

6 India bakes; temperature
nears 50 degrees Celsius



21 US spelling bee ends in
historic 'eight-way tie'



27 Grief as Arsenal 'Invincibles'
star Reyes killed in car crash



Ramadan KAREEM

IMSAK	03:05
Fajr	03:15
Dhur	11:46
Asr	15:20
Magrib	18:43
Isha	20:14

Makkah summit supports Palestinians, backs Saudis

Any war against Iran would engulf the region, Hezbollah warns



MAKKAH: Saudi Arabia's King Salam bin Abdulaziz (center) poses next to his Jordanian counterpart, King Abdullah II (right) of Jordan, and Kuwait's Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (left) for a family picture with other leaders and officials at the opening of a summit of the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in the Saudi holy city of Makkah yesterday. — AFP

MAKKAH: A Saudi-hosted Islamic summit yesterday threw its support behind Palestinians ahead of a US-led peace plan suspected to be skewed in favor of Israel, as Muslim states rallied around Saudi Arabia over tensions with Iran. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) meeting, the third and final Iran-focused summit in the holy city of Makkah this week, denounced controversial US moves to transfer its embassy to Jerusalem and recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

The summit of the 57-member bloc, marked by the notable absence of Iranian and Turkish leaders, called for a "boycott" of countries that have opened diplomatic missions in the city. Trump broke with decades of bipartisan policy to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in December 2017. The OIC's statement comes as Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner prepares to roll out economic aspects of his long-awaited Middle East peace plan at a conference in Bahrain later this month.

The plan, which has been heavily talked up

by Trump and dubbed his "deal of the century", has already been rejected by the Palestinians, who say the president's policies have shown him to be overwhelmingly biased in favor of Israel. The Palestinians see the eastern part of the disputed city as the capital of their future state. Kushner, who was in Jerusalem on Friday on the latest leg of a regional tour to sell the plan, had looked to an alliance with Saudi Arabia against Iran as a way to gain Arab support.

But Saudi King Salman told leaders of the OIC countries gathered at the summit: "The Palestinian cause is the cornerstone of the works of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and is the focus of our attention until the brotherly Palestinian people get all their legitimate rights. We reaffirm our unequivocal rejection of any measures that would prejudice the historical and legal status of Quds (Jerusalem)."

'Aggressive threats'

The OIC also backed Saudi Arabia in escalating tensions with Iran, as King Salman

warned that "terrorist" attacks in the Gulf region could imperil global energy supplies. The remark came after sabotage attacks damaged four vessels, two of them Saudi oil tankers, off the UAE and twin Yemeni rebel drone attacks shut down a key Saudi oil pipeline. "We confirm that terrorist actions not only target the kingdom and the Gulf region, but also target the safety of navigation and world oil supplies," the king told Muslim leaders. Tehran has strongly denied involvement in any of the incidents.

In a tweet just before the start of the summit, the king vowed to confront "aggressive threats and subversive activities". "Undermining the security of the kingdom effectively undermines the security of the Arab and Islamic world," said OIC Secretary General Yousef bin Ahmed al-Othaimen, voicing solidarity that was shared by other members. In back-to-back summits on Friday, Gulf and Arab allies similarly threw their support behind Saudi Arabia, which drew accusations from Iran of "sowing division".

Continued on Page 24

Disgruntled worker kills 12 in Virginia

VIRGINIA BEACH: A disgruntled public utility employee opened fire with a handgun on co-workers at a municipal building in Virginia on Friday afternoon, killing 12 people and wounding at least four before he was fatally shot by police, authorities said. The mass shooting in the coastal resort of Virginia Beach was the deadliest instance of US gun violence since November 2018, when a dozen people were slain at a Los Angeles-area bar and grill by a gunman who then killed himself.

Virginia Beach Police Chief James Cervera said the suspect in Friday's carnage was armed with a .45-caliber pistol equipped with a "sound suppressor" device and "extended" ammunition magazines he used to reload repeatedly during the attack. Survivors recounted scenes of pandemonium and fear that erupted as gunshots rang out, and workers scurried frantically for cover. "We just heard people yelling and screaming to get down," Megan Banton, a public utilities worker, told



VIRGINIA: Photo shows the victims of mass shooting at a Virginia Beach. A municipal employee sprayed gunfire 'indiscriminately' in a government building complex, killing 12 people. — AFP

television station WAVY-TV, recalling that she and co-workers barricaded themselves in their office.

"We put the desk up against the door because we didn't know if they were coming in. We were just hoping that it would be over soon, and then we heard the cops yelling up the steps."

Continued on Page 24

Sudan recalls envoy to Qatar

KHARTOUM: Sudan's ambassador to Qatar has returned to Khartoum for consultations, the foreign ministry said yesterday, with the envoy set to fly back to Doha soon. The diplomat was summoned "to Khartoum for consultations and...will leave to Doha in the coming hours" to resume his work, Sudan's ministry said. Earlier in the day, a spokesperson for Qatar's foreign ministry denied claims on social media the ambassador had been recalled and said it received official notification only that he was on "short leave".

Sudan's decision to summon its ambassador came after the country abruptly shut down the office of Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera on Thursday without giving a reason. The news channel, which regularly broadcasts footage of demonstrations that have taken place in Sudan since December, is funded by Doha, a close ally of former president Omar Al-Bashir.

Sudan's military in April ousted Bashir after months-long protests against his authoritarian, three-decade rule. The ruling military council's head Abdelfattah Al-Burhan is currently in Saudi Arabia after travelling for a string of summits. He has already visited Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. The deputy head of the council, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also visited Riyadh in May and met Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman.

Saudi Arabia and allies including the UAE and Egypt, broke off diplomatic ties with Doha in 2017, accusing it of supporting terrorism, which it denies. Sudan's generals, backed by key Arab powers, have resisted calls from African and Western governments to hand over the reins of power. Thousands of protesters have remained camped out in front of the army headquarters in Khartoum to pressure the military to cede power. — AFP

Ramadan Kareem

Ramadan: I have seen the enemy and it's me

By Shariffa Carlo Al Andalusia

I just read a meme that said, "The scariest thing about Ramadan is that you find out that it's you and not the jinn." As a Muslim, this was both funny and actually scary. Why? Basically, Muslims believe that at the beginning of Ramadan, the Gates of Heaven are opened and the Jinn are chained.

We know this because The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "When the first night of Ramadan comes, the devils and the rebellious jinn are chained, the gates of Hell are locked and not one of them is opened; the gates of Paradise are opened and not one of them is locked; and a crier calls, 'You who desire what is good, come forward, and you who desire evil, refrain.' Some are freed from Hell by Allah, and that happens every night." (Tirmidhi).

What does that mean? To clarify, I will give you a bit of background. Islam teaches that Allah Created three distinct life forms: Angels, Jinn and Humankind. Angels were Created as beings with no free will, who obey Allah without questioning. They were Created from light. Jinn and humans were given free will, allowing them the freedom to obey or disobey Allah. Jinns, were Created from smokeless fire and humans were created from clay.

Muslims believe that Satan was a jinn, not an angel, and that is why he was able to confront and disobey Allah.

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Local

Health Ministry to regulate overtime to avoid 'profiteering'

KD 821 million for spending on 85 energy projects

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Ministry of Health (MOH) undersecretary Dr Mustafa Redha urged all his assistants and department, health zone and hospital directors to list the names of employees assigned to work overtime outside official working hours, the tasks they do and how much they get paid. Informed sources said the aim of the survey is to rationalize overtime working hours through strict regulations to avoid profiteering and fake assignments to do things that can be done during official working hours. The conditions also include having the undersecretary's approval.

Meanwhile, informed sources said MOH is currently making a list of all accounts on various social media networks of health zones and various departments in order to track the content posted on them and regulate them to avoid negative posts that affect health awareness and trust in the ministry's services. The sources predicted that dozens of accounts will be accordingly closed for public interest, because they do not represent MOH's official views or because they contribute in undermining the public's trust in MOH.

Further, the sources pointed that MOH plans to issue a special resolution to regulate the matter and take legal actions against violators, as some MOH employ-

ees are running personal accounts implying that what they post are MOH's official points of view.

Proposed budget

A report about the Ministry of Electricity and Water's (MEW) proposed 2019-2020 budget project showed that KD 821 million will be allocated for spending on 85 projects this year. Meanwhile, informed sources said MEW circulated a directive to all MOE schools around Kuwait urging them to switch off all air conditioners from June 21 until the beginning of the new academic year in September, adding that this will save around 600 megawatts, which is enough for an entire

residential area. The sources added special MEW teams have been assigned to visit various schools and accordingly report back. The sources said in collaboration with the Environment Public Authority (EPA), special campaigns will be organized at The Avenues mall in July to boost public awareness of the need to rationalize water and power consumption.

Army recruitment

The Kuwait army announced that all military schools are ready to receive new batches of sons of Kuwaiti women and non-Kuwaiti military personnel by mid-June.

News in brief

Official denies offering jobs to 1,200 Egyptians

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel on Friday denied reports about planned employment of 1,200 Egyptians in the country. The minister said in a statement that the Public Authority for Manpower does not intervene in works of private companies and does not ask for employment of workers of certain nationalities. The labor market is open for the companies to choose the workers that match their needs and with respect of qualifications and payments, she added. Only the employer is eligible to specify the number of available jobs, in line with the number of the quota and nationalities allowed by the ministry of interior and the relevant regulations, minister Aqeel elaborated. — KUNA

Minister tours air base

KUWAIT: First Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah toured on Thursday Kuwait's Air Force base and Air Force Operations Center, including various army units and defense facilities. A statement by the ministry of Defense said Sheikh Nasser met with various ranking militaries and cadets to boost morale, noting that he also listened to a detailed summary of duties and tasks entrusted to them in securing Kuwait airspace. The statement noted that Sheikh Nasser expressed his appreciation and pride of all members of the armed forces for their efforts and sacrifices and readiness in maintaining the security and stability of the country under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Undersecretary promoted

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Lieutenant General Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah conferred the rank of lieutenant general on Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Major General Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. In a press statement issued by the Interior Ministry, the move is implementation of a promotion proposal presented by the interior minister and endorsed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti Cabinet. — KUNA

Fire guts nine vehicles in Salmiya

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Firefighters battled a blaze which engulfed nine vehicles parked at a square in Salmiya on Thursday. No injuries were reported in the incident. An investigation was opened into the case. Meanwhile, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate said Qurain and Mubarak Al-Kabeer hazardous materials stations responded to a call about a fire at Adan health center. The center was evacuated and the fire was found in the lighting on the roof. An employee at the center used a fire extinguisher and put it out before firemen arrived.

Speed limit

The interior ministry's relations and security information department denied rumors circulating on social media about changing the speed limit on Seventh Ring Road from 120 km/h. It said this measure is limited to areas where repairs are being carried out, and the speed is gradually reduced from 120 to 80 to 60. The speed limit then goes up to 120 after passing the maintenance area. Separately, the Interior Ministry Relations and Security Information Department said a video of a fight on social media claiming it was at Kuwait airport is untrue. It said the clip is not from Kuwait.

Manhole covers

Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations Department said that cleaning workers who stole manhole covers were arrested in cooperation with the interior ministry and are being charged, while the cleaning company faces legal action. The violating workers will be deported. The department was commenting on a video clip on social media showing the theft.



Hussam Al-Kharafi, Zainab Al-Qarashi and Hamad Al-Matar with the volunteers during the annual event.

Zain strategic partner of Engineers Without Borders

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, took part in the annual event and Ramadan ghabga of Engineers Without Borders - Kuwait. During the event, the company was recognized for its strategic partnership of EWB's programs and activities throughout an entire year.

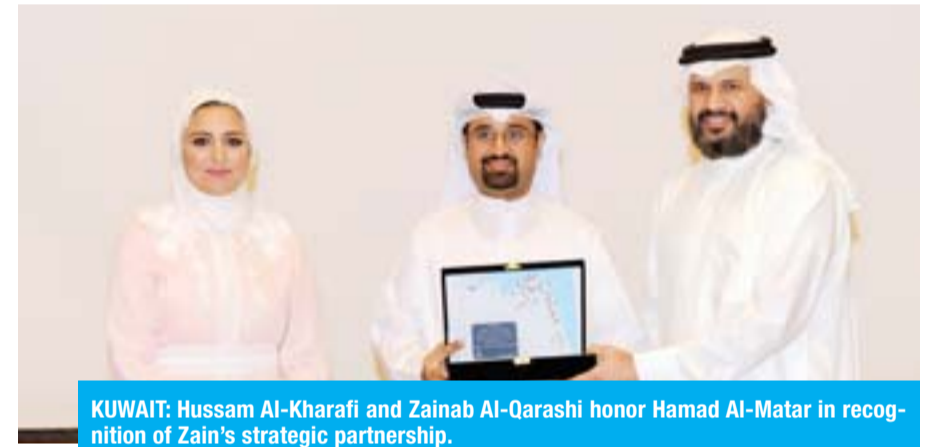
The annual event and Ramadan ghabga witnessed the attendance of Honorary President of Engineers Without Borders Hussam Al-Kharafi, Founder and CEO of Engineers Without Borders - Kuwait Zainab Al-Qarashi, and Zain Kuwait's External and Internal Relations Department Manager Hamad Al-Matar. The event was also attended by a number of diplomats, sponsors' representative, and volunteers.

Zain's strategic partnership of Engineers Without Borders' programs and activities comes in line with its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy, which closely focuses on contributing to the development of the youth sector and the encouragement of various student and volunteering activities. The company partners with many organiza-

tions, including student bodies, to invest in education, which is considered an essential element of the further progress of national economy. Zain is also keen on encouraging volunteering efforts that ultimately benefit various segments within the community.

Engineers Without Borders' initiatives, which are supported by Zain, include many educational and volunteering programs that are related to engineering and are held locally and internationally with the participation of nearly 400 volunteers and engineers from Kuwait. The programs include international projects such as renovating schools in India, and local projects such as renovating homes of underprivileged families in Kuwait, engineering conferences and forums, "Next Engineer" camp for children, "Without Barriers" project to support people with special needs, The Challenge competition, and more.

Zain's support to Engineers Without Borders springs from the company's core Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy. The company believes that supporting initiatives such as this one provides young people with skills



KUWAIT: Hussam Al-Kharafi and Zainab Al-Qarashi honor Hamad Al-Matar in recognition of Zain's strategic partnership.

and tools necessary to help them highlight and develop their skills, ultimately contributing to the further progress of national economy, as well as infuse a sense of responsibility within them.

Engineers Without Borders - Kuwait was founded in 2013 with the aim of making use of engineering skills and experiences to find solutions to various chal-

lenges faced by communities inside and outside of Kuwait. EWB's initiatives focus on enhancing the living conditions in developing countries by building homes and providing access to water and electricity. EWB received the Excellence and Creativity Award for Volunteering Work from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Vale Bob Hawke, a true friend of Kuwait



KUWAIT: Former Australian Prime Minister Robert James Lee Hawke meets with former Kuwaiti Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah in this file photo.

By Jonathan Gilbert, Australian Ambassador to the State of Kuwait

Robert James Lee Hawke, born on December 9, 1929, was the 23rd Prime Minister of Australia, serving in that office from March 1983 to December 1991. He is the third longest serving Prime Minister in Australian history. Hawke was a true friend of Kuwait and was committed to the country's freedom, prosperity and success.

Soon after Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, Hawke spoke to members of the National Security Committee of Cabinet to discuss the situation and Australia's response. On August 10, 1990, he announced Australia's decision to join the United States-led multinational force, enforcing UN sanctions on Iraqi trade through the Gulf (and at times in the Red Sea). Three days later, the Royal Australian Navy frigates, HMAS Darwin and HMAS Adelaide, sailed from Sydney for the Gulf, followed shortly afterward by the replenishment tanker HMAS Success.

Australia's deployment of naval ships to the multinational force was one of the first with the United States. It was to continue well after Kuwait's liberation on 26 February 1991 and involved over 1800 Australian Defense personnel. Alongside the three warships, Australia also provided a supply vessel, four medical teams, air transportation and a mine clearance diving team.

Speaking at the time about Australia's decision to commit forces to the Gulf, Hawke told journalists "if we believe in the principle of rights of independent

nations to be free and to be free from naked aggression from their neighbors then we have to be prepared even at some risk to back up our beliefs with action."

Hawke - a close friend of US President George H W Bush - was also engaged in the diplomatic effort to convince other nations to join the multinational force to liberate Kuwait. Marking the announcement of the ceasefire on February 28, 1991, Hawke expressed his shared joy with Kuwaitis over the liberation of the country. He also reiterated Australia's commitment to values such as national self-determination, national sovereignty and the rule of law over the rule of force.

Following Kuwait's liberation, Hawke continued his relationship with the country. In 2010, he led the Australia Gulf Council Mission in a visit to Kuwait, where he met with the former Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Hawke was known for his great warmth, openness and sense of humor. He did many great things for Australia, including opening up the economy to make it among the most successful and competitive in the world. He also left a wide impression mark on the global stage, particularly in regards to his efforts to forge closer ties between Australia and Asia and his work to end apartheid in South Africa.

Hawke passed away on May 16, 2019. A state memorial service will be held in Sydney on June 14, 2019. For those wishing to pay their respects, an online condolence book is available at <https://www.pmc.gov.au/pmc/condolences>.

Beware of 'fake' online shopping sites

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Ordering online is not always satisfying. People should be careful when ordering online, especially from an untrustworthy or unknown website, as they may end up paying for something they do not want or even lose their money.

This reporter was a victim of one of such websites. Although it claims to be an Australian site, the item was shipped from China. After waiting for two months to receive the parcel, a completely different item arrived. Contacting the customer care of the website via email, they only responded after two weeks, and after several emails, said they will resolve the problem. Over two months passed and the administration of the website even stopped responding. Finally, the entire website disappeared from the Internet.

As this website is not a local one and does not have an agent here, the customer protection department of the ministry of commerce and industry cannot provide any help. Mohammed from the customer protection department gave personal advice to online shoppers. He advised users to create an account on PayPal and pay through it. "PayPal will ensure your payment is refunded and the item returned if the seller sent you the wrong item. They will sue the seller if they are in any country and not just the United States. It happened with me and I returned the wrong items through PayPal, which also refunded the shipping fee, although the seller demanded I pay this fee," he told Kuwait Times.

This is not the only case of cheating, and these unknown websites exploit the fact that they are in a different country, so it is difficult to sue them. It will also be very costly and not worth the value of the ordered item. Furthermore, these unknown websites do not care for their reputation, as they are unknown in the first place, and most probably were launched temporarily to cheat people and then change their web address.

Even if some of these websites are legitimate and accept to refund or return the wrong item, it is still not fair for the customer. To return an item, the customer will have to pay the shipping fee twice, which is already expensive. The customer will also pay customs duties twice. All these charges may be higher than the value of the ordered item. So the customer will just keep the item even if it wasn't what they ordered.

Paying on delivery is safer and ensures paying for the correct item. But this is not available for all websites. Some websites, especially in the GCC, provide this option. Some have been popular since more than 10 years, such as Souq or Sukar that are based in the UAE. Other popular local and Gulf shopping applications which also offer payment on delivery are Sevi, Non, Shein, Brandat, Boutiqaat and many others. These will ensure hassle-free shopping and legal protection by the ministry of commerce. According to the official PayPal website, the PayPal buyer protection covers them when something goes wrong. It states that the buyer will get a full refund if an eligible order isn't significantly as described, or doesn't arrive. It also mentions that it will refund the return shipping cost on eligible purchases with refunded return service.

Local

Kuwait's Amir condemns attacks on Saudi Arabia, ships off UAE

We are in pain because efforts are not successful towards solving Palestinian cause: Sheikh Sabah

MAKKAH: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah condemned attacks on Saudi Arabia and affirmed solidarity with the Kingdom to defend its security and stability, while denouncing assaults on ships off UAE which threatened maritime navigation and oil supplies. His Highness the Amir, addressing a summit meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), said Kuwait condemned the attacks on Saudi Arabia which targeted its security and safety of its citizens. Kuwait, he said, also condemned attacks on commercial ships off the United Arab Emirates, which posed a threat to regional security and stability as well as safety of maritime navigation and international oil supplies.

His Highness the Amir said the region was experiencing "criticism and unprecedented challenges ... which might affect our nations and stability," which required maximum cautious and allow all efforts aimed at addressing escalation to prevent the region from confrontation. He said wisdom and rationale should prevail in order to prevent conflict and thus "preserve higher interest so our nations, security and safety of our people." His Highness the Amir, meanwhile, said "we are in pain because efforts are not successful" towards solving the Palestinian cause and the suffering of the Palestinians. He called on the international community to activate its efforts to revive the peace process in the Middle East, and affirmed a resolution of the Palestinian cause should be based on right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital in line with UN resolutions, Arab peace initiative and two-state solution.

His Highness the Amir said the suffering of the Yemeni people posed a challenge to the Islamic nation. He said all international efforts failed to end the bloody conflict in Yemen because agreements were not fully implemented, and called for abiding by the recent Stockholm agreement to solve the conflict in Yemen in line with GCC initiative and its implementation mechanism, outcome of national dialogue and relevant UN resolutions.

On Syria, His Highness the Amir said efforts to solve the crisis, which entered its 9th year, were far from being accomplished which would thus prolong the suffering of the Syrian people, while security and stability of the region remain fragile. His Highness the Amir expressed support for the UN Secretary General's special envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths to reach a solution that would end the humanitarian catastrophe in line with UN resolutions and communique of Geneva I. On Libya, His Highness the Amir called on the warring parties to stop hostilities thus bloodshed, and consider the safety of the Libyan people in compliance with UN envoy calls.

Terrorism, said His Highness the Amir, was targeting Muslims "therefore we should double the efforts and boost coordination with international community to confront forces of evil and to continue our victories and achievements." His Highness the Amir said the Islamic nation was "experiencing difficult conditions," noting that 37 percent of Muslims, or 507 million people, live under the poverty

line, while 61 percent of displaced people around the world were Muslims. His Highness the Amir said 40 percent of Muslims were illiterate, while unemployment was more than seven percent. "These are terrifying and painful numbers," which should encourage the Islamic countries to activate development mechanisms. His Highness the Amir urged the Muslims leaders to work together to honor aspirations of their people to live in peace, security and prosperity, in addition to stopping bloodshed of Muslims in conflict areas.

