiah in doubt.

Four-time former champions Ghana changed two of the team that began a 2-0 win over Guinea-Bissau that enabled them to pip Cameroon for top spot in Group F

on goals scored. Both alterations were on the left side of a 4-3-3 formation with defender Nuhu Kasim and midfielder Afriyie Acquah replacing Joseph Aidoo and Owusu Kwabena. Tunisia coach and 1980s France star Alain Giresse reacted to an embarrassing 0-0 draw with minnows Mauritania in their previous match by dropping four of the team.

Big surprise

A big surprise was the exclusion of forward Wahbi Khazri, who had been the outstanding Tunisian attacker in the group phase and scored one of their two goals. Bassem Srarfi, Naim Sliiti and Karim Aouadhi were also relegated to the bench with Ghaylen Chaalali, Ferjani Sassi, Taha Yassine Khenissi and Anice Badri promoted. After early yellow cards for Ghanaian John Boye, the first player to be red-carded in the group phase, and Tunisian Dylan Bronn, the first half became a cagey, even affair. Ghana came close to scoring on 16 minutes when a Kasim header struck the post and Andre Ayew fired the rebound straight at goal-

keeper Hassen Mouez.

Andre Ayew was convinced he had put the Black Stars ahead on 41 minutes when he backheeled a cross into the net, but the referee ruled that Thomas Partey handled in the build-up. Replays showed the ball touching the chin of the Atletico Madrid midfielder rather than a hand and the disallowed goal infuriated the Ghanaians. Midway through the second half Giresse had second thoughts about the composition of his attack, which was making little impression, and sent on Khazri in place of Badri.

Khazri needed just five minutes to make an impact with his brilliant backheel creating space for Wajdi Kechrida to cross and Khenissi scored with a shot that went in off the near post. The woodwork foiled Ghana a second time when a Mubarak Wakaso shot from outside the box struck the far post 10 minutes from the end of regular time with Mouez beaten. In the first minute of stoppage time, the Blacks Stars drew level with an attempted headed clearance by Bedoui looped over Mouez, who had strayed off his line. — AFP



ISMALIA: Tunisia's midfielder Ferjani Sassi (right) kneels to celebrate their victory during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Round of 16 football match between Ghana and Tunisia on July 8, 2019. — AFP photos

Egyptian soccer fans fed up with sacrificing much

CAIRO: Like many Egyptian football fans, Mahmoud Hashem sees "no reason to be excited" by the Africa Cup of Nations which continues in the country until July 19 without the host nation's involvement. "As a fan, I am deprived of everything that made me love football", he despondently told AFP after the lacklustre hosts were knocked out Saturday by South Africa in the round of 16. Sitting at a downtown Cairo, Hashem, 30, a fervent supporter of Egyptian powerhouse Al-Ahly, said he was having difficulty getting disappointed by the national squad's latest embarrassing loss on home turf.

"There's been a lot of problems in Egyptian football that have led me and many people I know to be less interested in the game," he added. The North African country's football scene has been chaotic in the last few years with the Egyptian football association (EFA) in complete shambles and

a war of words erupting about who is to blame for the game's mismanagement. The domestic league is also in disarray and a sexual harassment scandal involving one of its players only rounded off a turbulent tournament for the hosts.

Forbidden fans

For more than seven years, domestic league matches have been mostly played in ghostly stadiums empty of spectators. Violence in stadiums in 2012 and 2015 in which around 100 people died and the security forces were implicated, led authorities to ban fans from games.

That ban has been relaxed in recent years with small contingents of fans allowed in the stadiums. They are required to present their national IDs and to apply to attend a specific games of their registered club, and that request can be rejected. Mahmoud laments that the control extends to the way supporters interact with the game. "Even some chants for a team or wearing jerseys of specific players is forbidden," he said, referring to iconic Egyptian striker Mohamed Aboutrika.

Hundreds of supporters paid tribute to the legendary player, who retired in 2013 after helping Egypt clinch three African Cups during in the last decade. They chant-

ed his name at matches and in viral clips online. Aboutrika has been in the crosshairs of the government who view him as Muslim Brotherhood sympathizer. The Islamist party was declared a terror group in 2013 after it was toppled from government.

Aboutrika is exiled in Qatar, where he works for Qatari sports network beIN Sports, and he remains on a terror watch list. For Hashem, the golden era has been replaced by a haggard Egypt team lacking vision and unity, even with the presence in its ranks of Liverpool star Mohamed Salah. Hashem has stayed away from the stadium because he does not want his presence to be "exploited" by officials who have gone to great lengths to show off Egypt's tournament organization.

'Glory days'

Hani Abou Rida, the embattled president of the Egyptian Football Association (EFA), resigned on Sunday along with his highly criticized board after the Pharaohs lost. Shady Habashy, 33, who hosts a YouTube channel dedicated to reliving the "glory days of world football" called "Tarikh and Korafia" (History and Football-ography) was pleased with the news. His channel is aiming to educate younger generations about how the game was "more beautiful than the one



CAIRO: Egypt supporters watch the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Round of 16 football match between Egypt and South Africa at a cafe in the Egyptian Capital on July 6, 2019. — AFP

played today". "I'm glad that my country is hosting such an event, that it shows off a beautiful picture and that visitors can easily come and go," said Habashy, the father of a six-month old daughter. "But these are foreigners and as an Egyptian, I see things from a different perspective," he added. He blamed Rida, a FIFA Council member, and his cadre of close EFA officials for Egypt's footballing woes, particularly the poor "quality" of players chosen in the squad

which showed a lack of "respect for fans". In his plush apartment in an upmarket Cairo suburb, the devoted Al-Ahly fan watches the Africa Cup of Nations games on his big screen plugged into beIN Sports. He prefers to avoid the hassles of going to watch the matches from the stands for which a Fan ID—a special permit needed to enter the stadiums—is required. "Soccer used to be much better years go for supporters than what we're seeing now," he said. — AFP