Kuwait's aid

The OIC affirmed support for the legitimate leadership in Yemen, and commended Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait for their humanitarian assistance for the Yemeni people. Leaders of the OIC member countries, concluding a one-day summit in Makkah, supported Yemeni President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi's endeavors to achieve political and economic security and stability in Yemen. They welcomed the resumption of the sessions of resumption of the political process to reach a political solution based on the GCC initiative and its implementation mechanism, outcome of national dialogue, UN Security Council Resolution 2216 and agreement between the Yemeni parties in Stockholm, Sweden. They praised Kuwait's relentless support of the Yemeni issue, citing the host of negotiations between the Yemeni parties for more than three months, and its \$600 million contribution to the humanitarian condition in Yemen. They also praised Saudi Arabia and the UAE for providing \$1.5 billion to UN agencies working in Yemen to provide aid during Ramadan. The leaders also praised Kuwait's role in support of the humanitarian situation in Syria, citing Kuwait's hosting of three donor conferences and chairing two others, as well as contributing \$1.9 billion to alleviate suffering of the Syrian people, either internally displaced or refugees in other countries.

Israel's hostility

Muslim leaders reiterated commitment to the Palestinian cause and importance of establishing the independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, while condemning Israel's systematic violations of Palestinians' rights. The leaders affirmed peace and security in the Middle East could only be achieved with the full withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 in line with international law and relevant international resolutions, the Arab peace initiative and land-for-peace principle. They supported the Palestinian right of self-determination and right of return of Palestinian refugees in accordance with UN resolution 194. They supported Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' initiative at the UN Security Council in 2018 to launch a credible political process through an international multilateral mechanism, urging international actors to establish this mechanism to launch a credible process with a clear time frame for achieving peace based on the two-



MAKKAH: (From left) Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Kuwait's Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud pose for a group picture at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation summit. —Amiri Diwan photo

state solution thus ending Israeli colonial occupation. They urged member countries to confront political and financial pressure placed on the Palestinian people with a view of imposing unjust solutions to their cause. They rejected relocation of US and Guatemalan embassies to occupied Jerusalem and illegal recognition of the city as capital of Israel, viewing this move a blatant attack on the historical, legal and natural rights of the Palestinian people. The OIC summit considered as void any action aimed at changing the historical and legal status of Jerusalem, its status and demographic character.

It condemned the Israeli widespread and systematic crimes against unarmed Palestinian people, and urged the international community to comply with UNSC resolution 2334 to provide protection for the Palestinian people. It urged member countries to expand the economic support for the Palestinian people and the UN Palestinian refugees' agency (UNRWA). They commended Saudi Arabia's \$320 million contribution to Al-Quds and Al-Aqsa Fund, which aimed at preserving Islamic sacred sites in occupied Jerusalem. The OIC leaders, who called for release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, commended UNESCO's decision to referring to Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Ash-Sharif as one legal and acceptable way in the UN system, and that Bab Al-Magharebeh hill was an integral part of Al-Aqsa Mosque. They praised Kuwait and Indonesia, UNSC non-permanent members, for submitting

many initiatives in for the protection of the Palestinian civilians.

Tackling Islamophobia

Muslim leaders called for a comprehensive strategy against Islamophobia with the aim of establishing a binding international legal mechanism to prevent intolerance, discrimination and hatred that were based on religion and belief. The Muslim leaders voiced alarming concern over Islamophobia as a form of racism and religious discrimination that resulted in violent acts and crimes of hatred against Muslims. They called on the UN to set March 15 as an international day against Islamophobia. They strongly condemned the terrorist attacks on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, on March 15, that killed and wounded 50 worshippers and appreciated the government of New Zealand for its strong condemnation of these acts.

They recognized how the Prime Minister of New Zealand embraced the Muslim community and shared their grief. The leaders meanwhile urged all countries with Muslim minorities to refrain from policies, statements and practices that link Islam with terrorism or extremism. They said media in general and social media in particular have a major role in highlighting the moderation nature of Islam, and contribution of OIC to achieve Islamic solidarity. They called for the development of media infrastructure, launching satellite and internal channels. — KUNA

Wisdom, dialogue key to address regional escalation: Kuwait's Amir

MAKKAH: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Thursday urged parties of the current escalation in the region to resort to "wisdom" and take the course of dialogue to address tension. His Highness the Amir, addressing an urgent Arab Summit held in the Saudi holy city of Makkah, said there were "wrong practices that contributed to this escalation, which should make us act to correct the wrong practices through which the Iranian side deals with the developments and troubles of the regional countries." His Highness the Amir said the urgent summit was held amidst critical circumstances "threatening the security and stability of our Arab Nation," and participants should realize the ramifications of these circumstances. "Our Arab nation has been witnessing a sharp decline in its security and stability, which affected our ability to activate our common Arab action and derailed potentials of development and construction of our countries," he said.

His Highness the Amir affirmed the Palestinian cause would remain the top cause of the Arabs and that its resolution should be based on relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative and the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital. He also said the conflicts in Yemen and Libya, as well as political uncertainties in Sudan and Algeria were affecting security and stability of the Arab nation. Terrorism, said His Highness the Amir, was causing "a wound" that required collaboration of efforts to address it. His Highness the Amir commended Saudi King's invitation for urgent summit, which reflected his keenness on "our common Arab action."

Respect of good neighborliness

Arab leaders condemned attacks by Iranian-backed on commercial ships in UAE's territorial waters as well as two oil pump stations in Saudi Arabia. The leaders, holding an urgent summit

Thursday night to discuss threats to regional security and stability, said the only way to preserve regional security and stability was through respect of good neighborliness, refraining from using of force and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries. Arab League Secretary General Ahmad Abul Gheit said as he was reading the final communique. He called for importance of coordination of positions among Arab countries to confront all threats against the Arab national security, and condemned the Houthis for firing Iranian-built ballistic missiles from Yemeni territories against Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia, he affirmed, has the right to take all measures necessary to protect its territories in line with UN Charter.

Abul Gheit said Arab leaders condemned Iran's continuous support of the Houthis, its meddling in Bahrain's internal affairs, supplying terrorists with weapons and arms, and igniting sectarian sedition to undermine order and security. He condemned Iran's continuous occupation of three islands of the United Arab Emirates, and supported all peaceful measures by Abu Dhabi to regain its occupied islands.

Abul Gheit said Arab countries agreed to continue banning Iranian channels from using Arab satellites. The Arab countries, he added, agreed to boost diplomatic efforts with regional and international organizations to highlight Iran's practices against the security and peace in region. They called on the international community to take a firm action against Iran's regional policies, as well as its attempts to undermine energy security in the Arabian Gulf and maritime navigation. They condemned Iran's interference in the Syrian conflict, which would not serve efforts aimed at solving the crisis. The Arab leaders, said Abul Gheit, reaffirmed support for the Palestinian cause and the importance of solving this issue in line with relevant UN resolutions and Arab peace initiative. —KUNA

Kuwait's Amir appeals to GCC leaders to put differences aside



MAKKAH: Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders pose for a group picture during an urgent GCC meeting. — Amiri Diwan photo

MAKKAH: His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah appealed to leaders of Arab Gulf countries to put aside their differences in order to overcome critical regional challenges, while making clear to "the other party" that "wrong practices" contributed to the current situation. "I urge you from this blessed place that we achieve hopes and aspirations of our people, and I appeal to you to overcome issues that should not stop us from placing interests of our countries and future of our people as our top priority," His Highness the Amir said at an urgent meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), held in Makkah, in reference to the GCC crisis.

His Highness the Amir called on the GCC leaders to restore unity "of our ranks which enabled us over the past four decades to develop common Gulf action and confront many dangers and challenges." Without this unity, he added, "we will continue to be incapable of giving hope and optimism to our people who were tired of our differences and feeling the pain of their continuous existence."

His Highness the Amir said the critical challenges on the security and stability of this region should "make us rise above our differences and put the higher interest of our countries above anything else." His Highness the Amir said the bloody conflict in Yemen "is threatening our security and stability," and the "tragic" situations in Syria and Libya were undermining security of the Arab nation. He added that uncertainties in Sudan and Algeria required consultations in order to maintain unity and interest "of our countries."

His Highness the Amir expressed solidarity with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia following attacks on their properties, which were undermining two countries' security and stability, as well as jeopardizing international maritime navigation and oil supplies. He called for making it clear for the allies that escalation and tension in the region "will only lead to con-

frontation and destruction of our resources, wisdom should prevail and dialogue should be the only way to prevent our region wars we have long suffered from."

"We need to communicate with the other party and explain in a frank and transparent manner that many factors and wrong practices contributed to this level of tension, and we need to correct the way we deal with events in the region," he said, in reference to Iran. His Highness the Amir said Kuwait's non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council was a chance to convey "our concerns of the recent developments to the UNSC." His Highness the Amir thanked Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz for showing "extreme high sense of historic responsibility amidst these critical circumstances."

GCC condemns attacks

Arab Gulf leaders condemned the Iranian-backed Houthi militias' drone attack against oil pumping station in the Saudi districts of Duwadmi and Afif. The leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), in a final communique following their one-day urgent summit in Makkah, said these terrorist attacks were undermining security of the region, global economy and international oil supplies. The GCC, it said, voiced full solidarity with Saudi Arabia against these terrorist threats. It also supported Saudi Arabia's measures to protect its security, stability and territorial safety, citing more than 225 ballistic missiles' attacks and over 155 assaults by drones by Houthis against Saudi areas.

The GCC leaders also condemned sabotage attacks against a UAE, two Saudi and a Norwegian oil tankers off the United Arab Emirates in a dangerous threat to maritime navigation, which would negatively affect regional and international security and peace, as well as stability of oil markets. The GCC voiced solidarity with the UAE in all its measures to preserve

security and stability. The GCC leaders affirmed the integrated collective security to defend entities and interest of their countries and territorial waters. They said the security of the six GCC countries was integrated and any attack on any member was an assault on all countries, in line with the statute and the defense treaty.

On Iran, the GCC leaders said the Islamic Republic should be committed to principles of UN Charter, international law, good neighborliness, non-interference in affairs of regional countries, refraining from use of force, ceasing funding and arming of terrorist militias and groups, as well as refraining the fueling of sectarian conflicts. They called on the Iranian regime to exercise wisdom, refrain from hostile acts and destabilizing security in the region. They urged the international community to live up to its responsibility and preserve international security and peace, and to take a firm action against Iran to prevent it from acquiring nuclear capabilities and the development of ballistic missiles. Iran should prevent the region from conflicts through respecting international laws and conventions, not interfering in internal affairs of regional countries, stopping the support of terrorist groups and the threat of maritime navigation, aid the leaders.

The GCC leaders commended the coordination and consultation with the US within the US-GCC strategic partnership and bilateral agreements to achieve security and stability of the region. They supported the US strategy against Iran regarding Tehran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, as well as its activities that undermined regional stability and security, support of terrorism, confront the hostile activities of Hezbollah, Iran's revolutionary guards and Houthis. The GCC leaders said they were keen on regional security and stability, global economic growth and stability of oil markets. They urged the international community to secure maritime navigation following attacks on UAE and Saudi Arabia. — KUNA



Turkish Airlines celebrates Ramadan with its long-standing local partners

Four decades of authentic and world-class Turkish hospitality brought to the people of Kuwait



KUWAIT: The Kuwait Office of Turkish Airlines, Europe's best airline, recently hosted its annual Ramadan ghabqa with local media partners, dignitaries, civil aviation senior officials, travel operators, staff, and corporate clients at the Regency Hotel in Kuwait City.

The traditional gala event was attended by the Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait, Ayse Hilal Sayan Koytak who remarked on the strong cultural and economic ties shared between the two countries and wished its partners in success many more years of fruitful collaborations.

Muhammed Baltu, General Manager, Turkish Airlines Kuwait, said: "I am very pleased to see you all today as we celebrate a joyous time as well as recognize our historical journey together. Today, not only marks a special time of the year, it also sig-

nifies a magnificent milestone in our long and successful relationship with Kuwait as we welcome the 40th year of aviation ties with the wonderful people of this country. From the very flight that took off in 1979, we have since flown over more than millions passengers to and from Kuwait to destinations around the globe!"

With new international routes joining its network, Turkish Airlines presently operates flights to 49 domestic and 259 international destinations across 124 countries. 2019 will see the airline fly into, Bali/Denpasar, Mexico City, Cancun, Rovaniemi, Port Harcourt, Luksor, Pointe-Noire, and Strasburg. Domestically, the airline will also add Usak, Siirt and Canakkale. These new routes follow the launch of Sharjah and Marrakesh flights, which started in Q1. From Kuwait alone, Turkish Airlines flies to top



Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait
Ayse Hilal Sayan Koytak



Muhammed Baltu, General Manager,
Turkish Airlines Kuwait



Muhammed Fatih Durmaz - VP of Sales,
Middle East Turkish Airlines Headquarter

destinations in Europe such as London, Munich, Paris, Roma and United States of America Washington, New York, Los

Angeles, daily flights demonstrating the increased demand for a trusted and world-class carrier. Turkish Airlines maintains its

growing presence in Kuwait bridging the two countries closer with more than 56 flights to Turkey every week.



Local



AUB successfully concluded outstanding social program during Ramadan



KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) successfully concluded its extensive social program during the holy month of Ramadan, through which it provided many charitable and religious activities and social welfare work.

This year, the bank's program included the launch of its initiative to provide Ramadan supplies to the needy families. A number of volunteers of the bank's staff participated in this initiative by preparation and distribution of boxes that contained necessary food needs for the poor families in different parts of Kuwait, including Sabhan, and Jleeb Al Shuyoukh and other places. The bank's participation in this campaign is an extension of its contribution to support and encourage social initiatives aimed at improving the living conditions of needy families and putting a smile on their faces in this holy month.

The bank also organized several visits to celebrate girgian with children at Mubarak Hospital, Amiri Hospital and Hussain Makki Juma Center for Specialized Surgery with the participation of a number of the bank's volunteering staff.

The bank also launched its annual Quran Memorization

Competition for the fifth consecutive year. The competition included eight categories of contestants; male and female employees who were tested in Surat As-Saff, staff children (5-14 years) who were tested in Surat Al-Fajr, and staff children (14-18 years) who were tested in Surat Noah. The competition also included a category for the children aged 5-12 years who were tested in Juz' 29, and another general category for adult 13-18 years who were tested in Juz' 27 of the Holy Quran. The competition concluded by honoring the winners of each category. The competition was highly appreciated and valued by the bank management and the organizing committee due to the high turnout it witnessed this year.

The bank also held a religious seminar for its staff at its Head Office titled 'Ready For It?', in which Sheikh Anas Al-Mulla lectured about the virtues of the holy month of Ramadan, and how to spiritually prepare for it. This seminar was part of a series of educational and awareness programs the bank used to organize for its staff within its Ramadan program which was full of different and purposeful activities. Following the seminar, the attendees

were invited to 'Al-Quraysh Banquet' in preparation for the holy month of Ramadan where souvenirs were distributed to the staff in an atmosphere full of intimacy and joy.

The bank also organized a ghabqa to its staff and their families at the Four Seasons Hotel in Kuwait attended by the Executive Management and a large crowd of the bank staff and their families. The ghabqa featured a family feel, in an atmosphere full of joy and delight. The event included many competitions and pleasant surprises where gifts were distributed to the staff and their families. Moreover, the distribution of the girgian to the staff children gave the ghabqa a pleasant and distinctive feel.

On this occasion, Sahar Dashti, General Manager of Customer Protection Department, who is in charge of the bank Social Program said: "We believe in the importance of giving to the community in which we work, and as a sharia compliant financial institution, we are committed to interacting with our community and contributing to its well-being, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, in which it is desirable to do good and reach out to the needy."

Dashti added: "Every year, through our voluntary program for Ramadan, we are keen to instill the values of giving in the minds of our employees and bring about a positive and noticeable change in our society. We have ensured to make our social program in line with the bank's leading role in the field of social responsibility, and to contribute to the spread of happiness and the spirit of fraternity and charity through a number of different events and programs in which the bank staff participate to bring happiness and joy to all segments of society, adding that the bank's social program for the month of Ramadan is part of the bank's ongoing efforts to contribute to society and an extension to its commitment to instill the principle of volunteering among its employees towards their community."

Dashti expressed the intention of the bank's management to continue efforts to develop the social program for the month of Ramadan year after year, to ensure the provision of the best activities that match the nature of the holy month and deepen the bank's engagement with the Society. May Allah Almighty repeat it for the Muslim nation in good, prosperity and blessings.

NBK celebrates girgian with children at NBK Hospital

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) visited NBK Children's Hospital to celebrate with the children the happy moments of girgian. NBK employees spent the day with the children and organized a traditional girgian celebration event, touring the sick children's hospital rooms, playing traditional girgian music and handing out ice cream and treats.

This initiative reflects NBK's commitment towards children. It is a tradition that NBK is keen on maintaining every year at its specialized hospitals, especially that witnessing the joyous reactions reflected on the children's cheerful faces is priceless. girgian celebration is part of NBK's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, specifically designed for NBK Specialty Hospital and Stem Cell Therapy Unit, as part of a wide range of activities and events.

Children at NBK Hospital expressed their happiness to be part of the girgian event and NBK visit, which reflects the Bank's keenness to participate in various social and humanitarian activities, in the spirit of reaching out, sharing and communicating with the children in particular and all other segments of the society in general.

NBK Children's Hospital stands as a landmark for the bank's social initiatives towards children. NBK expanded the hospital's capacity and recently opened the Stem Cell Therapy Unit for children, further expanding its hospital's ability to treat children with cancer and blood diseases.



CONDOLENCES

**The Owners,
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**Extend our Heartfelt
condolences to**

**Mr C N Balasubramaniam
Vice-President, Oil & Gas**

**on the sad demise of his sister
Vijaya Lakshmi**

**who passed away in Bangalore
on May 30, 2019**

May her soul Rest in Peace

**Eid
Mubarak**

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Ocasio-Cortez back behind the bar in minimum wage push

Philippines ships dumped trash back to Canada



TEHRAN: Pedestrians walk in front of a mural painting depicting the late founder of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in the Iranian capital on May 29, 2019. —AFP

Khomeini's legacy still looms over Iran

Velayat-e faqih theocratic principle forms cornerstone of Iranian system

TEHRAN: Thirty years ago millions of mourners crowded the streets of Tehran for the funeral of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, and today the founder of the Islamic republic remains a guiding figure in Iran. The image of the black-turbaned cleric who brought down the monarchy in 1979 stares out at people across the country, from hotel lobbies and the front of stadiums to hospitals and banknotes. In life Khomeini was recognized by his followers as the "Imam", leader of the Shiite community, and decades after his death he remains enshrined in the Iranian constitution as "the great source of imitation".

"His key legacy is the strong notion of independence, sovereignty and resilience against foreign hegemony and imperialism that still continues to exist among Iranians," Mohammad Marandi, head of the American studies department at Tehran University, told AFP. Born in 1902, Khomeini died on 3 June 1989 following a battle with cancer just over 10 years after he led the Islamic revolution that swept Iran's last shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, a key US ally, from power. His rule saw a decade of tensions with the "Great Satan" Washington and the brutal 1980-88 war

unleashed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq that ended a year before he passed.

'Pragmatism'

Khomeini's teaching was centered on the defense of Islam and the underprivileged and a fierce rejection of Western modernity and perceived imperialism. He developed the doctrine of Velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the jurist) stating that power should be in the hands of a supreme spiritual leader chosen for his piety to direct both the state and believers. The theocratic principle forms the cornerstone of the Iranian system that combines elected institutions with religious control aimed at giving the Islamic republic both divine and popular legitimacy.

"Velayat-e faqih is not a concept that he created. It existed in Shiite jurisprudence over many centuries," said Marandi. "What was new was that he actually was able to overthrow a Western-backed dictatorship in the country and establish an Islamic republic" that allowed Iran to put the "theory into practice". The overthrow of the monarchy was achieved thanks to a disparate array of forces that

mixed Shiite clerics, with secular nationalists and Marxists. But after the regime fell Khomeini showed a ruthless determination to shut out those erstwhile allies as he staved off all challenges from them and supporters of the shah. In an Aug 1979 speech the ayatollah exhorted his followers to show no pity for the "enemies" of the revolution, lamenting displays of leniency. "If we had acted as revolutionaries, broken the pens of all the press and closed down all corrupt magazines and corrupt media, prosecuted their corrupt bosses, and banned the corrupt political parties, and set up hanging scaffolds in main squares... we would not be facing these struggles," he said.

Former French ambassador to Tehran Francois Nicoulaud said Khomeini combined both "the pragmatism that it took to get power and to keep it, and the merciless behavior towards the enemies of the Islamic revolution". "He was for the Velayat-e faqih...and he accepted having elected institutions," he said, ticking off examples of the leader's flexibility. "He wanted to go all the way against Saddam Hussein and finished by accepting a peace that had no victor and no vanquished."

'Changed Iranian society'

While Khomeini has become a major historic figure, he continues to play a central role in discourse in Iran decades after his death. "The ayatollah's charisma is kept alive in the political debate," said Clement Therme, an Iran specialist at the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS). "All the political elites of the Islamic republic claim to be his heirs and his words are used in the debate to score points off opponents."

The splits that run through the country's rulers are fed by "different interpretations" of Khomeini's thoughts, Therme said. On the one side are reformists "who insist on the popular elected legitimacy of institutions" and on the other are the conservatives focused on "divine legitimacy", he said. While the disputes may rage over Khomeini's political legacy there is little doubt that he transformed Iran and remains for many in the country a major authority. Khomeini "literally changed Iranian society, (from) a country that was subservient to the needs and interests of foreign entities to prioritizing the needs, the dignity, beliefs, culture and the interests of the indigenous population," said Marandi from Tehran University. —AFP

US heads to new talks with Taliban

WASHINGTON: The US envoy negotiating with the Taliban will hold new talks this month with the insurgents in Qatar, the State Department said yesterday, as momentum builds for a deal to end America's longest war. Zalmay Khalilzad, a veteran US policy-maker who is leading President Donald Trump's push to broker a peace deal with the Taliban, left Friday on a 17-day trip that will also take him to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Germany, Belgium and the United Arab Emirates, the State Department said. In Doha, he will resume talks with the Taliban after a break of around a month "to move the peace process forward," the State Department said in a statement.

Khalilzad has already met six times with the Taliban in recent months as he looks to seal a deal under which the United States will pull out troops who were first deployed following the Sept 11, 2001 attacks. The United States and the Taliban are believed to have largely agreed on the key demand of Washington from 2001 and again now - that the Taliban not allow Afghanistan to be used by violent extremists.

But a major sticking point remains the refusal of the Taliban to negotiate with President Ashraf Ghani's government, which enjoys international support. The Taliban, believing they have leverage on the military front, have also rejected Ghani's overtures for a nationwide ceasefire. "No one should expect us to pour cold water on the heated battlefronts of jihad or forget our 40-year sacrifices before reaching our objectives," Taliban chief Haibatullah Akhundzada said in a rare message released yesterday.

"The doors of dialogue and negotiations have been kept open and at this very moment, the (Taliban) negotiation team... is engaged in negotiations with the American side," Akhundzada said in a message ahead of Eid. Ghani had proposed a nationwide ceasefire at the start of Ramadan early last month, but the Taliban rejected the offer. Last year, the Taliban observed a three-day ceasefire over Eid and many Afghans - exhausted by decades of war and violence - had pinned their hopes on another truce this year.—AFP

India bakes as mercury nears 50 degrees Celsius

NEW DELHI: Temperatures pushed towards 50 degrees Celsius across much of India yesterday as an unrelenting heatwave triggered warnings of water shortages and left locals fearing for their livelihoods. The western, desert state of Rajasthan recorded 49.6 Celsius on Friday - India's hottest day of the year so far, the weather department said. Water and health warnings have been issued with temperatures hovering around 47 Celsius across many western, northern and southern states, with no letup in sight for at least two more days.

In the capital, New Delhi, the Indian Meteorological Department issued a red alert extreme weather warning as temperatures hit 47 Celsius. It said residents should not go out during the hottest hours of the day. Several cities have reported fears of water shortages as lakes and rivers start to dry up. In the western state of Maharashtra,

farmers struggled to find water for thirsty animals and crops. "We have to source water tankers from nearby villages as water reserves, lakes and rivers have dried up," said Rajesh Chandrakant, a resident of Beed, one of the worst-hit districts. "Farmers only get water every three days for their livestock."

Raghunath Tonde, a farmer with a family of seven, said the area has suffered worsening shortages for five years. "There is no drinking water available for days on end and we get one tanker every three days for the entire village," Tonde told AFP. "We are scared for our lives and livelihood," he added. The Hindustan Times newspaper said many Beed residents had stopped washing and cleaning clothes due to the water shortage. More than 40 percent of India faces drought this year, experts from Gandhinagar city's Indian Institute of Technology, warned last month. The annual monsoon - which normally brings much needed rain to South Asia - is running a week behind schedule and is only expected to hit India's southern tip on June 6, the weather department said. And private forecaster Skymet has said there will be less rain than average this year. The Indian peninsula has seen a drastic change in rainfall patterns over the past decade, marked by frequent droughts, floods and sudden storms. —AFP



ALLAHABAD, India: An Indian truck driver takes a bath using a water tanker as he tries to cool himself on a hot summer afternoon on Friday. —AFP

Pompeo attends secretive global meet in Switzerland

BERN: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was to take part yesterday in a secretive meeting in Switzerland of global power brokers discreetly discussing issues like Brexit and the future of capitalism. The State Department confirmed yesterday that Pompeo, who is on a four-nation tour of Europe, would take part in the four-day Bilderberg meeting, which kicked off on Thursday in the picturesque Swiss town of Montreux. His participation had not been previously mentioned in the official agenda and he did not figure on the list of some 130 elites from 23 countries participating in the event.

Already on the list is US President Donald Trump's son-in-law and advisor Jared Kushner, who might use the forum to try to drum up support for his yet to be unveiled Middle East peace plan. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg and elder statesman Henry Kissinger also figure on the list of participants, as do Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire and German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen.

The group, which has met every year since 1954 and was created as a forum for fostering dialogue between Europe and North America, is this year discussing a range of topics such as climate change, the future of capitalism, the ethics of Artificial Intelligence, China, Russia and Brexit, the organizers said. The Trump administration has taken strong and controversial stances on a number of the topics on the agenda, including swelling tensions with Beijing, complex relations with Moscow and a more than sceptical attitude to calls to fight climate change. Pompeo himself recently hailed that climate change was helping open new sea routes in the usually frozen Arctic. The luxury hotel where the talks are taking place has placed high bushes all around its perimeters to keep the press at bay.

'Cheese and chocolate fan'

The participants are meanwhile held to the so-called Chatham House Rule, meaning that participants are free to use the information received, but may not reveal the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker. The secretive nature of the group has given birth to conspiracy theories. Some have warned, for example, that Bilderberg is a group of rich and powerful kingmakers seeking to impose a one world government.

Pompeo arrived in Switzerland on Friday on the second leg of his European tour, following a stop in Berlin and



BERLIN: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo listens to Swiss MP Christa Markwalder during a visit to the Swiss House of Parliament yesterday. —AFP

before travelling on to The Hague and London. Yesterday morning, he and his wife Susan had a guided tour of Bern's Old Town, and today he is due to meet with his Swiss counterpart Ignazio Cassis. Asked why he chose to stay for so long in Switzerland - from Friday afternoon through Monday morning, Pompeo told a group of journalists travelling with him that he is a "big cheese and chocolate fan". —AFP

International

On this D-Day, US allies look for unity and fear the Trump show

Trump will attend two days of memorials in Britain and France

PARIS: For a sign of how far Western politics and transatlantic relations have changed, look no further than next week's D-Day commemorations in Britain and northern France. Five years ago, for the 70th anniversary, former US president Barack Obama travelled to France to stand with America's allies and deliver a moving tribute to their joint sacrifice and shared destiny in World War II. In what was condemned as vulgar and disrespectful by right-wing opponents at the time, he was filmed chewing gum during one of the ceremonies — apparently to stop a craving for a cigarette.

Starting from Wednesday, US President Donald Trump will attend two days of memorials in Britain and France for the 75th anniversary of the world's biggest naval operation, which signaled the start of efforts to liberate western Europe. "It's not the same world," Francois Heisbourg, a former French diplomat and head of the International Institute for Strategic Studies said.

While European leaders in Obama's era would sometimes complain privately that Europe was a low priority for the US president, none ever imagined a US leader actively working to undermine the European Union. And Trump, who has cheered Brexit and is openly hostile to the idea of the EU bloc, has ripped up postwar conventions to such an extent that chewing gum at a ceremony seems like an offence from a different era.

He has publicly refused a handshake with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, called Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau "weak" and has humiliated British Prime Minister Theresa May over her strategy to negotiate Britain's departure from the EU. On his last visit to France in November last year to mark 100 years since World War I, he left mocking the "very low

approval rating" of his host, President Emmanuel Macron. Heisbourg said that "everyone will wait anxiously for the end of the ceremonies fearing a Twitter storm from Donald Trump."

Despite all this, Jeremy Shapiro, an expert on transatlantic relations at the European Council on Foreign Relations, said that relations between the US leader his Western counterparts "aren't disastrous". "They still want to be allies, but there isn't that same sense of shared destiny which is what you need to land people on a beach together. There's a sense that they can have transactions that work," he said. "Trump has caused everyone to see him in that light, and that's how they see him," he added.

Putin absent

The commemorations of the D-Day landings, which saw 150,000 Allied soldiers storm the beaches of northern France on June 6, 1944, will begin on Wednesday morning. Queen Elizabeth II will preside at a ceremony in Portsmouth in southern England attended by May, Macron, Trudeau, Merkel and Trump, who begins a state visit to Britain tomorrow.

Thousands of ships left from Portsmouth under cover of darkness 75 years ago for an invasion that signaled the start of the liberation of western Europe from Nazi occupation. British authorities have said the D-Day event will be "one of the greatest British military spectacles in recent history" involving 26 RAF aircraft and 11 Royal Navy vessels. On Thursday, ceremonies in France will continue along the wide sandy beaches where troops faced a hail of Nazi bullets and artillery shells which left 10,470 dead, wounded or missing on the first day.



OUISTREHAM: A picture shows "La flamme" (The flame), a monument commemorating WWII French commando with Brigadier Simon Christopher Joseph Fraser aka The Lord Lovat statue at the foreground. — AFP

One notable absentee will be Russian President Vladimir Putin, who was invited to represent the Soviet Union for the first time in 2004 on the 60th anniversary of the invasion. He was also present in 2014, just as his relations with the West were collapsing over his decision to order troops into eastern Ukraine to annex Crimea.

"In 2014, the attack in Crimea gave the Allies something to unite around," Heisbourg said. The Russian leader, whose government made "sweeping and systemic" efforts to help get Trump elected in 2016 — according to an investigation by US special counsel Robert Mueller — was not invited this time.—AFP

Pope celebrates diversity in Romania

SUMULEU CIUC: Pope Francis on the second day of a visit to Romania celebrated diversity at a mass yesterday attended by tens of thousands of people in a predominantly ethnic-Hungarian part of the Transylvania region seen as the highlight of his trip. The open-air mass was keenly awaited for reasons of both faith and national identity in majority Orthodox Romania, where believers suffered under the post-war decades of Communist rule.

For Catholics in the "Szeklerland" area, where some 600,000 ethnic-Hungarians comprise a majority of the population, the pope's visit was seen as welcome recognition of their identity. Under dark skies, a sea of colorful rain coats formed around the hillside of the Sumuleu Ciuc shrine as Francis arrived by pope-mobile.

Golden rose

In his mass, Francis celebrated "a people whose wealth is seen (in) its myriad faces, cultures, languages and traditions" and called on pilgrims not to be "afraid to mingle, to embrace and to support each other". "To go on pilgrimage is to participate in that somewhat chaotic sea of people that can give us a genuine experience of fraternity, to be part of a caravan that can together, in solidarity, create history," he said. Up to 100,000 people were estimated to have attended the ceremony, which saw the Argentinian pontiff present a golden rose at the large wooden replica of the Madonna — a tradition for popes visiting major Marian shrines. "For us, worshippers, it's a very beautiful thing to have the pope among us. It's a once-in-a-lifetime chance," Iosif Orban, a pilgrim said. Another man, Alexandru Miron, said he walked one and a half hours through pouring rain and mud early yesterday to see the pontiff. "Was it worth it? Yes," he said.

Pilgrims from abroad

Most pilgrims were Romania-based ethnic-Hungarians, but organizers had said some 25,000 would also travel from Hungary itself, as well as from Slovakia, Serbia and Ukraine, all countries with sizeable Hungarian communities.

Having come by train, car and bicycle, thousands of people started gathering late Friday with churches in the nearby small town of Miercurea Ciuc, 215 kilometers north of Bucharest, staying open all night to accommodate pilgrims. Between religious chants in Hungarian, they expressed their hopes for the 82-year-old's visit.—AFP

Who won WWII? Russia's role gets short shrift in France

PARIS: When world leaders gather for D-Day commemorations, Vladimir Putin's absence will be a sign of how Russia's huge sacrifices in World War II have gone missing in most French minds. It's a striking reversal from 75 years ago, when the Soviet contribution at a cost of 27 million dead soldiers and civilians was hailed by the French as the biggest factor in Germany's defeat.

Just after the European fighting ended in May 1945, a poll by the French survey group Ifop found that 57 percent of the French thought Moscow had contributed the most to the war effort, compared with just 20 percent who named the United States. But by the 60th anniversary of the Normandy landings by Allied forces in 2004 — when Russia was represented for the first time, by Putin — the figures were reversed, with just 20 percent putting the Soviet Union first.

Instead, 58 percent lauded the US, even though its total losses of 400,000 in both the European and Pacific theatres were just a small fraction of the dead in the Soviet Union. "From a purely historical point of view, overlooking the absolutely critical role of the Soviet Union is absurd," said Denis Peschanski, a senior research fellow at France's CNRS institute, who has long studied the evolution of France's collective memory of the war.

While the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact initially established neutrality between Moscow and Berlin, Hitler's 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union led to brutal fighting and sieges of Russian cities until Stalin was able to mount a counterattack. The fierce Russian offensives battered Germany's military might while immobilizing millions of Nazi soldiers who might have reinforced the Atlantic coast.

"In 1945, the great ally was Stalin and the USSR — their role was absolutely clear for the French," said Stephane Grimaldi, director of the Caen Memorial Museum for World War II in Normandy. "But 50 years later, it's the US that won, for the very simple reason that in the meantime we had the Cold War," he said. Hollywood also helped change perceptions with a string of hit films starting in the 1960s showing brave Americans fighting far from home. "If you



MOSCOW: People walk along Arbat pedestrian street in downtown Moscow on May 24, 2019, as a portrait of a Soviet WWII commander Marshal Georgy Zhukov is seen on a wall. — AFP

look at way it has been portrayed in popular culture, it's all about the battle in France and the Battle of Britain, but World War II was overwhelmingly Germans and Russians killing each other," said Jeremy Shapiro from the European Council on Foreign Relations.

For decades, French presidents didn't officially commemorate the D-Day landings, when 150,000 Allied soldiers stormed France's Atlantic coast by sea and by air. French Resistance hero and president Charles de Gaulle refused to honor the Allied operation in which he was relegated to a secondary role.

Upon entering Paris in 1944, he cheered a city "liberated by itself, liberated by its people" — despite the lines of British and American tanks behind him "De Gaulle wanted first and foremost to re-establish France's sovereignty, and that meant getting the Americans out," Grimaldi said.—AFP

A look at the vivid life of Spain's Juan Carlos I

MADRID: He only discovered Spain when he was 10, was picked by dictator Francisco Franco to succeed him but instead steered his country to democracy. Today, former king Juan Carlos I retires from public life. "Such a long, full story, as if it were designed by an architect," Spanish novelist Eduardo Mendoza said last year.

Born 81 years ago in Italy, the grandson of exiled Spanish king Alfonso XIII will go down in history as the one who gave both the throne back to the House of Bourbon and democracy back to Spain. But the end of his 38-year reign (1975-2014) was clouded by several scandals until he abdicated in favor of his son Felipe VI.

A child takes the train

On a winter day in 1948, a 10-year-old boy, escorted by a duke and viscount, arrives at Lisbon station. This little prince "with his blond curls, fighting back tears," boards a train bound for Spain, a country he doesn't know, writes Jose Luis de Vilallonga in his biography "The King." Dictator Francisco Franco, who rules Spain with an iron fist since 1939 when he won a civil war, has decided to bring him over.

His father Juan de Bourbon might be wary of Franco but has accepted to entrust Juan Carlos to the dictator with the hope that one day, the throne will be returned to the Bourbons after Alfonso XIII fled the new republic in 1931. Far from his family, Juan Carlos' childhood is

marked by church services and speeches vaunting the victory of Franco's forces over the republican "reds."

He also plays a lot of sport with friends who call him "Juanito" or else "your highness." When he is 18, tragedy hits when he accidentally kills his 14-year-old brother with a shot to the forehead while visiting his parents in Portugal, according to the biography "Juan Carlos" written by British historian Paul Preston. Franco will make sure the accident is kept under wraps. Trained in military schools, Juan Carlos will spend 27 years of his life in the shadow of the dictator who may have considered him as the son he never had but still "devoured police reports" about him, says Preston.

Head down with Franco

In 1962, Juan Carlos marries then Princess Sofia of Greece whom he met on a cruise. Seven years later, Franco names him as his successor. Two days after the death of the dictator, on November 22, 1975, he finally recovers his grandfather's throne and becomes Juan Carlos I. "Years of appearing with Franco, dejected and mute, has prompted the widespread idea that he lacked both intelligence and courage," writes Preston.

But it wasn't so. Going against his mission to preserve the Franco regime, the king chooses to carry his country to democracy. The Communist Party is legalized, political offences are amnestied and, after free elections in 1977, he is applauded as "the king of all Spaniards."—AFP

Battered Athens turnaround a tall order for new mayor

ATHENS: Battered by the crisis that ravaged the rest of Greece, Athens will have a new mayor today and a challenge to reverse the fallout from the country's long recession. Across the city, the damage from the economic slowdown is still evident: abandoned or dilapidated buildings, shuttered shops, broken sidewalks, and wide pockets of drug abuse and prostitution.

Polls for the second round of Greece's local elections today see conservative New Democracy candidate Costas Bakoyannis, son of a former mayor, with a lead of over 25 points against leftist government candidate Nassos Iliopoulos. Frontrunner Bakoyannis, whose mother Dora was Athens' first female mayor ahead of the 2004 Olympics, promises to usher in a "new era" by focusing on "the obvious": "Safety, cleanliness, lighting."

"A mayor is not elected to concern himself with world peace. A good mayor for Athens is one... that wakes up the city in

the morning and tucks it in at night," the 41-year-old candidate, a grandson of former prime minister Constantine Mitsotakis, said in a recent interview. Among Bakoyannis' pledges is a 54.4-million-euro (\$60-million) promenade connecting some of the capital's main landmarks, and an emphasis on playgrounds and cycling routes.

In addition to wiping out a quarter of the country's economic output, the 2010-2018 crisis also decimated real estate prices in Athens, as did a succession of violent anti-austerity demonstrations in the city centre. Yiorgos Kymionis, a cloth merchant, was among the few who stood their ground while most fled the area. "It was difficult at first... residents and business owners nearly abandoned this district outright," says Kymionis, who opened his shop at the height of the crisis in 2012. And even now, most people come downtown to have a coffee, not to shop, he said.—AFP

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May his soul Rest in Peace

International

First the emperor, now the queen: Trump revels in royal splendor

Boris Johnson would make 'excellent' British PM: Trump

WASHINGTON: Just a few days after returning from his visit to Japan, where he met new Emperor Naruhito, Donald Trump heads to Britain, where Queen Elizabeth II will receive him during a state visit that could be rocky. The US president - who has never hidden his affinity for military honor guards and red-carpet diplomacy - will arrive in London at a moment when the country's politics are in disarray. Prime Minister Theresa May will soon step down, her party is looking for a successor and Britons are wondering how their "Brexit" from the European Union is going to happen - and what it will mean for them.

His last visit to Britain nearly a year ago, which brought tens of thousands of protesters into the streets, was particularly tumultuous after Trump's criticism of May to The Sun tabloid caused an uproar. Trump's three-day stay this time around begins tomorrow with a ceremony at Buckingham Palace followed by lunch with the queen. That evening, he will be the guest of honor at a state dinner, a privilege also afforded to George W Bush and Barack Obama.

So what kind of attitude will the billionaire Republican adopt on the trip? Will he weigh in further on who should next occupy 10 Downing Street? Will he offer Britons advice on how to leave the EU? As have all his pred-

ecessors, he will certainly emphasize the "special relationship" between the United States and Britain. But the rest - as with most things related to POTUS 45 - is hard to predict. "I think President Trump is perhaps looking most forward to his interactions with the royal family," said Heather Conley, director of the Europe program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

In the summer of 2018, Trump had tea with Elizabeth II at Windsor Castle, but was not afforded the pomp and circumstance of a state visit. Before he sets foot on British soil, there are multiple calls for protests - and controversy is already brewing. The leader of Britain's main opposition Labour party, Jeremy Corbyn, declined an invitation to the state dinner in Trump's honor. He said it wasn't the time to roll out the red carpet for a president who "rips up vital international treaties, backs climate change denial and uses racist and misogynist rhetoric".

The 'excellent' Boris Johnson

On Tuesday, Trump's trip will take a decidedly political turn when he sits down with May, just days before she steps down on June 7. While she was the first foreign leader welcomed to the White House after Trump's election victory in Nov 2016, their relationship has

not always been rosy. Tensions have soared on occasion and the disputes between the two sides are real. "When you look at the US-UK relationship, there's a lot of bilateral disagreement," Conley said, naming Iran as a major point of contention, seeing as Britain backs the nuclear deal dumped by Trump.

The Paris climate accord, which Trump also abandoned, is also on the list. The US president's talks with Prince Charles, who is actively pro-environment, could focus on this issue. China and its controversial tech giant Huawei could also be on the agenda, as well as a US-British trade deal, though no concrete progress is expected from this trip. Before heading across the Atlantic, Trump staked a claim to close ties with Boris Johnson, the pro-Brexit favorite in the race to succeed May, and anti-EU populist Nigel Farage.

"Nigel Farage is a friend of mine. Boris is a friend of mine. They're two very good guys, interesting people. I like them," Trump said. "Maybe it is not my business to support people but I have a lot of respect for both of those men." He doubled down on Friday, praising Johnson's bid for the prime minister's post in an interview with The Sun. "I think Boris would do a very good job. I think he would be excellent," he said. "I have always



COLORADO SPRINGS, Colorado: US President Donald Trump places his hand on his heart as he listens to the national anthem being played during the 2019 graduation ceremony at the United States Air Force Academy on May 30, 2019. — AFP

liked him. I don't know that he is going to be chosen, but I think he is a very good guy, a very talented person." No meetings are scheduled with Johnson or Farage - for now. Trump added that several candidates in the

Conservative leadership race had asked for his support, without revealing who. A key Leave campaigner in the Brexit referendum, Johnson has said he is prepared to take Britain out of the European Union, "deal or no deal". — AFP

Trump to formally announce re-election bid on June 18

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said Friday that he would formally announce his bid for re-election at a June 18 rally in Florida - a state that was key to his victory in 2016. Trump's wife Melania, Vice President Mike Pence and his wife Karen will also be part of the evening event in Orlando at the Amway Center arena, Trump said on Twitter. "I will be announcing my Second Term Presidential Run... on June 18th in Orlando," he said. "Join us for this Historic Rally!"

The event is largely symbolic - Trump has made it clear since taking office that he planned to run again in 2020, has held multiple campaign rallies and has already raised tens of millions of dollars. When he speaks to his supporters, he often refers to his six remaining years in power - not the 18 months left in his first term. Trump will launch his campaign against the backdrop of mounting Democratic calls for his impeachment, including by several of the nearly two dozen members of the opposition party seeking to unseat him.

For now, the 72-year-old billionaire Republican leader has focused his energy - and fiery criticism - on Democratic frontrunner Joe Biden, the 76-year-old former vice president. Biden, a six-term senator before serving as number two to president Barack Obama, has taken a substantial lead in early polling. Trump has referred to him as "Sleepy Joe" - and even "SleepyCreepy Joe". Biden styles himself, like Trump, as an ardent defender of working class Americans - someone who can win back the Midwestern, white, male blue-collar voters who went for the Republican in 2016. Trump defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton to win the White House.

Three weeks ago, Trump said the Democratic presidential primary would come down to a race between Biden and independent Senator Bernie Sanders, who lost the nomination to Clinton in 2016. "Looks to me like it's going to be SleepyCreepy Joe over Crazy Bernie," Trump tweeted. "Everyone else is fading fast!" In the announcement of his presidential run in April, Biden said Trump had "fundamentally altered the character of this nation." The scene of Trump's announcement is no accident: Florida is a major prize for any presidential candidate, and traditionally a battleground state. — AFP

Ocasio-Cortez back behind the bar in minimum wage push

NEW YORK: American congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez returned to her restaurant roots on Friday, donning an apron and serving drinks in Manhattan in a push to raise the country's minimum wage. The 29-year-old New Yorker and rising political star, who describes herself as a socialist, worked as a bartender and waitress in a restaurant in her hometown before entering Congress last year. "I was nervous that I may have lost my touch - still got it! That muscle memory doesn't quit," she wrote on Twitter after an hour taking orders and swinging a cocktail shaker at a restaurant in her Queens constituency.

Ocasio-Cortez was promoting of the "One Fair Wage" campaign, which is calling for a raise to the federal hourly minimum wage to \$15 for service workers. "The federal tipped minimum wage is \$2.13 an hour. That is unacceptable. Any job that pays \$2.13 an hour is not a job. It's indentured servitude," she said behind the bar. "All labor has dignity, and the way that we give labor dignity is by paying people the respect and value that they are worth."

Bronx-born Ocasio-Cortez, who has become a favorite target of Donald Trump supporters, owes part of her aura to her magnetic social media presence and her bold, progressive political platform. She told the Guardian last year that prior to entering politics she worked 18-hour shifts as a waitress and bartender to help save her mother's home from foreclosure. From the start, Ocasio-Cortez traded heavily on her non-privileged background in her quest to defeat a 10-term,

Miami's would-be prince gets long stay behind bars

MIAMI: A Florida man who posed as a Saudi royal for three decades and cheated people out of \$8 million will spend 18 years in prison for fraud, authorities said Friday. Anthony Gignac, 48, constructed a personal world of luxury from his regal scam involving fake diplomatic credentials and a coterie of bodyguards. Posing as Khalid Bin Al-Saud, he lived in a condo on Miami's posh Fisher Island, drove a Ferrari with a forged diplomatic license plate and



NEW YORK: US Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez works behind the bar at the Queensboro Restaurant on Friday in the Queens borough. — AFP

Democratic Party grandee in her first political race in a New York primary last June. Overnight, she went from total unknown to the toast of coastal America, profiled

in Vogue, a guest on chat shows and jetting around the country lending her rock-star status to other insurgent candidates. — AFP

eagerly courted investors and gift-givers. He was accompanied by bodyguards carrying fake diplomatic papers and demanded to be treated according to royal protocol, which he used to justify demands for gifts from potential investors. Dozens of people deposited money into his bank accounts, thinking Gignac, whose apartment bore a sign on its door reading "Sultan", would invest it. Instead, he spent it on everything from designer clothes to yachts to private jet rides.

Gignac moved to Miami in 2017 but Prince Khalid emerged long before then. Born in Colombia, Gignac was adopted by a family in Michigan at age seven, with his alter-ego first emerging 10 years later when he was 17 years old. Since then, Gignac has been arrested and convicted several times for fraud, but that wasn't enough to stop Prince Khalid. Amazingly, his years as a fraudster started to collapse like a house of cards around him when

a real estate developer saw Gignac happily eating ham, bacon and other pork products that would normally be off-limits for a devout Muslim prince, according to the Miami Herald.

In November 2017, he was arrested and charged with 18 counts, including electronic fraud and aggravated identity theft. "Over the course of the last three decades, Anthony Gignac has portrayed himself as a Saudi Prince in order to manipulate, victimize, and scam countless investors from around the world," US Attorney Ariana Fajardo Orshan said in a statement. "As the leader of a sophisticated, multi-person, international fraud scheme, Gignac used his fake persona... to sell false hope," she said. "Dozens of unsuspecting investors were stripped of their investments, losing more than \$8 million." Judge Cecilia Altonaga handed down the hefty sentence, saying Gignac's life of luxury crime had been "really extraordinary". — AFP



TEGUCIGALPA: A masked demonstrator throws a tyre into a burning fire at the entrance of the US embassy during a demonstration of the education and health sectors protesting against government reforms on Friday. — AFP

Masked group targets US embassy with arson attack during protests

TEGUCIGALPA: Masked protesters set fire to the gate of the US embassy in Honduras on Friday during massive demonstrations against public sector reforms in the country. Thousands of doctors, teachers and students had taken to the streets to demand the government abandon plans to privatize the health and education sectors. Firefighters came to extinguish the blaze, which destroyed the diplomatic mission's gate without damaging the main embassy building.

The US embassy issued a statement after the attack urging Hondurans to refrain from "acts of violence". Police spokesman Jair Meza told local media that one of the suspects, a 23-year-old man, had been arrested. Relatives of the suspect later went with a crowd to the police headquarters where they shouted demands for his freedom. Demonstrators blamed "government infiltrators" for the damage to the embassy. — AFP

Guaido renews call for Maduro to quit after Norway talks

SABANETA, Venezuela: Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido renewed calls for President Nicolas Maduro to resign on Friday while campaigning in the birthplace of former leader Hugo Chavez, following inconclusive talks in Norway to end the country's crisis. Guaido - who is backed by the United States and is recognized as interim president by more than 50 countries - has been leading a push to oust leftist firebrand Maduro, who has presided over a crumbling economy after succeeding Chavez in 2013.

During a brief speech before a handful of followers in the small town of Sabaneta, Guaido called for a "large mobilization" of protesters to rally against the government over shortages of gasoline and prolonged blackouts in the country. "The real solution is, without a doubt, to leave once and for all and let us live in peace," he said of Maduro. Sabaneta has been turned into a shrine for the hugely popular Chavez, who mixed a larger-than-life personality with a man-of-the-people style and generously-funded social programs through oil revenues.

Dozens of walls in the town are adorned with murals of the leftist leader, who died of cancer in 2013, and a bronze and granite statue of the former president, donated by the Rosneft oil company on behalf of Russian President Vladimir Putin, stands six blocks away from where Guaido spoke on Friday. But Maduro struggled to fill his mentor's shoes and he quickly lost favor after a fall in oil prices in 2014 precipitated a massive economic crisis.

Sabaneta resident Mireya Moreno, 61, said that even locals who had staunchly supported Chavez had turned against his successor. "We have hope that Juan Guaido will take us out of this hole we are in," the teacher told AFP. Venezuela is reeling from astronomical rises in the cost of consumer goods, with the International Monetary Fund forecasting an



SABANETA, Venezuela: Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed interim president Juan Guaido points to supporters during a rally in Barinas state on Friday. — AFP

inflation rate of 10 million percent by the end of the year. Representatives of Guaido and Maduro met face-to-face in Oslo this week as part of talks mediated by Norway aimed at resolving the country's political deadlock. Further talks are planned despite the first meeting ending without agreement. Maduro's government will go into the next round proposing the "release" of resources for medical transplants which are blocked by US sanctions, the leader said Friday. Four children have died in the last month waiting for bone marrow transplants at the main pediatric hospital in Caracas. — AFP

International

US won't 'tiptoe' with Asia stability at threat: Shanahan

US lawmakers impressed by defense secretary's speech

SINGAPORE: The United States will no longer "tiptoe" around in Asia, with stability in the region threatened on issues ranging from the South China Sea to Taiwan, acting US Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said yesterday. Shanahan did not directly name China when making accusations of "actors" destabilizing the region, but went on to say the United States would not ignore Chinese behavior, the latest in the exchange of acerbic remarks between the world's two biggest economies. He added, however, he was keen to foster a military relationship with Beijing.

"Perhaps the greatest long-term threat to the vital interests of states across this region comes from actors who seek to undermine, rather than uphold, the rules-based international order," Shanahan said at the annual Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Asia's biggest security gathering. "If the trends in these behaviors continue, artificial features in the global commons could become toll-booths, sovereignty could become the purview of the powerful."

Shanahan's first major speech since taking over as acting defense secretary in January came as the United States and China remain locked in an escalating trade war and at odds over a range of security issues in Asia. His reference to artificial features was a swipe at islands built by China in the disputed South China Sea, a strategic waterway claimed almost wholly by Beijing. "We're not going to ignore Chinese behavior and I think in the past people have kind of tiptoed around that," Shanahan said later in answer to a question.

A senior Chinese military official responded to Shanahan's comments by saying that the United States' actions on Taiwan and the South China Sea were hardly conducive to maintaining stability in the region. Shanahan said it was in Beijing's interests to have a constructive relationship with the United States. But he added: "Behavior that erodes other nations' sovereignty and sows distrust of

China's intentions must end." "Until it does, we stand against a myopic, narrow, and parochial vision of the future, and we stand for the free and open order that has benefited us all - including China."

US lawmakers said Shanahan's speech was impressive. "I was very impressed and I certainly am looking much more positively on potentially voting for him when his confirmation happens," Democratic Senator Tammy Duckworth told reporters. The White House said last month that it plans to nominate Shanahan as defense secretary, a job he has been doing in an acting capacity since January, the longest in Pentagon history. His nomination, if and when it comes, will have to be confirmed by the Senate.

"The way he laid out the facts and the United States' position in a firm way, but very upfront, impressed me tremendously," Duckworth added. Senator Angus King, a political independent from Maine and on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said Shanahan had "distinguished" himself and was hopeful the confirmation hearing would take place within about a month.

Trade war

Shanahan said that he did not see the current trade dispute between China and the United States as a trade war, but rather just part of trade negotiations. An increase in Chinese tariffs on most US imports on a \$60 billion target list took effect as planned yesterday, after Washington's own tariff increases. Shanahan also became the latest senior US official to call out Chinese telecoms giant Huawei, saying in his speech that it was too close to the Chinese government. The United States has accused Huawei of espionage, breaching trade sanctions against Iran and intellectual property theft. Huawei disputes all allegations. China's Defense Minister Wei Fenghe is due to address Asia's marquee security summit today when he is expected to criticize the United States over its implied support for a

chaos across several countries in Africa. Earlier this year, a thick green carpet of the weed choked up Kenya's main entry to Lake Victoria, the largest body of water in Africa. It was first noted in Nigeria in the early 1980s, in the Badagry creeks west of Lagos, reportedly spreading from neighboring Benin. Since then, mats of weeds have spread to rivers across the country, including Nigeria's oil-rich Niger delta.

Fishermen say the weed is so thick it creates a dense cover that makes it difficult for fishing boats to navigate the river. It is having a damaging impact. One study, from Nigeria's Obafemi Awolowo University, estimated it put at risk one-third of Nigeria's local fish supply, a cheap source of food millions rely on. That threatens to put thousands of fishermen out of a job. "It has become a menace to the marine ecosystems of Lagos," said Nkechi Ajayi, spokeswoman from Lagos State Waterways Authority, adding that it impacted "the socio-economic activities" of river communities.

Propeller problems

Water transportation is also at risk. Operators complain of damaged boats and risk of accidents. "We often find it difficult to navigate whenever the weeds clog the river," said boat driver John Ibikunle, as he waited to pick passengers on Lagos Island. He said many commuters, who once preferred water transport to beat the perennial Lagos traffic gridlock, are returning to the roads, tired of being stuck on water with weeds snagging the propeller. "They cause mechanical problems to the propulsion system of boats," added Ajayi, from the waterways authority.

The plant doesn't grow well in salt water, and environmental experts say the plant expands during the rainy season when the level of fresh water rises in Lagos lagoon. "It

Angola rebel gets reburial 17 years after death

LUANDA: Former leader of Angola's rebel UNITA movement Jonas Savimbi will be reinterred yesterday, 17 years after he was killed in a shootout with government soldiers that spelt the end to the country's long civil war. Angola, a former Portuguese colony, became a Cold War battleground after independence in 1975 when the Marxist-Leninist People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) seized control. The United States lined up behind Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) rebels and the Soviet Union and its allies backed the MPLA.

"The remains have been returned to UNITA and the family," Alcides Sakala Simoes, spokesman for UNITA, told AFP on Friday. "There was a lot of emotion. It has been 17 years since the government was asked to give us the body. This is an important step for national reconciliation." "We are moved and relieved, we will be able to mourn," Cheya Savimbi, his eldest son, said after the remains were handed over at a ceremony in Andulo about thirty kilometres from the village of Lopitanga where the funeral will be held. At least half a million people died in the conflict for the vast, oil-rich southern African nation, which played out over more than a quarter of a century.



ANDULO, Angola: Palbearers guard the coffin of Jonas Savimbi, a former leader of the UNITA movement, as it is carried during the reburial of the remains yesterday in his home village of Lopitanga. — AFP



SINGAPORE: China's Defense Minister Wei Fenghe (left) and acting US Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan (front second right) attend the opening of the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue summit in on Friday. — AFP

democratic Taiwan. On Friday, Shanahan held talks with Wei that both sides called "constructive", although their teams later reverted to type with critical comments on each other's defence strategies.

Along with the expected warnings aimed at China, Shanahan referred to cooperation between the two countries in areas like military-to-military exchanges, counter-piracy and joint efforts to reduce the "extraordinary

threat" posed by North Korea's military ambitions. "I am confident that we'll solve problems," Shanahan said. Shanahan also called on US allies to contribute more to their own defense. Burden-sharing, from Asia to Europe, has long been a demand of President Donald Trump's administration. "We need you to invest in ways that take more control over your sovereignty and your own ability to exercise sovereign choices." — Reuters

Aquatic weed plagues waterways in Lagos

LAGOS: Traffic jams on the snarled up roads of Nigeria's megacity of Lagos are legendary, but a growing problem is also clogging up the waterways of Africa's biggest city - water hyacinths. The spread of the invasive species of fast-growing plant is not only damaging transport links in Nigeria's economic capital, built on a lagoon dotted with islands. With waterways covered and silting up, the aquatic weed is also threatening fishing jobs and a vital food source. "This is all I can get since morning," said fisherman Solomon Omoyajowo, showing a handful of fish in a bowl in his wooden canoe.

The 45-year-old fisherman has already been forced to move his nets from one part of the Ogun river too thick with weeds, to a new area nearer the sea. "Many fishermen have abandoned their boats, while some of us who still want to continue, now try our luck here," he told AFP, using his palms to wipe a stream of sweat from his face. "Water hyacinths are killing the fish in the river," said another nearby fisherman, Adisa, as he cast his net into the river. When he hauled it up, he had caught only four small fish. "I don't think I can do any other job apart from fishing," Adisa said. "I will continue to manage until the government comes to our aid to clear the weeds."

Jobs at risk

Originally from South America, the plant has caused



Ian Khama

Botswana ex-prez slams successor

JOHANNESBURG: Botswanan former president Ian Khama has accused his chosen successor of becoming an autocrat and threatening the country's reputation as a beacon of stability in Africa. Khama, 66, last week left the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) in a culmination of a dramatic fallout with President Mokgweetsi Masisi, who took office last year. Khama told AFP that he took the "very painful" decision to leave the BDP because of the "immature and arrogant" attitude of Masisi's government.

"The person who I nominated to be my successor, as soon as he took office became very autocratic, very intolerant and it has led to a decline in the democratic credentials that we have a reputation for," Khama said in a telephone interview. After serving the constitutional maximum of ten years in office, Khama handed power in April 2018 to Masisi, who was then his deputy. Khama stepped down 18 months before elections, allowing Masisi to settle into the role and start campaigning.

But the two leaders have clashed so badly that Khama last weekend quit the party and declared he would campaign against it in the October elections. Khama - whose father Sir Seretse Khama co-founded the BDP in 1962 - said he was not joining another party but would back some opposition parliamentary candidates.

He said some senior BDP officials fear the party may be "heading for an election defeat" because they believe Masisi "has now become a liability". Since coming to office, Masisi changed several key policies adopted by Khama - the most high-profile being the lifting of the wildlife sports hunting ban imposed in 2014. "To me it's so sad and extremely painful that all these years' work to build up to what we had achieved is being put in reverse," said Khama, adding Masisi never previously objected to the ban. — AFP

Philippines ships dumped trash back to Canada

MANILA: Tons of garbage sent to the Philippines years ago was shipped back to Canada on Friday after a festering diplomatic row, as Asian nations increasingly reject serving as dumping grounds for international trash. After a long campaign to urge Canada to take back the rotting waste, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte lashed out at Ottawa last week and ordered the refuse returned immediately. The 69 shipping containers of garbage were loaded onto a cargo vessel at Subic Bay, a former US naval base and shipping port northwest of Manila, and began the lengthy trip to Canada.

"Baaaaaaayyyy bye, as we say it," Philippine Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin wrote on Twitter, along with images of the vessel leaving. Canada's Environment Minister Catherine McKenna welcomed the news of the trash being returned, telling reporters on Thursday: "We committed with the Philippines and we're working closely with them." Just days earlier Malaysia announced it was shipping 450 tonnes of imported plastic waste back to its sources, including Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

For years China had received the bulk of scrap plastic from around the world, but closed its doors to foreign refuse last year in an effort to clean up its environment. Huge quantities of waste plastic have since been redirected to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia, Indonesia and to a lesser degree the Philippines. "We've seen pristine communities... transformed into dumpsites because of a tsunami of waste shipments from the US, UK and Australia as a result of the China ban," said Von Hernandez, global coordinator from Break Free From Plastic advocacy group.

The Philippine row centres on dozens of containers which a Canadian firm sent to the Southeast Asian nation in 2013 and 2014 - incorrectly labelled as recyclables. The issue has polluted Manila-Ottawa ties for years, but it blew up when Duterte said in an April speech: "Let's fight Canada. I will declare war against them." — AFP

US pulls tax exemption from Pak diplomats

WASHINGTON: The United States said Friday that it had suspended tax exemption privileges enjoyed by Pakistani diplomats due to parallel disputes with Islamabad in the latest dust-up between the countries. Under the 1961 Vienna Convention, diplomats around the world do not pay taxes in countries where they are posted, with embassy staffers in Washington routinely flashing State Department-issued exemption cards when dining out or shopping.

The State Department said it withdrew tax exemptions for Pakistani diplomats and their dependents as of May 15, citing pending tax issues faced by US diplomats in Pakistan. "The issue is the subject of ongoing bilateral discussions, and we hope to be able to resolve the issue and restore the tax privileges," a State Department spokesman said. While the latest issue was not linked to politics, the United States last year restricted Pakistani diplomats in Washington from traveling outside a 40-km radius around the US capital after charging that Pakistani police routinely harass US diplomats, including through time-consuming traffic stops.

The Pakistani embassy in Washington said that 22 officials enjoyed the tax exemption. In a statement, it also said that discussions were underway "on the basis of the principle of reciprocity." Pakistan is a Cold War ally of the United States but the two countries have had bumpy relations in recent years, with President Donald Trump cutting off some \$300 million in military aid, saying Islamabad had failed to curb Islamist extremists who stage attacks in Afghanistan and India. — AFP

Analysis

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Email: info@kuwaittimes.com
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

New front in US trade war: Fed's dry powder may get burned

The US Federal Reserve's hesitance to react to world trade tensions may have been dealt a fatal blow Friday by President Donald Trump's surprise announcement of new tariffs on Mexico, levies that could slam investment and business confidence and leave little doubt the administration's combative stance is here to stay. The reaction won't be immediate, with few analysts expecting the Fed to cut rates when it next meets on June 18-19.

But a wide berth of forecasters, economists and investors said Friday that the prospect of steadily escalating tariffs, slapped without warning across one of the world's most integrated supply chains, has substantially increased risks to the economy and increased the likelihood the Fed will have to respond. "The damage to business confidence could be lasting," and prompt the Fed to cut interest rates at both its September and December meetings, wrote JP Morgan economist Michael Feroli in a report headlined "Making Abysmal Growth Attainable," a swipe at Trump's signature Make America Great Again campaign slogan.

"Ground zero will be business capital spending," with economic data likely to begin turning sour mid-summer, he said. Financial markets are now pricing in two quarter percentage point Fed rate cuts before the end of the year. Analysts at Barclays went a step further, anticipating the Fed will cut rates a total of 0.75 percentage point by year's end.

Stocks on Friday continued a monthlong slide, and falling bond yields showed investors skeptical about what's to come. Forecasts for economic growth have ebbed well below 2% for the second quarter, compared to about 3% last year and in the first months of 2019. Risks to the Fed outlook are now "completely skewed to the downside," with shaky financial markets and waning confidence possible precursors to a slowdown that would prompt the Fed to react, said Cornerstone Macro analyst Roberto Perli.

Distinct from talk that the Fed might cut rates to help nudge along a decade-old recovery and raise weak inflation, Perli said the Fed may soon face a more conventional rescue mission, cutting rates in the face of an earnest slowdown. The impact "is hard to judge...but it would be naive to think there won't be an effect and that only Mexico has something to lose from all this," he said.

Fallout for Fed

For the Fed the fallout may not be all bad. In recent remarks Fed Governor Lael Brainard said that if trade policies lead to an "opportunistic" jump in prices, it could bring the central bank closer to or above its 2% inflation goal, and allow the Fed to send a signal it would tolerate that faster pace of price increases.

But the whipsaw policy environment under Trump has been difficult for the Fed to read. Last year's tax cuts and increased government deficits sparked stronger-than-expected growth and, for a while, a more aggressive pace of Fed rate increases. With the Fed's target interest rate still at a relatively low level of between 2.25% and 2.5%, the central bank may now have to devote its rate cut "ammunition" to battling the impact of the trade war. Officials have been reluctant to commit.

Even the recent collapse of trade talks with China, and the imposition of higher tariffs on an array of Chinese imports, caused little immediate reaction from Fed officials who noted that employment, household spending and other economic data pointed to continued steady growth. That continued to be the case Friday, with April inflation data a bit stronger, and consumer expectations of future inflation on the rise, both positive signs for policymakers worried about a downward drift in price increases. But the Fed's upcoming June meeting will be a first test of how the intensified trade war is influencing opinions at a central bank whose officials were already primed for the economy to slow this year.

Policymakers will release new economic forecasts and update their views on the appropriate level of interest rates for coming months, an early tell of possible support for a rate cut. Along with the blow to confidence and financial markets, there are reasons the Mexico tariffs may move the Fed more than Trump's other trade actions to date. It was an impromptu move, driven by a political dispute over immigration rather than by some economic logic, a fact that may leave Fed officials even less certain about what to expect next.

In addition, more than 70% of US imports from Mexico are so-called intermediate goods, meaning higher input prices for US manufacturers trying to sell their final products at home or in export markets abroad. — Reuters

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Jewish settlers guarded by Israeli security forces walk past a Palestinian pickled vegetable and olive vendor's stall as they tour the Palestinian side of the old city market in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron, during the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan yesterday. — AFP

Why the US 'Workshop' for Palestinians will fail

Dr James J Zogby
President Arab American Institute

Twenty-five years ago, I moderated the panel discussion on the Palestinian economy at the international economic summit in Casablanca, Morocco. I was there in my capacity as co-chair of Builders for Peace (BFP), a project created by Vice-President Al Gore to help grow the Palestinian economy in support of the still-fledgling Oslo peace process.

I learned a great deal both at the Casablanca Summit and in my more than three years with BFP and it is from that vantage point that I want to comment on the Trump Administration's proposal to sponsor an economic "workshop" in Bahrain. In short, I believe this effort will fail, not because the Palestinians won't participate. It will fail because of the reason why Palestinians won't participate.

They know that without sovereignty and independence they cannot grow their economy. The Trump team would have been well advised to learn from - and not ignore - this lesson that Palestinians could have taught them. I first saw this lesson play out in Casablanca. When we arrived there, in January of 1994, we found the atmosphere to be quite heady. Government and business from around the world were there.

In addition to the top echelon of the Clinton Administration, BFP had brought a delegation of American business leaders. Arab governments and investors were there in full force; as were the Israelis - who were demonstrably excited to be welcomed, for the first time, in an Arab capitol. At times, it became almost comical to watch Israeli businessmen spotting an Arab in a thobe and then run up to them to have a picture taken to send home.

The Palestinian leadership were there and were feeling optimistic about their prospects for achieving a Palestinian state within the five-year window projected by Oslo. They were, therefore, eager to begin building the structures of their state and securing the investment needed to create businesses and jobs that would enable them to develop an independent economy.

During the first decades of the Israeli occupation, Palestinians had lost access to much of their water and arable land, been cut off from one another by a harsh occu-

pation regime, and had also been cut off from the outside world. As a result, the territories had undergone a process of de-development and had become increasingly dependent on the Israelis. Israeli businesses dumped products in what had become for them a captive market. Palestinian businesses, where they existed, could only have access to the outside world if they traded through an Israeli middleman.

And the single largest source of employment for Palestinians were low-paying, often humiliating, day-labor jobs in Israel. Our efforts were encouraged by a World Bank study which argued that with investment and access to external markets the Palestinian economy was ready to take off. The US had already pledged \$150 million a year for five years to support the Palestinians, with other nations following suit. My panel featured three Palestinian ministers - all with economic portfolios - who laid out in some detail what they felt was needed to help them grow. At the end of the session, I was approached by a young American, who asked excitedly if I would introduce him to the Palestinian ministers. He told me that he had just been awarded a USAID grant for around \$10 million to help train Palestinians in entrepreneurial skills.

When I relayed his request to the Palestinians, they were furious. One said to me "No one consulted us as to what we needed. Our people don't need to be trained on how to do business. We need capital to be invested in our small business sector and we need the freedom to do business." I experienced variations of this same frustration - with supply-driven instead of demand-driven aid - throughout my tenure at BFP.

In our first year, we brought two delegations of American business leaders to meet with Palestinians to discuss investment and partnership possibilities. The projects that were hatched during our first visit were ultimately aborted when the American side realized that they could not freely import raw materials and export finished products without securing either an Israeli partner (which added unacceptable costs) or Israeli permission (which was not forthcoming).

As I expressed it then "we had the horses at the gate, but the gate never opened." Even US government efforts were blocked. On one occasion I fielded a

troubled call from an official at the Department of Agriculture. They had appropriated funds to ship bulbs to Gaza's farmers in order to assist them in developing an export capacity.

He reported to me that the bulbs had been sitting in the port for months and had rotted. The Israelis wouldn't let them in. What we discovered, in part after then Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown convened a roundtable discussion with Israeli and Palestinian government and business leaders, was that the Israelis simply didn't want the competition that might result from the emergence of an independent Palestinian small business sector.

The Israelis were more interested in protecting their small businesses, than they were in seeing the Palestinians grow and become independent. Brown was even forced to tackle the Israeli resistance to surrendering to Palestinians the franchises that Israelis had secured allowing them to market American products in the West Bank and Gaza. These areas represented but a small percentage of the Israeli GDP - but the Israelis didn't want to give up their economic control.

I accompanied Brown on another visit where we convened a meeting to hear the concerns of Palestinian business leaders. The meeting was held in East Jerusalem's Ambassador Hotel (before Congress bowed to Israeli pressure and barred US officials from meeting Palestinians in Jerusalem). Part way through his opening remarks, many Palestinians began to leave.



A Palestinian protester uses a slingshot to hurl stones at Israeli forces across the barbed wire fence amidst clashes with them during a protest by the border with Israel marking Al-Quds (Jerusalem) International Day along the border with Israel near Bureij in the central Gaza Strip. — AFP

What's Mexico doing to stop flow of drugs and migrants to US?

Despite calling himself a champion of migrants' rights, Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has actually stepped up detentions of Central Americans crossing Mexico - just not enough to please Donald Trump. Mexico's leftist leader scrambled to defend his migration policies Friday after Trump blew up neighborly relations by announcing he would impose tariffs of five percent - rising to 25 percent by October - on all Mexican goods "until the Illegal Immigration problem is remedied." "We are doing our job," Lopez Obrador replied. The anti-establishment politician has gotten a rude wake-up call on the migration issue since sweeping to office in December after a landslide election win.

He initially vowed to break with Mexico's past by warmly welcoming Central American migrants fleeing violence and poverty. His government offered humanitarian visas rather than detaining them, providing access to health services and education during their stay in Mexico. But as the flow of Central Americans trekking toward the United States has continued to surge - drawing threats from Trump to close the border and, now, impose

tariffs - Lopez Obrador has had to change his game plan, if not his stump speech.

Visa restrictions, detentions

Lopez Obrador still talks of welcoming migrants and safeguarding their rights. But his actions on the ground have taken a headline turn. "There's an inconsistency between the narrative and the reality," said Leticia Calderon of the Mora Institute in Mexico City.

An initial lull in migrant detentions under Lopez Obrador's administration was followed by a surge: from January to April this year, Mexican authorities detained 51,607 migrants, a 17-percent increase from the same period in 2018. When more than 13,000 migrants applied for humanitarian visas in less than two weeks, the government suspended the program. Instead, it now gives migrants visas that restrict them to the south of the country, far from the US border.

Originally designed for Central Americans making short visits to southern Mexico for activities like shopping, these "regional visitor visas" are now applied to Africans, Cubans and Haitians as well. Migrants have not taken kindly to the new policies. They have rioted several times in recent weeks in the euphemistically named "shelters" where the authorities hold them. Cubans, in particular, have taken umbrage, breaking out of shelters en masse at least six times since March.

"Lopez Obrador opened his mouth too soon," said international relations expert Javier Urbano at the Iberoamerican University in Mexico City. "Promising a

total overhaul of migration policy in a matter of weeks was completely out of touch with reality." Mexican migration policy, he added, "continues to be based primarily on containment and repression." Nevertheless, migrant detentions at the US southern border continue to rise: in April, border officers apprehended a new record of 58,474 people who crossed in family groups.

Drugs: another sticky issue

Lopez Obrador's big idea to stop migration is a 10-year economic development plan for Central America and Mexico that he says will wipe out the root causes of the exodus. He wants the US to contribute a major part of the \$10 billion-a-year budget, and his administration had been in talks with White House officials to that end. But then Trump lashed out with tariffs over the migration issue - and doubled down Friday by saying Mexico also needed to stop drug trafficking into the US if it wanted the tariffs lifted. Lopez Obrador is also in a sticky situation on drug trafficking.

He has declared an end to the bloody "war" that previous governments waged on the country's powerful drug cartels, the main suppliers to the US. But he has also launched a new, militarized National Guard to fight crime, drawing criticism from human rights groups and disappointing some supporters. As with migration, he appears powerless to stop the problem: the wave of cartel-fueled violence sweeping Mexico has only gotten worse, and this year is on track to break last year's record of 33,500 murders. — AFP

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Zain publishes its 8th sustainability report boldly titled 'Time to Act'

Report is a call-to-action to corporates, governments and individuals

KUWAIT: Zain Group, the leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announces the publication of its eighth annual sustainability report, entitled Time to Act, which stands as a call-to-action to address key global challenges.

The report for 2018 expresses Zain's view that urgent action is required to address pressing issues that include tackling climate change; developing inclusive products and services; investing in building up communities; and addressing the ills of child abuse. Zain is taking major strides in its own right to address these deficiencies, and for example operates a rigorous program to assess the environmental impact of its core business activities while setting targets to reduce its carbon footprint, minimize the waste it produces, and promote greater environmental awareness.

The company has launched a Group-wide campaign on the threat of climate change, which has been communicated across its social media channels with images showcasing the negative impact of these developments such as the rise in sea level and pollution.

With respect to inclusive products and services, the report reflects on how Zain's strategy is centered on providing digital services to businesses and consumers to create long-term positive value for all stakeholders. Key initiatives in 2018 include progress in the areas of smart cities; micro-insurance products; e-health; e-learning; and digital banking services. By investing in the digital landscape, Zain can unlock opportunities and enable positive social outcomes through services such as Zain Life in Kuwait; and AlTibbi and Salamtak micro insurance programs that target low-income and vulnerable segments.

Commenting on the release of the 2018 sustainability report, Zain Group Vice-Chairman and CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi said, "Our reports go beyond being an academic or philosophical exercise, and within them we identify real problems that are afflicting the world and offering real solutions on how to go about making inroads into overcoming them. Time to Act means exactly what the title suggests, and it is important for a compa-

- Zain already possesses impressive sustainability credentials in areas such as climate change; social inclusion; community development; and countering child abuse
- Bader Al-Kharafi: Innovation in our business gives us better capabilities in using digital services to achieve growth and inclusion

ny with the brand and reputation as Zain to lead from the front and not only point out problems but suggest and implement lasting solutions. We are proud to carry this responsibility and shall continue to make our presence felt in a positive way across our footprint."

The communities that Zain serves represent the heart of its operations and the sustainability report chronicles some of the activities the company is undertaking to foster significant and long-term value across its footprint. The company is addressing youth unemployment, which continues to be a critical challenge in the MENA region. With rapid evolution of technology, young people are having to create new career paths and gain skills required to adapt to the global digital economy.

In 2018, Zain Youth (ZY) was launched, which is a youth empowerment platform that aims to capture, measure, and develop youth with necessary skills while providing them access to resources to help them grow and prosper in a rapidly changing environment. At a Group level, Zain set out stringent key performance indicators for the platform to evaluate the success and impact of the initiatives and programs.

Youth-oriented programs instituted by Zain include Zain Bahrain Technology Summer Camp; Zain Kuwait's partnership with Makers Academy and the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs to offer a coding workshop for teens; Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) in Kuwait and

Jordan; Zain Iraq's training workshop for entrepreneurs called ZY waves; and Zain Sudan's sponsorship of Global Entrepreneurship Week in Khartoum.

Zain Group's Chief Sustainability Officer, Jennifer Suleiman commented, "In our eight years of publishing our sustainability reports, this latest one is arguably the most direct when it comes to identifying issues, and calling for actionable solutions to helping solve them. At the heart of what we are doing and saying as an organization is the belief that people have a right to live with dignity, and we believe this is an achievable ambition. We are convinced that the rise of modern technology embodied in the Fourth Industrial Revolution has the power and the reach to drastically improve people's quality of life, and as a digital lifestyle provider we are on the frontline of this ongoing effort."

The 2018 sustainability report also addresses issues related to the tragic problem of child abuse, with Zain having assessed that access to broadband and ICT is a tool for empowerment but also a source of threats for vulnerable groups including women and children.

The company believes that it must remain vigilant regarding this issue and established a working group titled Child Safety and Empowerment Online at the ITU/UNSECO Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, which it is co-chairing with Childhood USA. The working group is focused on how broadband (ICT) can contribute to achieving Sustainable



Development Goal 16.2, "to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children by 2030".

The report is aligned with the United Nations Guiding Principles adhering to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards reporting guidelines. In accordance with Zain's sustainability agenda, the 2018 sustainability report is available only in digital format and can be downloaded for free by clicking here or visiting <https://zain.com/en/sustainability/sustainability-report/>

China raises tariffs on US goods amid escalating tensions

BEIJING: China yesterday increased tariffs on billions worth of US goods as it prepares to unveil a blacklist of "unreliable" foreign companies that analysts say aims to punish US and foreign firms cutting off supplies to telecoms giant Huawei. Beijing's move hits \$60 billion worth of US goods with new punitive tariffs ranging from five to 25 percent, and comes in retaliation for Washington raising duty on \$200 billion in Chinese goods to 25 percent.

Washington and Beijing resumed their trade battle last month when trade talks in the US ended without a deal, with American negotiators accusing Chinese negotiators of reneging on previous commitments. The countries have exchanged tariffs on \$360 billion in two-way trade so far. The tit-for-tat tariff war has been upstaged in recent weeks by Washington's move to blacklist Chinese tech giant Huawei over national security concerns, threatening the firm's global ambitions.

The US Commerce Department placed Huawei on an "entity list" on grounds of national security on May 16, a move that curbs its access to US-made components it needs for its equipment. A 90-day reprieve was later issued.

'Talk' or 'fight'

Hitting back, China's commerce ministry said Friday it would release its own list of "unreliable entities" that break their commercial contracts and stop supplying Chinese firms. "For China's countermeasures, what we say, we do," said anchor Kang Hui on Chinese state broadcaster CCTV's primetime news show that aired across multiple Chinese stations Friday.

"Talk and our door is open. Fight, and we'll fight to the end," said Kang. China's commerce ministry said it would roll out the detailed measures against companies on the list shortly, noting foreign firms that break contracts, cut off supplies or take other discriminatory measures against Chinese firms would be included.

In an opinion piece published by China's state broadcaster Saturday, Chinese legal expert Kong Qingjiang said China's entity list would mimic that of the US. Once a foreign firm is added to the list "all goods, services, technology, and software covered by (China's commerce ministry) will then require a license to be sold to the entity."

"It may serve as a useful tool in dealing with those entities that easily bow to the pressure of foreign governments hostile to China," Kong wrote. First in line to be added to the list will be Huawei partners that cut off supplies, experts said.

"Obviously it's mostly aimed at Huawei suppliers, Intel, Qualcomm, ARM... if anything it's probably aimed at non-US companies, so European, South Korean and Japanese companies that may be trying to decide how strictly to apply the US ruling," said Andrew Polk, an economist at Trivium China. China wants to make it a much more difficult choice to cut off supplies to Huawei, he added.

"It's potentially putting companies in a situation where they are forced to choose between the US and China and that could definitely backfire on them," said Polk. China's state-owned tabloid the Global Times said the new list would "work as deterrent forming a protective barrier around Chinese companies".

"China is ready to wage a protracted economic and trade war with the United States," the nationalist paper said in an editorial. Former Chinese officials warned Friday that the trade war could last decades. "It is quite clear now that this is no longer a trade dispute and will extend much more broadly to punitive economic measures that each side can inflict upon each other," said Christopher Balding, a



BEIJING: This photo illustration shows a display of US cosmetics brand Benefit at a shop in Beijing on Friday. —AFP

China expert at the Fulbright University Vietnam, adding it was reasonable to expect further escalation by each side. "It is quite possible there will be significant collateral damage here," Balding said.

Speaking at a defense and security conference in Singapore on Saturday, the acting US defense secretary said Huawei was "too close" to Beijing, creating "too much risk". "The integration of civilian businesses with the military is too close. China has national policies and laws where data is required to be shared," Patrick Shanahan told the forum.

Tariff hike

US President Donald Trump more than doubled punitive tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese goods to 25 percent last month, and launched the process to hit nearly all remaining imports from the Asian giant.

China responded by increasing tariffs five percent to 25 percent on 5,410 American products yesterday, worth \$60

billion in trade. The list includes beauty products, sports equipment, musical instruments, wine, condoms, diamonds, wood, fabric and toys.

Washington's tariffs appear to have already had an impact on Chinese manufacturing activity, which contracted more than expected last month. While Trump insists China will pay billions in duties, experts note that US consumers and exporters bear the brunt of tariffs on products coming into the United States. "The United States remains an important export market for China, but its importance is declining," said Wang Shouwen, who was on China's negotiating team, according to official news agency Xinhua.

He emphasized the trade war's effect on China's economy would be "controllable". "If the US wants to force the Chinese to make concessions by engaging in unilateralism and putting on extreme pressure, this is impossible," said Wang, according to Xinhua. —AFP

US cuts off India GSP trade access

WASHINGTON: The United States will end preferential trade treatment for India from Wednesday, US President Donald Trump has announced, in a fresh economic headwind for New Delhi alongside slowing growth and record unemployment.

India has been the single biggest beneficiary of the decades-old US Generalized System of Preferences program, allowing the country to export \$5.7 billion worth of duty-free goods in 2017, according to figures from US Congress. Trump said in a statement issued late Friday that he wanted greater access for US goods to the giant South Asian nation. "I have determined that India has not assured the United States that India will provide equitable and reasonable access to its markets," Trump said.

"Accordingly, it is appropriate to terminate India's designation as a beneficiary developing country."

Trump announced in March that he would be ending the preferential trade accord with India, but did not give a date. Washington has sought to make India a closer diplomatically, but has long complained about limited access to the huge market of 1.3 billion people. The US had a \$26.7 billion trade deficit with India in 2017-2018. The announcement is the latest headwind to threaten the Hindu nationalist government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was re-elected to his second term in a landslide just weeks ago after campaigning partly on his record as an economic reformer. Official figures released Friday showed that India's growth slowed for the third straight quarter to 5.8 percent in January-March, while unemployment hit a 45-year high in 2018.

The Indian government made no immediate comment on Washington's move, but media reports said New Delhi was considering higher import duties on more than 20 US goods including agricultural produce and chemicals. Indian commerce secretary Anup Wadhawan played down the move to end the country's GSP status in March, saying that preferential trade accounted for a fraction of its nearly \$80 million in annual exports to the US. —AFP

Al Mulla Automobiles opens its first Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-Owned showroom in Kuwait



Al Mulla Automobiles Co., the authorized general distributor and exclusive service and repair partner of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, opened last week its first Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-Owned showroom in Al Rai area in Kuwait.

The inauguration event was hosted by Mr. Talal Anwar Al Mulla, CEO of Al Mulla Group, in the presence of the management of Al Mulla Group and Al Mulla Automobiles Co., as well as representatives from Mercedes-Benz Cars Middle East in Dubai (MBCME), and the media.

With the opening of its first Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-owned showroom, Al Mulla Automobiles reinforces its commitment to its customers in Kuwait by making new locations and facilities available to them and providing them with more options of products and services across Kuwait.

In his welcoming notes, Mr. Talal Al Mulla, CEO of Al Mulla Group said: "We are pleased to launch our first Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-Owned Showroom in Kuwait, offering our customers more choice and variety. This opening means that more of our products and services are now available to more customers."

"We will continue our journey of success with our Mercedes-Benz partners and we will expand our network to come closer to our customers, keeping our promise of offering them the best experience at all our facilities and showrooms," Mr. Al Mulla added. The Mercedes-Benz Certified pre-owned showroom is the first of its kind in the Middle East, and it conforms to Mercedes-Benz future retail concept MAR 2020. This concept involves the overall look of the showroom, vehicle presentation, sales process and customer



consultation. Al Mulla Automobiles Co. will run this showroom under the label of Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-Owned Cars (CPO), which is a program developed by Mercedes-Benz, keeping customers' convenience and benefits at its core.

The showroom facility has an area of 2450 square meters and consists of the showroom, storage area, and offices. The showroom comprises of about 1200 square meters, with the capacity to accommodate 23 Certified Pre-owned vehicles on display. The showroom features private and semi-private customer

consultation areas in addition to a vehicle delivery area connected directly to the showroom from where customers can receive their cars.

Pre-owned Mercedes-Benz cars under this label fulfill stringent criteria and undergo thorough checks by the qualified Mercedes-Benz technicians to ensure that customers who buy a Mercedes-Benz Certified car have confidence in the valuable services that this CPO program delivers, including a warranty that meets the highest standards.

The minimum requirements for vehicle classification under the Mercedes-Benz Certified CPO program stipulate that they must be no more than six years old from the date of registration and have run for no more than 150,000 km.

When customers choose a Pre-owned Mercedes-Benz under this program, they get the same attention and care as expected when buying a new car. Every pre-owned Mercedes-Benz has passed rigorous safety, mechanical, and electrical checks. The signed multi-point checklist ensures that the vehicle has undergone thorough testing.

All Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-Owned vehicles include their service history records before being awarded with Certified Pre-owned badge which includes minimum 12 months' warranty and 24hrs roadside assistance (available on selected vehicles).

A range of Mercedes-Benz vehicles are available in the new showroom to satisfy the needs of different customers based on their vehicle choices and budgets. When visiting the Mercedes-Benz certified vehicles showroom, certified sales representatives provide customers with convenient financing solutions when making a purchase.



Business

Trump doubles down on Mexico tariff threat, markets rattled

Hitting neighbor with tariffs would be a lose-lose game: Obrador

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump escalated his abrupt tariff threats against Mexico on Friday, triggering alarm about the likely economic fallout, spooking global markets and raising the prospect of US trade wars on multiple fronts.

Trump unexpectedly announced his readiness to levy tariffs on all Mexican imports, beginning at five percent starting June 10 and rising monthly to as high as 25 percent until Mexico substantially reduces the flow of illegal immigration.

Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said Friday that his country was "doing our job" to stop the flow of undocumented migrants to the United States, and warned Trump that hitting his neighbor with tariffs would be a lose-lose game. But the US leader then doubled down on his threats, saying in a flurry of tweets that "Mexico has taken advantage of the United States for decades."

The impact of new tariffs would be devastating for Mexico, which sends 80 percent of its exports to the US. Lopez Obrador reminded his American counterpart the tariffs would also take a heavy toll on the United States, whose largest trading partner so far this year is Mexico—thanks mainly to Trump's trade war with China.

Earlier this month Trump, angered by what he deemed unfair Chinese trade practices, raised punitive duties on \$200 billion in Chinese imports. Beijing has promised retaliation.

Effects of the Mexico tariffs would ripple across multiple economic sectors, including the automobile industry and agriculture. "No good can come of coercive measures... These (tariffs) would not be good for Mexicans, but they would not be good for Americans either," said Lopez Obrador.

He said his government would act prudently, and a delegation led by Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard had already been sent to Washington for talks. Ebrard is expected to meet US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Wednesday. "We will be firm and we will defend the dignity of Mexico," Ebrard said.

A State Department spokeswoman said Ebrard and Pompeo spoke by phone on Friday, but gave few details.

"We maintain an ongoing dialogue and close cooperation with Mexico on a wide range of issues, including border security efforts," she said.

Trump, meanwhile, only stepped up his Twitter attacks. "Mexico must take back their country from the drug lords and cartels. The Tariff is about stopping drugs as well as illegals!" he fumed.

Market turmoil

Trump's startling announcement of the new tariffs came the same day he started the process of ratifying the new North American trade pact with Mexico and Canada, the USMCA—an agreement that now may be under threat. Global markets slumped over the latest trade war threat.

The top three US markets all closed down 1.3 percent or more, with some automakers skidding five percent. Shares in Tokyo lost 1.6 percent, European markets were also hit, and the Mexican peso dropped 2.5 percent against the dollar.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the powerful Democrat who has a key say in whether Congress takes up the USMCA in the coming weeks, slammed the president's move as "recklessness." Even some senior Trump aides opposed his plan, notably Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, NBC reported, citing a source close to the White House.

Republican allies in Congress also warned Trump not to damage a vital trade relationship over border concerns.

"This is a misuse of presidential tariff authority and counter to congressional intent," said Senate Finance Committee chairman Chuck Grassley, one of several Republicans to oppose Trump's plan.

US industry groups voiced their disapproval, too, with the Business Roundtable warning Trump that unilateral imposition of tariffs "would be a grave error." The US Chamber of Commerce said a five percent tariff on Mexican imports, which last year totaled \$346.5 billion, would amount to a \$17 billion hit on US consumers and businesses. Should the tariffs tank the USMCA, "that would have serious consequences for the three countries' economies," Ana Maria Salazar, an expert on US-Mexico relations, told AFP.



MEXICO CITY: Cargo trucks drive pass the secondary fence that divides the United States and Mexico driving towards Mexico from Otay Mesa, California on Friday. —AFP

Clash over migrants

Trump pledged in his 2016 election campaign to crack down on illegal immigration, but the numbers of migrants have steadily climbed. The number apprehended at the US-Mexico border has topped 100,000 a month in recent months. That included a new record of 58,474 people who crossed in family groups in April, and a single group of 1,036 people that particu-

larly outraged Trump when it crossed into El Paso, Texas this week.

They are mostly people fleeing poverty and violence in Central America and ask for asylum once they reach US soil. Trump has consistently demonized the migrants as criminals and gang members, and warned that illegal drugs are flowing across the border. —AFP

Brazil eyes fiscal boost as economy flirts with recession

BRASILIA: Brazil's government is looking at assembling a fiscal stimulus package worth around 20 billion reais (\$5 billion) to revive flagging growth and prevent the economy from falling back into recession, sources told Reuters. Stung by figures on Thursday that showed the economy shrank in the three months to March for the first time since 2016, the Economy Ministry may soon free up cash from workers' guarantee funds, the sources said on condition of anonymity.

The FGTS funds, from employers' contributions, serve as a buffer for employees, and can only be drawn from in certain circumstances such as buying a home, loss of employment or serious health problems.

Economy Minister Paulo Guedes said on Thursday that the government is looking at freeing up active and inactive FGTS accounts, but only after fis-

cal and economic reforms - namely pension reform - are approved and implemented.

Guedes is a deficit hawk committed to cutting public spending across the board. His mulling of a fiscal stimulus indicates the government's sense of urgency on the economy.

Another quarter of negative growth would mark Brazil's sixth recession in 20 years, although it may be significantly lighter and shallower than the bruising 2015-16 crash.

Analysts at ratings agency Moody's Investors Service on Friday said the rebound from the 2015-16 recession is "the weakest cyclical recovery in decades," noting private consumption and investment have been particularly weak. Alberto Ramos, head of Latin American research at Goldman Sachs, went further, calling it the weakest recovery in history.

"After nine quarters into the current up-cycle the performance of the economy has been notably sluggish despite massive slack in terms of resource utilization, a strong external balance sheet, low inflation, and accommodative monetary and financial conditions," he said. Real gross domestic product, real GDP per capita, private consumption and capital spending are all significantly lower than their peaks before the recent



BRASILIA: Another quarter of negative growth would mark Brazil's sixth recession in 20 years, although it may be significantly lighter and shallower than the bruising 2015-16 crash.

crash, Ramos notes.

These structural headwinds to growth, together with shocks such as a Vale SA mining disaster in January and the slump in major export destination Argentina, have cast a dark cloud over the outlook.

Economists at Citi cut their 2019 GDP growth forecasts to 0.9 percent and Rabobank cut its forecast to 0.7 percent following first-quarter figures

on Thursday, below the already weak market consensus of around 1.2 percent. Guedes insists the economy will improve if Congress approves the government's pension reform bill, which seeks to generate public savings of 1.237 trillion reais (\$315 billion) over the next decade. With that, investor, consumer and business confidence will return and the economy will "take off," he has promised. —Reuters

Mexico's top diplomat for North America lashed out after the tariffs announcement, describing the move as "disastrous" and vowing to respond "vigorously."

Trump's latest aggressive tariff strike was all the more shocking as it came days after he removed a key hurdle to approval of the new North American free trade pact when he lifted tariffs on steel and aluminum from Canada and Mexico. Trade experts warned the punitive measures could derail efforts to enact the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement or USMCA, and cause Chinese negotiators—already on the defensive after repeated attacks by Trump—to be even more reticent to move forward with negotiations, when he could reverse course at any moment. —AFP

tries, economists warn.

Trump announced the tariffs on Thursday night, which would start at five percent on June 10 and rapidly increase to pressure the Mexican government to clamp down on the flow of migrants from Central America to the southern US border. The announcement was met with an outcry from business groups, retailers and trade experts, who also warned of the damage to relations not just with Mexico, but also with China and other trading partners who would no longer trust US negotiators.

"If maintained, the tariffs would reduce US GDP growth by at least 0.7 (percentage point) in 2020 and likely push Mexico into a recession," Gregory Daco of Oxford Economics said in a research note.

dent want rate cuts and they might just get them if this slow-down persists and the Fed caves to the mob of public opinion." Consumer prices as measured by the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index increased 0.3 percent last month, the biggest gain since January 2018, after rising 0.2 percent in March.

That lifted the annual increase in the PCE price index to 1.5 percent from 1.4 percent in March. Inflation was boosted by higher prices for gasoline and services, which offset a 0.3 percent drop in the cost of food. Excluding the volatile food and energy components, the PCE price index gained 0.2 percent last month after edging up 0.1 percent in March. In the 12 months through April, the so-called core PCE price index increased 1.6 percent after rising 1.5 percent in March. The core PCE index is the Fed's preferred inflation measure. It hit the US central bank's 2 percent inflation target in March 2018 for the first time since April 2012. A much weaker inflation pulse than initially thought in the first quarter had led economists to anticipate that the annual core PCE price index would remain at 1.5 percent in April.

Trade dispute

Economists said it was unclear what the impact on inflation would be from Trump's announcement late on Thursday that he would impose a tariff on all goods from Mexico in a bid to stem the tide of illegal immigration across the US-

Bayt.com weekly report

Making it through the job interview stage

Interviews, interview formats and interview questions come in all shapes and sizes and there are ample tomes and articles written to prepare for them all! There are the usual questions and the usual answers expected, then there are the different types of "trick" questions which have mostly been accounted for and written about too. There are behavioral and attitudinal and verbal language and body language cues interviewers are looking for that you can be taught to anticipate. And there are the usual ample opportunities to prove your skills and competencies and/or to dig a hole and sink yourself. Career experts at Bayt.com state that most interviewers are looking for mainly five things and all questions are targeted towards them and all answers need to deliver on them. Here they are:

1. What you bring to the job at hand

Notice it's all about the job at hand. You may or may not have mastered your last job but it's really about what direct transferable skills you bring to the table and how these can and will prepare you to excel at the exact job role you are interviewing for. By all means wax lyrical about your past accomplishments but be aware that given your limited face time and the interviewers limited attention span, these need to be phrased to accommodate your future employer's prism by highlighting these particular achievements that are most directly relevant and important for your desired role. Study the role in detail and research the company and industry so you are well aware of exactly what will be required.

2. How much you will love and be loyal to the job and company

Enthusiasm is not overrated nor is integrity and loyalty which are always paramount. Companies in the digital era are well aware of the tremendous transparency in the job market thanks to the success of leading job sites, and they are cognizant of the realms of opportunity that can be accessed with a simple click. They are also aware of the high costs of employee churn and the detrimental effects of this on employee morale, satisfaction and general productivity. For this reason they will almost always favor a more stable candidate who has shown loyalty, goodwill and a high level of integrity with past employers. Your priorities will be in question here and employers will be looking first and foremost for professionals who are very committed to their careers and display a high level of personal and professional integrity.

3. How quickly you will hit the ground running

Time is money and employers investing in top professional skills want to see a dividend sooner rather than later. Interviews are not the ideal time to demand prolonged training courses and induction periods and orientation activities especially if you are competing with professionals who assert and can prove they are prepared to make immediate inroads in the role. Show that you are prepared to make an immediate contribution and that in the short, intermediate and long term you are a winning investment.

4. How willing you are to adapt

You may be able and successful but employers need to know if you still have it in you to make the sacrifices and investments needed to excel in the new work environment. You need to display adaptability and flexibility as well as willingness and ability to blend into the new company culture and adopt new policies, procedures and business guidelines. All cultures are not the same and adaptability is at a premium with employers across the board.

5. How pleasant and professional you will be to work with

This one is not often written about but after all the theory and degrees and top-rated credentials are analyzed, people still prefer to work with people they like, respect, admire and trust. Smile, put on the charms and be true to yourself and your values; at the end of the day the chemistry needs to be right too and you will work best in a team that welcomes and embraces and values you and vice versa.

Trump tariffs on Mexico threaten to undercut US economy: Analysts

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has trumpeted the robust US economy but hitting all products from Mexico with 25 percent tariffs threatens to undercut growth and undermine key American indus-

US inflation perks ups; slowing economy may limit gains

WASHINGTON: US consumer prices increased by the most in 15 months in April, but a cooling in spending pointed to a slowdown in economic growth that could keep inflation pressures moderate. The report from the Commerce Department on Friday supported Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell's view that a recent disinflationary trend "may wind up being transient."

Inflation remains below the US central bank's 2.0 percent target. That, together with the slowing economy, has increased calls, including from President Donald Trump, for the Fed to cut interest rates. The Fed this month kept rates unchanged and signaled little desire to adjust monetary policy anytime soon. "The Fed is in a good place when it comes to its current policy, but it won't be for long if the market's forecasts for rate cuts are to be believed," said Chris Rupkey, chief economist at MUFJ in New York. "The market and the presi-

Business

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

Kuwait real estate sales soften in 1Q19 but remain solid

Investment sector posts drop in sales and prices

KUWAIT: Real estate sales in the first quarter fell back from a four-year high in 4Q18, but remained solid at KD 789 million. The decline came mostly from a drop in investment sector sales following a strong end to last year. The residential sector continued to post robust sales and growth, while the commercial sector, having improved noticeably in 2018, extended its good performance into 1Q19 with relatively solid sales and activity levels.

Recent sales levels in 1Q19 reflect a continuation of the recovery observed in 2018 and an indication that market confidence and liquidity is intact. Real estate prices however were mixed. While the residential sector continued to register solid annual gains, the investment sector was recently subjected to renewed downward pressure.

Investment sector

Investment sector (apartments and apartment buildings) sales in 1Q19 stood at KD248 million, a sharp 47 percent decline from the exceptional KD 470 million recorded in 4Q18 and down 31 percent y/y. Sales volumes also moderated to 327 transactions from 504 the previous quarter. The declines were possibly due to softer demand stemming from subdued immigration



growth, while the supply of new apartment buildings continues to increase. These headwinds seem to have led investors to reconsider the pricing and timing of potential deals. Apartment prices also fell, by 11.7 percent q/q, and 2.2 percent y/y, while apartment building prices declined less severely, by 3.8 percent q/q and 1.4 percent y/y. Apartment rents also fell slightly in March as indicated by the housing component of the CPI, reflecting the general weakness in the sector.

Residential sales maintained their strength in 1Q19 at KD 377 million, a 2 percent q/q increase (and +26 percent y/y) despite a slight decline in transaction volumes. The easing in volumes was likely due to the significant rise in prices for both residential homes (10.5 percent) and land (8.4 percent) that has occurred over the past year. Looking ahead, support for this sector may come from the possible approval of the mortgage law later this year, which should provide a healthy boost to demand. Further the recently proposed KD 750 million capital increase of the Kuwait Credit Bank, the entity responsible for granting housing loans to citizens, if

Table 1: Real estate sales

	Quarterly average				Quarterly total			% Change 1Q19	
	2019	2018	2017	2018	1Q18	4Q18	1Q19	%q	%y
Sales (KD mn)	760.6	584.0	543.6	849.1	767.4	1022.8	788.6	-22.9	2.8
Residential	340.1	236.0	288.5	322.2	298.3	367.7	376.5	2.4	26.2
Investment	306.7	204.2	165.1	392.9	357.1	470.2	248.0	-47.3	-30.5
Commercial	113.8	143.8	89.9	133.9	112.1	184.9	164.1	-11.3	46.4
Number of Transactions	1356	1060	1331	1496	1295.0	1757.0	1504.0	-14.4	16.1
Residential	970	712	840	1027	928.0	1222.0	1150.0	-5.9	23.9
Investment	360	325	274	439	340.0	504.0	327.0	-35.1	-3.8
Commercial	25	23	18	30	27.0	31.0	27.0	-12.9	0.0
Average Transaction Value (KD th)	561	551	481	568	592.6	582.1	524.3	-9.0	-9.2
Residential	351	332	344	314	321.4	300.9	327.4	8.7	1.4
Investment	851	628	603	895	1050.2	932.9	758.3	-24.6	-34.0
Commercial	4509	6320	5068	4540	4150.7	5964.9	6077.2	40.4	97.6

enacted may further enhance access to home financing and reduce the large backlog in housing applications.

Commercial sector

Commercial sector sales were strong in 1Q19, at KD 161 million. Although below the sales peak of 4Q18, this is still up 46 percent y/y and also well above the quarterly averages for

2015-2018. Strong sales were due to some exceptionally large size deals, which nearly doubled the average transaction size of 1Q18. Three large ticket transactions stood out in 1Q19: a complex in Jahra (KD 39 million), a plot in Khaitan (KD 26 million) and a commercial building in Sharq (KD 25 million). These three transactions had a combined value of KD 90 million and comprised more than half of all 1Q19 commercial sales.

KFH Ayadi at all governorates 24/7; available until first day of Eid

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) offers the service of withdrawing new banknotes "Ayadi" in various categories and in different locations for customers on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr. This service is available 24/7 and covers all governorates of Kuwait.

Deputy General Manager Sales and Distribution at KFH, Khaled Al-Subaiei said that the bank is keen on sharing various occasions and holidays with the community, confirming the uniqueness of KFH by providing a wide variety of communication channels that make the bank closer to its customers in their various places.

Al-Subaiei pointed out that KFH provides customers with the service of withdrawing "Ayadi" via branches, ATMs, XTM Interactive devices, smart branches KFH Go in the Co-op society branch of Ishbiliyah and Jabriya, as well as KFH Movi vehicles, which are spread in different locations in Kuwait to meet the requirements of all customers wherever they are present.

He added that the branches that provide 24-hour Ayadi service are: Al-Qasr, Abdullah Al Salem, Ishbiliyah, Jabriya, Abu Fatira and Al-Mangaf.

He explained that the service is available until the first day of Eid, in all cash categories that include the dinar, 5 dinar, 10 dinar and 20 dinar.

Al-Subaiei stressed the pursuit of KFH's strategy in achieving the highest levels of excellence in customer service according to the highest standards of quality by providing the most competitive advantages that confirm the leadership of KFH in offering advanced banking services, achieving the highest levels of innovation and keeping up with the latest technological developments in the banking industry.



Khaled Al-Subaiei



NBK executives at the ceremony celebrating the graduation of the 21st batch of "NBK Academy" fresh graduates

NBK Academy celebrates graduation of the 21st batch of trainees

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) celebrated the graduation of the 21st batch of newly hired employees from "NBK Academy" program. NBK Academy aims to train and develop young graduates through providing professional skills as part of NBK's strategy to develop the national human resources and attract them to work in the banking industry.

Burgan Bank's customers offered a discount from Ghaseel app

KUWAIT: Accommodating its loyal customers with modern age privileges, Burgan Bank announced its partnership with the first mobile app for vehicle wash services in Kuwait, Ghaseel. The new offer presents numerous options for customers to choose from, for different vehicles and models, ranging from cars, motorcycles, and boats.

Ghaseel is a platform that links clients to licensed car wash providers, and professional washers and detailers. With Ghaseel you can order a car wash at home, work or any preferred location from one of certified service providers available on Ghaseel platform. Providing optimal convenience and affordability, Burgan Bank customers can avail the offer by applying promo code before finalizing the order in the last step.

Keeping in line with the latest trends and demands, through a 10 percent discount presented by Burgan Bank, customers can enjoy the benefit of having their vehicles washed anytime and anywhere. Burgan Bank customers can avail the discounted offer by using any of Burgan Bank cards along with a special code.



Burgan Bank working hours during Eid holiday

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank yesterday announced that its airport branch will continue its operations during the upcoming Eid Al-Fitr holiday. The branch will remain open 24 hours for seven days a week, to conveniently provide services to its clients during public holidays.

The contact center will also be at customers' service over the clock to ensure customers enjoy services throughout the holiday period. On this occasion, Burgan Bank extends its best wishes and greetings to the public on the coming of Eid Al-Fitr.

ers to enable trainees to gain top banking skills. NBK Academy program is designed in accordance with the highest international training techniques with the aim to provide participants with both theoretical and technical skills that cover key areas of the banking sector.

Participants also receive a wealth of knowledge about NBK work structure and culture in order to further enhance their career development opportunities in the future. In 2008, NBK launched "NBK Academy", the first initiative of its kind in the private sector in Kuwait aimed at developing highly qualified national banking leaders with the highest international skill set and experience level in all banking disciplines. The initiative aims at fulfilling the bank's aspirations to continuously improve its services and expand its activities and growth plans, both locally and regionally.

AUB congratulates another winner of KD 100,000 at Hassad draw

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank announced on the 29th of May 2019 the KD 100,000 winner of its Monthly draw of Al-Hassad Islamic account as Farah Hasan Ahmed. Al-Hassad Islamic account is the very first draw account in Islamic banking in Kuwait that has reshaped the lives of thousands lucky winners. Al-Hassad Islamic account presents the most number of chances to win with over 850 prizes, over a 12 month period.

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

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

Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents also 21 weekly prizes comprised of a grand prize of KD 10,000 and 20 prizes of KD 1,000 each. In addition to the highly attractive package of the prizes, there will be the annual expected profits on, which makes the Al-Hassad account a useful tool: for family and other savings, both for the short term and for the longer term - a fact which well appreciated by a large multitude of new and old customers.

What's On

NBK, LOYAC sponsor kids in low income families through 'Eid Clothing' campaign

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and LOYAC organized "Eid Clothing" campaign to support children in low income families through purchasing new Eid clothing to celebrate Eid Al-Fitr by dressing up and wearing their new outfits. The campaign covered purchasing new Eid clothing to 30 children from different parts of Kuwait. Each dedicated volunteer was assigned to accompany a child to go shopping. The shopping trip included buying new clothes and shoes for Eid Al-Fitr, so that children would look their best and don't feel left out of the celebration mood due to the limited resources of their families.

"NBK is so proud of its cooperation with LOYAC. We highly appreciate its role in the community through organizing a wide range of volunteering, developmental, awareness and social initiatives", Yacoub Al-Baqer,



Yacoub Al-Baqer

NBK Public Relations Officer said. "The "Eid Clothing" campaign, launched to support children in low income families, is considered a unique initiative across Kuwait. It extends a helping hand to families in need to bring them the joy of Eid through providing the necessary support to whomever in need, so no one is left out when celebrating Eid holidays" Al-Baqer added.

Al-Baqer highlighted that NBK is always committed to supporting humanitarian initiatives and is proud to lead this campaign with LOYAC. "We look forward to organizing this campaign to complement our community and philanthropic initiatives that share the same objectives of lending helping hands to those in need." Al-Baqer noted.

Al-Baqer stressed that NBK firmly believes that this social commitment is a fundamental cornerstone of NBK's objectives as a leading financial institution, expressing his hopes that this campaign had left a positive impact on children and brought them happiness, confirming that NBK's mission is to bring joy and hope for a better tomorrow. The initiative is part of NBK's commitment to its social responsibility program and expanding its reach to cover more sustainable programs.



NBK continues to reinforce its leading corporate citizen role committed to bringing positive values to the community through its CSR initiatives that adopt a wide range of objectives. NBK's participation in this initiative is part of its partnership with LOYAC through its participation in similar campaigns covering training, developmental, educational and social services programs.

Jumeirah's guide to a globetrotting Eid

As Eid Al Fitr is on the horizon, it is the perfect time to start planning your dream holiday. Whether you favor refreshing dips in a mesmerizing infinity pool or are looking for a super-stylish fine dining experience or simply want to stay in your suite soaking up the spectacular ocean views, Jumeirah is the perfect destination for a long weekend.

From city breaks to island escapes, from gastronomic adventures to spa retreats, and Jumeirah offers a myriad of experiences to families, couples and solo holidaymakers of all ages. To help you plan your Eid getaway, Jumeirah has listed down must visit hotels and resorts around the globe to help you make the most of the festive time with special offers for GCC residents only.

DUBAI: Jumeirah Al Qasr at Madinat Jumeirah

Famed for its iconic waterways that flow through 2km throughout the Madinat Jumeirah resort, and located on one of the world's most recognizable shorelines with views of the iconic Burj Al Arab, it is simply an Instagram favorite. With the special Jumeirah Breaks offer, save 20 per cent on the best available room rates along with complimentary breakfast and feel spoilt with a sumptuous choice of over 40 restaurants for lunch and dinner. The offer also includes unlimited access to Madinat Jumeirah's private beach and entry to Wild Wadi Waterpark.

Jumeirah Zabeel Saray

The remarkable Jumeirah Zabeel Saray, nestled on the Palm Jumeirah, is a true visual delight, boasting impressive architecture and striking views of the Arabian Gulf. Redefining luxury, the recreational haven is complete with a pristine private beach, an infinity pool, award-winning restaurants, and an energizing spa - ideal for a fine retreat from the city rush. Indulge like royalty at the Iklil Hammam



- an entire spa floor dedicated to couples which features two spacious treatment suites, including saunas, whirlpools, showers, changing areas, majlis, Jacuzzis, steam baths and relaxation lounges.

ABU DHABI: Jumeirah Saadiyat Island Resort

The latest luxe-destination in the region, Jumeirah at Saadiyat Island Resort sits majestically on the island's prime beach. Experience island life at its best at the eco-friendly Jumeirah at Saadiyat Island Resort. It's hard to beat the views of 400 meters of beautiful white sand on the Arabian Gulf and the breathtakingly beautiful scenery and undisturbed wildlife. With the special Jumeirah Breaks offer, save 10 per cent on the best available room rates along with access to 'Spa' for hydra pool, Rhassoul chamber, sauna and steam room, and complimentary use of 'Bodyism Wellness Centre' facilities. The offer also includes unlimited access to the kids and teens clubs.

Jumeirah Al Wathba Desert Resort & Spa

Explore the tranquility of Jumeirah Al Wathba Desert Resort & Spa and explore the rich heritage of the Emirati culture. Inspired by classical dwellings, the boutique resort's 103 guest rooms and villas feature timeless local details, traditional artwork, and Arabesque accessories, alongside a range of dining destinations showcasing the dunes to panoramic perfection. Celebrate Eid Al Fitr

with an authentic Arabic Brunch inspired by Lebanese flavors set deep within Abu Dhabi's desert. Savour signature slow cooked Lamb Ouzi with saffron rice, charcoal kebab grills, live kitchen with a verity of mezzes and sweet delights in bright and spacious Bait Al Hanine. Enjoy this sumptuous spread of culinary treats from the Traditional Arabic delicacies paired with complimentary access to 1000-sqm pool overlooking the Arabian Desert just for AED 285 (soft drinks included).

LONDON: Grosvenor House Suites by Jumeirah Living

For a week-long city adventure, there is no place like London. Grosvenor House Suites by Jumeirah Living offers a wonderful experience at London's most exclusive address and combines the refined services of a luxury serviced apartment with the privacy, comfort and generous living space of a contemporary Mayfair residence.

FRANKFURT: Jumeirah Frankfurt

The striking Jumeirah Frankfurt is located right in the heart of the Frankfurt - just a few steps away from the popular 'Zeil' shopping street and the financial district - it offers 218 spacious guest rooms and suites, with amazing views across the city. While you're there, don't forget to try skyline honey' - on the roof of Jumeirah Frankfurt 28 storeys above ground level, more than 40,000 bees are hard at work, creating the hotel's very own golden nectar.

Enjoy a majestic Eid Al-Fitr experience at Sheraton Kuwait

In celebration of Eid Al-Fitr, Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait invites you for a luxurious Eid experience with its high level of hospitality and outstanding services through its variety of authentic restaurants spread from Sheraton Kuwait to the Grand Avenues where you can choose from a wide selection different cuisines from around the world.

For the clientele of Sheraton Kuwait, our restaurants awaits you for remarkable times with your loved ones with a fascinating cultural experiences of hospitality. The Al Hambra International Restaurant welcomes you to an exceptional dining experience with its authentic buffet including lavish dishes from around the world and a variety of live cooking stations to have your meals prepared in front of you.

For more varieties of other cuisines, Le Tarbouche Lebanese Cuisine, Bukhara Indian Cuisine and Shahrayar Persian Cuisine provides you with the original taste of traditional dishes with authentic ingredients. In addition, The English Tea Lounge also welcomes you for a relaxing cup of its high tea in its classical and elegant ambience. The Riccardo Restaurant invites you to indulge in classic authentic Italian fine

dining in a luxurious and elegant ambience, with a special Eid set menu specially prepared by our very own Chef.

Sheraton Kuwait's restaurants at the Grand Avenues awaits you for a delightful Eid experience starting from Al Hambra's open buffet featuring International & Kuwaiti dishes to Le Tarbouche, Bukhara and Shahrayar's authentic and traditional menus, come visit our English Tea Lounge offering you its high tea and scones located in the 2nd Phase.

Exceptional nights also awaits you at the Panoramic Pool Deck on the 42nd Floor of Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait. Special Eid Set Menu with a breath-taking view of the beautiful Kuwait City, La Mamma Pizzeria at Four Points also offers you its modern Italian ambience where you can enjoy an assortment of appetizing antipasti, freshly prepared pasta and pizza baked on a wood fired oven to meet your culinary desire. Special Eid Al Fitr & Summer Offers on rooms and suites are available to match the holiday celebrations. On this occasion Fahed Abushaar - Complex General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait and Mounir Amer - General Manager of Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait, the Executive Committee and all the associates wish the people of Kuwait and all residents a Happy Eid!



ICAI Kuwait Chapter organizes Iftar



Kuwait Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) conducted an Iftar event along with its Continuing Professional Educational (CPE) session for the benefit of its member and their families on 25th May 2019 at Copthorne Hotel, Kuwait City. The topic of the session was "About 5G - The Foundation of 4th Industrial Revolution."

The speaker of the session was Zarrar Khan, Chief Technology Officer, VIVA Telecom and the Chief Guest of Honor is the CEO of Qualitynet Mohamad Al-Nusif as the Chief Guest of Honor. The event began with

Iftar and was followed by welcome speech by CA Sai Devata, the Chairman of ICAI Kuwait Chapter.

CA Sai Devata, Chairman of the Chapter initially briefed the members about the various activities planned by Kuwait Chapter for the current year and then he welcomed the speaker - Zarrar Khan to initiate the informative session. Zarrar conducted the CPE session on "About 5G - The Foundation to 4th Industrial Revolution".

He explained the impact of 4th industrial revolution on human privacy and rapid pace of technological advancement which is going

to impact the customer life styles by enriching customer experience. He simplified the heavy technical terms in an easy way to understand its structure and included lot of examples, videos and humor to keep the audience engaged.

During this session, Al Mulla Exchange conducted a lucky draw event conducted exclusively for its CA customers. There were 5 lucky winners announced during the event. The session was well attended by the audience of more than 130 people and the event was concluded with vote of thanks by the Secretary CA Deepak Bindal.



Family and friends would like to wish (from left to right) Ibrahim Ismail Ibrahim Al-Rowaini, Mohammed Sameh Shehata and Hamza Sameh Shehata a hearty congratulations for passing their individual final exams.



Health & Technology

Tanzania the latest African nation to ban plastic bags

NAIROBI: A plastic bag ban comes into force in Tanzania yesterday, as Africa leads efforts to stem the tide of plastic blighting the farthest reaches of the globe, and depths of the ocean. Tanzania is banning the importation, production, sale and use of plastic bags, becoming the 34th African country to implement such restrictions, according to the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP).

"Let me be clear on this, once it reaches June 1, the government is not planning to add any more days and we will not tolerate anyone who will be caught using them. No plastic bag will be allowed in the country," Tanzania's vice-president Samia Suluhu Hassan said when announcing the move in April. Tanzania — whose wildlife is a popular tourist draw — has also issued a notice to travelers that they will have to "surrender" plastic bags in their possession before entering the country.

"The government expects that, in appreciation of the imperative to protect the environment and keep our country clean and beautiful, our visitors will accept minor inconveniences resulting from the plastic bags ban," said the statement. According to local media, anyone caught manufacturing or importing plastic bags and plastic wrappings could get a fine of one billion Tanzanian shillings (\$430,000, 390,000 euros) or face imprisonment for up to two years. Possession and

usage can lead to a fine of \$87 or imprisonment for seven days, or both.

Degrees of success

Globally, 127 countries have some sort of plastic bag legislation, 91 of which include a ban or restriction on manufacturing, importation and retail distribution, according to UNEP. Africa has 34 of these countries, followed by Europe with 29. Patrick Mwesigye, UNEP's regional co-ordinator for resource efficiency told AFP that the degree of success of the bans varied in Africa.

Rwanda's plastic bag ban has been in place for over a decade and is considered one of the most successful. "But Rwanda had an advantage that there wasn't much manufacturing of plastics," in the country when the ban was implemented, said Mwesigye. Countries with manufacturing and import industries, where jobs are impacted by bans, have struggled more to enforce them. "In Kenya... it has been very effective. Still you have some plastic smuggled from neighboring countries" like Uganda, he said.

Kenya's 2017 plastic ban imposed particularly harsh laws, with fines of up to \$38,000 (32,000 euros) and four-year prison sentences. However in reality, while there have been waves of arrests, fines and jail terms have been far less than pro-

scribed. Mwesigye said some countries put bans in place before ensuring there were suitable alternatives in place, while monitoring and practical enforcement were also a challenge.

Scourge of single-use plastics

Joyce Msuya, UNEP's Acting Executive Director, praised Tanzania for joining the nations implementing the ban. "It is critical that bans now be complemented by efforts to identify effective alternatives to single-use plastics..." The world currently produces more than 300 million tons of plastics annually, and there are at least five trillion plastic pieces floating in oceans, scientists have estimated.

Most of the items polluting oceans and landscapes and causing horrendous deaths for the creatures that live there, are made to be used once and thrown away, such as bags, straws and food packaging. In March nations failed to agree to a timetable to phase out all single-use plastics, opting instead to "significantly reduce" their production. Neither the United States, Canada or Australia have national plastic bag regulations — although some American states like Hawaii or California have implemented bans. The European Union in March voted to ban a dozen forms of single-use plastics from 2021. — AFP

US may lose measles 'elimination status'

WASHINGTON: The United States risks losing its measles "elimination status" if current outbreaks continue, US health authorities said. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said Thursday there have been 971 cases of measles reported in the US so far this year, which means more people have caught the disease in the last five months than in any entire calendar year since 1992, which saw 963 reported cases.

Authorities declared measles eliminated in the US in 2000, a goal set in 1966 with the introduction of the vaccine. Measles is considered eliminated when there is an absence of continuous disease transmission for 12 months or more in a specific geographic area, according to the

CDC. An ongoing outbreak in and around New York City that started last fall is threatening the US's "elimination status" — if it continues for four more months, the country will no longer be able to say it has eliminated measles.

Even though the New York mayor began requiring city residents in heavily affected areas, many with large Orthodox Jewish communities, to be vaccinated starting in April, the city still had 173 cases that month and 60 in May. The US has never counted zero measles cases. Since 2000, the number has fluctuated between a few dozen and a few hundred cases per year, with 667 cases recorded during a 2014 outbreak in Ohio, especially in Amish communities. — AFP

CLINIC

PAGE





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Kuwait Times
248 33 199

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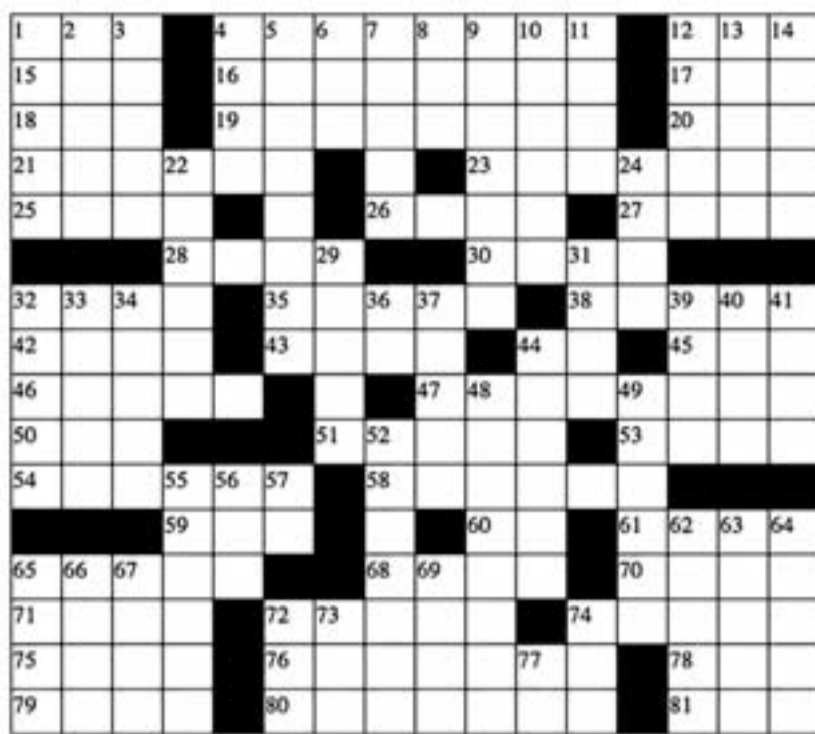
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2223



- ACROSS**
- The player judged to be the most important to the sport.
 - A kind of fluent easy superficiality.
 - (computer science) A measure of how densely information is packed on a storage medium.
 - Being one more than two.
 - A long plume (especially one of egret feathers) worn on a hat or a piece of jewelry in the shape of a plume.
 - The sign language used in the United States.
 - (informal) Of the highest quality.
 - The hard inner (usually woody) layer of the pericarp of some fruits (as peaches or plums or cherries or olives) that contains the seed.
 - A long thin fluffy scarf of feathers or fur.
 - A member of the Algonquian people formerly inhabiting the Maritime Provinces of Canada.
 - A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
 - The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
 - A skullcap worn by nuns under a veil or by soldiers under a hood of mail or formerly by British sergeants-at-law v 1.
 - An independent group of closely related Chadic languages spoken in the area between the Biu-Mandara and East Chadic languages.
 - Type genus of the Nepidae.
 - A river in northwestern Russia flowing generally west into the Gulf of Finland.
 - Earlier than the present time.
 - Any of a class of organic compounds that contain the divalent radical -CONHCO-.
 - (Zoroastrianism) Title for benevolent deities.
 - An independent ruler or chieftain (especially in Africa or Arabia).
 - A quantity of no importance.
 - An anxiety disorder characterized by chronic free-floating anxiety and such symptoms as tension or sweating or trembling of light-headedness or irritability etc that has lasted for more than six months.
 - Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
 - Dried bark of various magnolias.
 - Make amends for.
 - (possibly Roman) Goddess of horses and mules and asses.
 - Moderate in type or degree or effect or force.
 - A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade name Nalfon) used in the treatment of arthritis and other painful inflammatory disorders.
 - Inability to name objects or to recognize written or spoken names of objects.
 - A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
 - Being one more than ten.
 - An island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
 - A populous province in northeastern China.
 - A detailed description of design criteria for a piece of work.
 - (Norse mythology) One of the Aesir known for his beauty and skill with bow and skis.
 - An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
 - Stalk of a moss capsule.
 - The craniometric point on the sagittal suture near the lamboid suture.
 - The compass point midway between east and southeast.
- DOWN**
- A member of the extinct Algonquian people formerly living in northern Indiana and southern Michigan.
 - Widely distributed genus of annual or perennial and often climbing herbs.
 - A separate part of a whole.
 - (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
 - A central cohesive source of support and stability.
 - One of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
 - An unbroken or imperfectly broken Mustang.
 - An acute inflammatory disease occurring in the intestines of premature infants.
 - A soft cotton or worsted fabric with an open mesh.
 - Use explosives on.
 - The month following August and preceding October.
 - A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
 - Either of two muscles of the abdomen and pelvis that flex the trunk and rotate the thigh.
 - Tropical American tree grown in southern United States having a whitish pink-tinged fruit.
 - (Hinduism or Buddhism) A sacred word or syllable repeated in prayer or meditation.
 - A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
 - Affect with wonder.
 - Characteristic of false pride.
 - Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
 - A woman who tells fortunes.
 - A state in the Rocky Mountains.
 - The friend of Phintias who pledged his life that Phintias would return (4th century BC).
 - Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
 - A barrier consisting of a horizontal bar and supports.
 - (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
 - (of reproduction) Not involving the fusion of male and female gametes reproduction*.
 - Abnormally low oxygen content in arterial blood.
 - The third compartment of the stomach of a ruminant.
 - Affected with palsy or uncontrollable tremor.
 - Foul with waste matter.
 - A religious belief of African origin involving witchcraft and sorcery.
 - A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
 - American dramatist (1928-).
 - Highly favored or fortunate (as e.g. by divine grace).
 - Type genus of the Ardeidae.
 - A fencing sword similar to a foil but with a heavier blade.
 - The 2nd letter of the Greek alphabet.
 - A sudden numbing dread.
 - (Australian and New Zealand) A disparaging term for English immigrants to Australia or New Zealand.
 - A run that is the result of the batter's performance.
 - Either extremity of something that has length.
 - In operation or operational.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

The changing of your mind over and over could give you a clue as to what's going to happen today. Irritation with others at work gives you the next hint. Quick thinking and wanting to act adds to the sense of urgency you feel that others may not feel now. This isn't a great time for you and it's the end of the month. That's the best part. Maybe next month will be more successful than today. You can talk others into anything now but you don't want to even attempt it. Try to go home early today and get some time alone, if possible. That'll help.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Dark, secret thoughts pop up into your mind where you can't seem to let them go. Be careful here at work today. You may have the desire to tell your boss, in a not so nice way, where to go now. Be quiet. You'll be glad you did later on. If you can take the day off, then do so. If not, try to go home early. Don't allow coworkers to talk you into saying anything regarding your boss today. Neither of you may be in the mood to shake this one off. Be calm and try to relax as much as possible if you have to work all day. Later, surround yourself with real friends.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Be safe with your words today. You don't want to damage relationships at work or at home. Emotional flare ups could occur easily now. Sex, or lack of it, might play a role in your irritation today. Fighting with others at work won't help. Besides this is a special day you want to remember with fondness not anger. As the song says, "Let it go." A love of what you consider law and order brings you to look at others more harshly now. We can't all be alike. Otherwise the world would be very boring. Sing the song and enjoy celebrating with friends later.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You tend to overlook your own needs now because you feel they're not necessary in the scheme of things. Energy dominates your world. You come across as very assertive. Communication with others comes easily. Work is all it's about for you at this time. You do have to remember your needs too though. You could burn out if you don't. It's easy to see what you value now. Appreciation is in high focus and you thank the powers that be for giving you what you want. That's a good thing to do since you've gotten what you desired. It will bring you more of the same. What you think you are, you are. Keep on keeping on.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You've been feeling an outpouring of independence for a while lately but with this culminating today, you're in more of a mood having to do with your freedom. Liberty to act as you'd like, to do your work on your own terms and to enjoy your home life too in a manner fitting your needs has been and is your goal today. You've turned over the apple cart, so to speak, for almost the whole month. Now you can reap what you've sown although you've seen a difference there too. Now is the time to get more serious about what you need in your life and to go after it. It'll only make you more prosperous in every manner of your life.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You need roots. The longing you feel and remembering other times and places make you want more in the family area. If you don't already have a spouse, you may soon. You can't seem to help yourself right now. Though you still have peace in your heart, you're looking at expanding your life to include a permanent partner who'll be there when others aren't. You don't even care about your work life today. As a matter of fact, you'd rather stay home with those you love. That may not be done easily though. If you have to work, make sure you get through the day without squabbles to ruin your sense of peace.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Everybody wants to be around you now. Be grateful for that. You get compliments from those with whom you spend time. This isn't necessarily just at work. Being the end of the month may be the best time to sort of party at work and that's what you feel is happening today because of all the kudos. You're quieter than usual but that's not bad either. It has you looking humble and those singing your praises appreciate you even more. Make this an easy work day. Go home and be with those you love. You should receive more attention and love there.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

Sympathy and understanding are more important to you now. Perhaps it's because you need them from others at this point in time. Getting out and walking may help your state of mind and give you some much needed exercise too. Going against convention and tradition can bring on problems you hadn't realized you'd elicit by saying or doing what you did to garner it. This could cause problems you can't repair anytime soon. A little romance is something you think may do you some good. If you haven't gotten rid of your lover completely since yesterday, perhaps a little make-up sex will suffice.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Be thoughtful before talking. You could have a run in with someone older who is an authority figure. That's never good. Try to work without being noticed today. Later go home to family, pets and your lover, if you have one now, to enjoy people you know who feel you can do no wrong. Maybe a dinner on the patio is a good place to wind down from today's long work day. Make the conversation around the table more interesting by conveying some travel stories or listening to something that you haven't heard before. Be sure to invite a friend you know brings you good comedic information.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your sense of value may be stressed today. Things are not as they appear. Stay away from buying that new car. You're on the brink of imagination and practicality. Switching back and forth from those two items leave you appearing almost drunk. You'll find yourself thinking of lost love at some time today, even wishing for that person to surface so that you can relive a little part of your past. Romanticizing what was leaves you with an image of something that perhaps didn't really have all the good things you think. A ghost is most always a perfect person after having died.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Start your day off with sweet loving from your wonderful lover. That will set the tone for your day if you'll allow it. Power and control are on your mind now. Coworkers may find that a little hard to take but you can put them at ease easily. Investing may be the very thing you take on next because it allows you to gamble against those who supposedly know best. If you do your homework and find that you're good with research at knowing which stock to pick, you may find yourself in stocks as well. Healing arts are something that interests you now too.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your love or a great friend whom you think should know your ways and what you consider good in life, seems to turn against you or so you think. You may take what they say in the wrong way now. Their emotions seem to oppose what you believe to be right. Your feelings have been part of a quick temper lately and this is no different than what you've already experienced this week. The only difference is that it is with someone for which you care and you can't seem to let it go. Feeling unappreciated and unwanted can cause a rift in your friendship or love.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Old TV Shows 3 - Word Search

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

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| ALLY MCBEAL | FLIPPER | NIGHT GALLERY |
| BANACEK | GREEN ACRES | PERRY MASON |
| BARNABY JONES | HAPPY DAYS | PEYTON PLACE |
| CHIPS | L A LAW | THE A TEAM |
| COLUMBO | MAD ABOUT YOU | THE JETSONS |
| DR KILDARE | MARTIN | VEGAS |
| DRAGNET | MISTER ED | WEBSTER |
| DYNASTY | MURPHY BROWN | |

Friday's Solution

Old TV Shows 2 - Solution

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

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| ALICE | HARRY O | PROFILER |
| ALIEN NATION | HIGHLANDER | RAWHIDE |
| BIG VALLEY | HOTEL | RHODA |
| CHEYENNE | LOU GRANT | RIN TIN TIN |
| CHICAGO HOPE | MAJOR DAD | SILVER SPOONS |
| ELLEN | MASH | THE COSBY SHOW |
| EMERGENCY | MIAMI VICE | WISEGUY |
| GOMER PYLE | PARTY OF FIVE | |

Friday's Solution

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

Daily Sudoku

	4	2	6					3
						7		
5	3	8			1	6		2
		5			9		7	
			8		6			
	2		7				1	
8		4	1			2	3	6
			1					
3				2	8	9		

Friday's Solution

6	9	5	8	1	4	2	3	7
7	2	8	3	5	6	1	9	4
4	3	1	9	7	2	5	6	8
9	5	7	1	4	3	8	2	6
2	6	3	5	8	7	9	4	1
1	8	4	6	2	9	3	7	5
3	1	9	4	6	5	7	8	2
5	7	6	2	9	8	4	1	3
8	4	2	7	3	1	6	5	9

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2019



This picture shows an aerial view of Muslim worshippers gathering around the Kaaba, Islam's holiest shrine, at the Grand Mosque in Saudi Arabia's holy city of Mecca, during the holy fasting month of Ramadan. — AFP



Inside the Millennium Falcon during the Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge media preview.



Inside the Millennium Falcon during the Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge media preview.

STAR WARS THEME PARK OPENS AT DISNEYLAND

Hundreds of Star Wars fans lined up before the crack of dawn on Friday outside Disneyland as the California park opened the doors of a new mega-attraction based on the iconic film series. The \$1 billion theme park, called "Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge," was open only to lucky visitors who managed to reserve tickets ahead of time that allowed them to roam the new land for a total of four hours. Only those with reservations will be able to visit "Galaxy's Edge" for the first three weeks, after which it will be open to the public.

"Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge" is absolutely amazing and we are thrilled to finally share it with the world," Chairman and CEO of The Walt Disney Company Bob Iger said at a pre-opening ceremony on Wednesday. "Now, for the first time, fans will be able to immerse themselves in the iconic stories that have captured audiences' imaginations for decades and live their own Star Wars adventures in the most creative, innovative and ambitious land we've ever built."

The park features rides, including on the Millennium Falcon, as well as Star Wars characters such as Stormtroopers, the mighty Chewbacca and Rey, a hero of the resistance in the futuristic land of Batuu. On "Millennium Falcon: Smuggler's Run," guests will go on a cargo run that features multiple storylines depending on how they pilot Han Solo's beloved spaceship.

'Waiting for the longest time'

Star Wars fanatics will also be able to down exotic drinks such as spicy Bloody Rancor or Carbon Freeze at Oga's Cantina or refresh themselves with Blue or Green Milk. And if they have any money left at the end of the day, they can fork out \$200 — before tax — to build their own lightsabers at Savi's Workshop or spend nearly \$100 for a custom droid. A similar Star Wars park will also open at Disney World in Florida at the end of August. Miguel Langarcia, one of the lucky fans who was able to reserve a ticket for the Friday opening in California said he was over the moon at being among the first to experience the new attraction.

"I had four computers open at one time, trying to get a reservation," he told AFP as he entered the park. "I finally got in, so I'm excited to go today." Joe Kaniwa, another visitor, said he didn't mind the steep entrance price of nearly \$150 per-adult given the experience. "They want to make a lot of money, and they are making money," he said. "But they also want to make people's dream come true. Like you can have people from all generations, you know 40-, 50-year-olds, who have been waiting for this for the longest time, and now they can be part of (this) world." — AFP



Droid Depot, where customers can build their own droid, is seen during Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge media preview.



(From left) George Lucas, Billy Dee Williams, Mark Hamill, Bob Iger and Harrison Ford attend the Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge Media Preview at the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, California.



Droid Depot, where customers can build their own droid, is seen during Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge media preview.



The Death Star on display during the Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge media preview. — AFP photos

Lifestyle | Music & Movies

'Bionic' amputee to star at Crazy Horse cabaret

"Bionic showgirl" Viktoria Modesta, who is set to take the stage at the risqué Crazy Horse cabaret in Paris next week, says she has had to reinvent herself after being treated as an outcast over her artificial leg. Born in Latvia under Soviet rule with a malformed left hip and leg due to an accident at birth, Viktoria Modesta (her stage name) was 20 when she chose amputation "for medical and psychological reasons". With her intense look and black outfit, dark hair pulled into a bun and long nails painted in metallic colours, the 31-year-old recounted her origins, recalling her debut in a private salon with red walls and dimmed light in an ambiance known as "nude chic".

"They were destroying me as a human being and I had to create my new identity," said Modesta, a British national having emigrated to the UK. "When I was born my mum didn't see me for five days," she told AFP, noting that her mother was pressured at the age of 17 to send her baby to an orphanage. "My mum... saved me from being sent away somewhere," she said.

"Growing up as a kid, it was a lot of adults making decisions on my behalf. And not all of them were correct and I ended up in a situation where my creative spirit didn't align with my physical ability and I really wanted to fix that." She recalled feeling the harsh judgments of people around her, such as "old ladies looking at you and saying, 'Oh my God, how are you gonna

survive when you grow up, who is gonna marry you?'" The performer said she grew up in an "extreme environment", with those who were not "biologically accurate" treated as "second-class citizens". "I felt so outcast that I had to build my own new identity."

'Your body, you truly own'

The amputation was a watershed moment, giving her a chance to regain control of her body and make a break with a painful past. She has said previously that she chose to have her leg amputated below the knee to "improve mobility and safeguard future health". It took her five years to persuade surgeons to do the operation, which she described as literally severing the thing that was holding her back.

Drawing inspiration from avant-garde British fashion designer Alexander McQueen and US artist Matthew Barney, Modesta said: "Your body is the only thing you truly own... It was a part of survival, bringing me a more fulfilling and happy life." She grew up mainly in Britain and now lives in the United States, describing herself as a "citizen of the world". In Paris, she will perform at the world famous Crazy Horse nightclub from June 3-16, using a different prosthesis for each scene, surrounded by dancers with only lighting effects to cover their nudity.

In one number, an "artistic prosthesis" breaks ice and it has already been viewed 12

million times on YouTube. In 2012 Modesta performed at the closing ceremony of the Paralympics in London wearing a diamond prosthesis before a crowd of some 90,000. She said she thought then: "The fact that I had an amputation doesn't make me different. There are millions of people with the same physical situation, it's my perspective and my view on the world that really made things different."

'Balancing strength, vulnerability'

She said the Crazy Horse experience "perfectly captures the essence of femininity" and would allow her to find "a good balance between strength and vulnerability". No longer feeling the need to suppress her sexuality in the name of her art, she said, "Here I decided to do the opposite. It's really important to bring our sexual identity into the creative process."

She added that her message "would be that the modern woman... is someone who chooses exactly who she wants to be... There is no limitation of 'I have to be soft or I have to be hard', the thing is creating your own cocktail of qualities". "I'm going to explore several facets of myself in this performance" at the Crazy Horse. — AFP



Drug baron and 'American Gangster' inspiration Lucas dead

Former American drug kingpin Frank Lucas, whose criminal exploits were profiled in the film "American Gangster", has died at the age of 88, his nephew told media Friday. Adrian Lassiter told Rolling Stone magazine his uncle had died of natural causes without giving further details. Raised in North Carolina, Lucas became one of New York's biggest heroin dealers between the late 1960s and 1975, claiming that he imported the drug from Southeast Asia in the coffins of American soldiers who died in the Vietnam War. This claim was challenged by several of his contemporaries but was featured in Ridley Scott's 2007 biopic, in which he was played by Denzel Washington.

Lucas told the New York Times in 2000 that he was making \$1 million a day at the peak of his criminal empire. He was known for his flamboyant displays of wealth, including his outing to the 1971 boxing match between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier at Madison Square Garden, where he appeared wearing a long coat and hat made from chinchilla. "I could not have people who made less money than me walking around thinking they ruled the world," he wrote in his autobiography "Original Gangster." Arrested in 1975, he collaborated with the US authorities and was paroled in 1981 despite a 70-year prison sentence. He was again arrested in 1984 and sentenced to an additional seven years in prison for drug trafficking. — AFP



In this file photo US actor Robert Pattinson arrives at the Marrakech International Film festival in the city of Marrakesh. — AFP

Pattinson picked as the new Batman

Robert Pattinson has been chosen as the new Batman, beating out several other actors, including Nicholas Hoult, to play the Caped Crusader, Variety said Friday. The 33-year-old "Twilight" heartthrob is set to play the vigilante superhero in a standalone movie called "The Batman," under the direction of Matt Reeves, who was behind the last two "Planet of the Apes" sequels, the entertainment magazine said. Filming is slated to start in the coming months with a release date expected in June 2021. A Warner Bros spokeswoman would not confirm the news to AFP, saying only: "I can confirm that we are in negotiations." Pattinson's agent did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Pattinson, who shot to fame as teenage vampire Edward Cullen in the "Twilight" saga, has avoided the spotlight in recent years, evolving from a teenage heartthrob to an indie darling. He recently starred in acclaimed French director Claire Denis's sci-fi mystery "High Life," which earned him critical praise. He also stars in "The Lighthouse," a dark fantasy horror film that was also well received at this year's Cannes Film Festival. As Batman, Pattinson will be replacing Ben Affleck who retired from the role after playing Bruce Wayne in 2016's "Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice" and 2017's "Justice League." — AFP

R Kelly hit with 11 new sex crime charges

Chicago prosecutors on Thursday filed 11 felony sex crime charges against R&B superstar R Kelly, in what his lawyer said was a refile of counts from an existing case. The 52-year-old, whose legal name is Robert Kelly, already had been facing 10 felony counts, filed in February, for the alleged abuse of four women. He has denied the charges and claimed his accusers are lying. The latest counts are refiled charges related to one of the four accusers and not a new case, Kelly's lawyer Steve Greenberg said. "These are the same conduct, just charged differently, same alleged victim, same time frame, same facts," Greenberg said on Twitter. "It changes nothing," he added.



In this file photo US music artist R Kelly attends a hearing on his sex abuse case, at the George N Leighton Criminal Court Building in Chicago, Illinois. — AFP

The 11 charges handed down by a grand jury in Chicago are connected to the January 2010 alleged sexual assault and abuse of a person identified in court documents only as JP. Three of the charges are for the sexual abuse of a child between 13 and 16 years old. In some of the counts, Kelly is accused of having threatened or used force against JP. The singer is currently out on bail. He will appear in court June 6 on the new charges, US media reported. The Cook County State's Attorney's office, which is prosecuting the case, did not immediately return a request for comment.

In March, Lanita Carter identified herself as one of the four women in the Chicago case, and the only one who was an adult when the alleged abuse occurred. She says that while working as Kelly's hairdresser, the singer tried to force her to perform oral sex. When she resisted, he allegedly masturbated on her. Carter spoke through tears about her struggle to come forward against a global celebrity. "If I die tomorrow, I know that I told the truth," she told CBS News. "It's hard when it's a celebrity. It's not easy." The accusations echo previous ones of sexual misconduct that have followed the artist for the last two decades. In a March interview, Kelly vehemently denied the charges and said he was "fighting" for his life. "I didn't do this stuff. This not me," Kelly told CBS News. "Whether they're old rumors, new rumors, future rumors, not true." — AFP

Genre-bending American musician Redbone dies at 69

American Musician Leon Redbone, known for reviving pre-World War II musical styles with his own twist, died on Thursday at age 69, according to a statement on his website. "It is with heavy hearts we announce that early this morning, May 30 2019, Leon Redbone crossed the delta for that beautiful shore at the age of 127," read the statement written in the sly style of the musician known for his mysterious persona. "He departed our world with his guitar, trusty companion Rover, and a simple tip of his hat," it continued.

Neither the cause nor place of death were specified. The musician retired in 2015 for health reasons. With a stage presence resembling a mash-up of American guitar maverick Frank Zappa, French jazz legend Marcel Zanini and comedian Groucho Marx, Redbone seemed a creation of the early 20th century Vaudeville style even though his rise to popularity began decades later. Described in turn as a jazz, folk or blues musician, Redbone recreated the long-lost world of "minstrel shows," musical showcases that traveled the southern United

States from the end of the 19th century until the Great Depression began in 1929.

While he kept his past deliberately mysterious, the Toronto Star revealed that he was born Dickran Gobalian in Cyprus before immigrating to Canada in the 1960s, while The New York Times separately put his birthday at August 26, 1949, making him 69 at the time of his death. Redbone achieved fame with appearances on American television shows like "Saturday Night Live" and Johnny Carson's "Tonight Show" beginning in the 1970s. Paradoxically, one of his best-known compositions was titled "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone." A 2018 documentary about Redbone was given the same title.

The musician released 16 albums, beginning with "On the Track" in 1975 and concluding with "Flying By" in 2014. "People like to listen to music, I don't know why, I don't," he told AFP in his trademark self-deprecating style. "But as I'm not a dictator, I'm not going to impose my taste on the public." — AFP



This photo taken on September 15, 2005 shows Leon Redbone, jazz and blues musician, posing in a restaurant in Paris. — AFP

Elton John blasts Russian cuts of gay sex scenes in 'Rocketman'

Elton John has slammed the removal of gay sex scenes from the Russian version of the musical biopic of his life "Rocketman" as "cruelly unacceptable". Film critics who watched a preview on Friday said the local distributor had censored some scenes for legal reasons. In a joint statement with the filmmakers, the superstar said he only became aware of the cuts on Friday. "We reject in the strongest possible terms the decision to censor Rocketman for the Russian market," said the statement, published on the singer's Twitter account.

"That the local distributor had found it necessary to edit out certain scenes, denying the audience the opportunity to see the film as it was intended is a sad reflection on the divided world we still live in and how it can still be so cruelly unacceptable of the love between two people." Russia has a dire record on LGBT rights and a controversial law bans the promotion of "non-traditional sexual relationships" to minors, though it is not clear why this would apply to the 18-rated film. Film critic Anton Dolin wrote on his Facebook page that all the

sex or kissing scenes had been cut out, adding that the edits had been "very obvious".

The film, which is set for general release in Russia next week, addresses the British pop icon's struggles with his sexuality, drugs and alcohol. Another journalist who attended the screening, Misha Kozlyev, wrote that scenes featuring drugs were also cut from the film. "Yes, the film has been amended to comply with the laws of the Russian Federation," distribution company Central Partnership told the TASS news agency, without providing details.

Family life also censored

Russia's culture minister Vladimir Medinsky told state agency RIA Novosti that his ministry had nothing to do with the edits and that "everything is decided by the distributor." "We do not cut anything, I don't even understand what this is about," he was quoted as saying. Film critic Dolin said the text that ends the film was also changed, to say only that Elton John founded an NGO to fight AIDS. But in the original, view-

ers learn that he eventually found love and is raising two children with his same-sex partner.

In the statement, the singer praises Paramount Pictures for being "brave and bold" in allowing a true representation of his life. "We believe in building bridges and open dialogue, and will continue to push for the breaking down of barriers until all people are heard equally across the world," the statement concluded. Amnesty International called the censorship of the film "an insult for the rights of LGBTI people." In a statement on Friday it said the editing of the film was an example of Russia's anti-gay laws "undercutting freedom of expression and encouraging homophobia in Russia."

Other films that included gay scenes, including the recent biopic about British rock star Freddie Mercury, "Bohemian Rhapsody", were shown in Russian cinemas. Elton John is popular in Russia, where he first performed during the Soviet era in 1979 but he has been a vocal critic of the country's anti-gay laws. "Rocketman" premiered on May 16 at the Cannes film festival where it received a standing ovation. — AFP



Lifestyle | Features



Employees work at the Biotrem factory producing wheat bran plates in Zambrow, Poland. — AFP photos



Employees work at the Biotrem factory producing wheat bran plates in Zambrow, Poland.



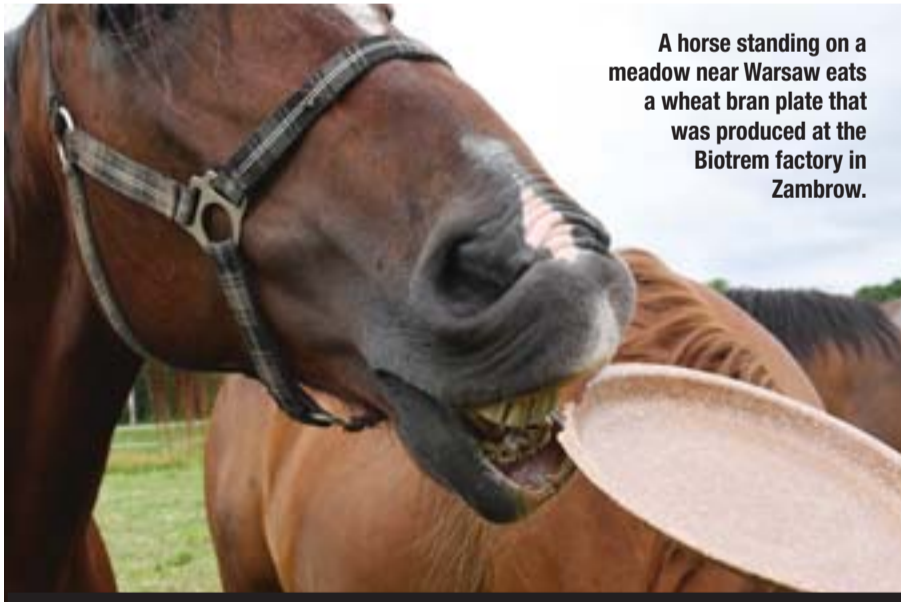
Women working in one of Warsaw's vegan restaurants serve meals on wheat bran plates produced at the Biotrem factory in Zambrow, Poland.



Polish inventor and entrepreneur Jerzy Wysocki holds a wheat bran plate in his factory Biotrem.



Horses standing on a meadow near Warsaw eat wheat bran plates that were produced at the Biotrem factory in Zambrow.



A horse standing on a meadow near Warsaw eats a wheat bran plate that was produced at the Biotrem factory in Zambrow.

You can have your plate and eat it too, says Polish inventor

Polish inventor and entrepreneur Jerzy Wysocki catches a brown plate—still warm—as it drops out of a machine and he begins to eat the crunchy, fibrous tableware. “A meat chop will always be more delicious on this wheat bran plate than on plastic,” says Wysocki with a big grin at the Biotrem factory in Zambrow in northeast Poland. Taking a bite, the plate does not have much of a flavor. It calls to mind dry cereal flakes or maybe what you would imagine cardboard to taste like. But Wysocki says what matters is the tableware is biodegradable.

The sexagenarian invented the plate some 15 years ago, and today Biotrem makes around 15 million of them a year. That figure could soon skyrocket thanks to a decision by the European Union to ban plastic plates and cutlery starting in 2021. A son and grandson of millers, Wysocki got the idea for the tableware when he was looking to use up the leftovers of flour production, which take up a lot of space. But he says he is also driven by the desire to help a good cause, “because the amount of rubbish that pollutes oceans is huge and frightening.” “To make the plates, we only use wheat bran, which we compress at a precise pressure point and temperature, using a machine made specifically for that purpose,” he explains.

Eco-conscious clients

Biotrem CEO Malgorzata Then acknowledges, of course, that at 15 euro cents (17 US cents) a pop or 20 percent more for exports, wheat bran plates are more expensive than their plastic counterparts. But “the current price of plastic doesn’t factor in the environmental cost, that of recycling and marine pollution,” she adds. At first, the company targeted clients who were environmentally inclined as well as restaurants and hotels that wanted to offer something original. “Now, with the measures taken by the EU, even clients who are uninformed about the environment are forced to take an interest in biodegradable products,” Then said.

Biotrem distributes the plates in Europe, Asia, North America and Australia. The client Down Under had asked that they check whether earthworms would like the taste—they do. “These aren’t huge amounts, but they’re enough for us to be optimistic about the future,” Wysocki says. The rosy outlook is backed by the prospect of greater output leading to a drop in the price. Also, it should be possible to harness the same technology to make plates out of corn, barley, oats, cassava and even algae. “With cassava, the first tests turned out really well and we already have a small group of interested clients,” Wysocki adds. Biotrem is hoping to expand its offer to edible boxes for takeaway



meals and catering. The research is already at a fairly advanced stage: the only thing left to do is to make the boxes more resistant to liquid and heat.

A man works at the production line of wheat bran plate at the Biotrem factory .

Biodegradable cutlery

You do not have to eat the plate or its packaging to be a friend of the environment. In favorable weather conditions, with a little humidity, wheat bran products decompose after a month, or even after two weeks if there is rain. The Biotrem crew are not the only ones in Poland stepping up to the front line of the war on plastic. Researchers in the chemistry department of the Gdansk University of Technology have developed a way to make biodegradable cutlery out of potato starch.

The forks, spoons and knives are even safe for sea creatures to eat. “We are the only ones so far to have tested the biodegradability of our products on living aquatic organisms and it looks like this cutlery is safe for the environment,” professor Helena Janik told AFP. According to Robert Bajko, who sells the university’s innovations to entrepreneurs, the cutlery does not require any complex technology or a huge investment. Anyone in the plastic industry can get started “overnight,” he enthuses. — AFP

US spelling bee ends in historic eight-way tie

The world’s premier spelling bee has ended in an unprecedented eight-way tie after hours of intense competition among American youngsters tackling some of the English language’s most obscure words. Texas seventh-grader Rohan Raja became the eighth and final winner of the National Spelling Bee’s 92nd annual competition on Thursday after a correct recital of the word “odylic”, earning a wild round of applause from the audience. He hoisted the trophy with the seven other kids to survive the final round after successfully spelling a slate of tongue-twisters, including auslaut, erysipelas, bougainvillea, aiguillette, pendeloque, palama and cernuous.

The winners were “the most phenomenal assemblage of spellers in the history of this storied competition”, said the bee’s long-time official pronouncer Jacques Bailly. Each will receive a \$50,000 cash prize in addition to their own

trophies, organizers said. An American institution, the Scripps National Spelling Bee brought together more than 550 spellers from all over the country aged between seven and 14. They were the elite among millions of youngsters, typically aged nine through 15, who competed in local and regional spelling bees this past school year.

The competition has only tied six times in its history, though four titles in the last six years ended with a draw. Seven of the eight winners are of Indian ancestry—a reflection of the popularity of competitive spelling among Indian immigrant families. This was the twelfth year in a row that American youngsters of South Asian heritage clinched the title. — AFP

Co-champions (From left) Shrutika Padhy (307) of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, Erin Howard (93) of Huntsville, Alabama, Rishik Gandhasri (5) of San Jose, California, Christopher Serrao (427) of Whitehouse Station, New Jersey, Saketh Sundar (132) of Clarksville, Maryland, Sohun Sukhatankar (354) of Dallas, Texas, Rohan Raja (462) of Irving, Texas, and Abhijay Kodali (407) of Flower Mound, Texas, hold the trophy for photographers after 20 rounds of competition and won the championship of the Scripps National Spelling Bee at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland. — AFP



Lifestyle | Features



This picture shows elderly South Korean women (top left to right) Park Young-ae, Nam Yang-soon and Shin Dong-hee studying with their eight-year-old classmates in a classroom at Woldeung Elementary School on the outskirts of Suncheon, 320 kilometers (198 miles) south of Seoul. — AFP photos



Elderly South Korean women painting during a class at a city-run library in Suncheon.



Elderly South Korean women display their painting during a class at a city-run library in Suncheon.

Illiterate to author: Ageing S Koreans embrace written word

Hyper-wired South Korea is the world's 11th-largest economy, one of its most technologically advanced countries, and the first to launch a nationwide 5G network. But that is a relatively recent transformation and at the other end of the spectrum, many of its elderly are illiterate. Now some are finally learning to read and write, decades after their contemporaries—and even becoming published authors. In the first half of the 20th century, the agricultural south was the poorer half of the already underdeveloped peninsula, and many children never went to school.

Jang is one of 20 grandmothers in a writing class at the library in Suncheon, 320 kilometers (200 miles) southeast of Seoul. Sitting in rows with pencils in their hands, the grey-haired women—aged from 57 to 89—summon recollections of their mothers and try to put them into words. Since the program began three years ago they have co-written a collection of memoirs entitled “We didn’t know how to write, but we knew how to live”, which conveys stories that bear witness to their country’s historical turmoil.



Elderly South Korean women (front left to right) Park Young-ae, Nam Yang-soon and Shin Dong-hee posing and their eight-year-old classmates in a classroom at Woldeung Elementary School.



Elderly South Korean women (rear left to right) Park Young-ae, Nam Yang-soon and Shin Dong-hee sitting in a classroom as their eight-year-old classmates (front) play at Woldeung Elementary School on the outskirts of Suncheon.

According to a 2017 study by the National Institute for Lifelong Education, 67.7 percent of South Koreans aged 80 or older were unable to read or write. The phenomenon is significantly more pronounced among women—Korea has been a patriarchal society for centuries and many families kept girls from school even into the mid-20th century, as the country began its rapid industrialization. “My grandmother used to say a woman with knowledge always ends up rebellious,” said Jang Seon-ja, 75, at a library in Suncheon. “So she forbade me from school,” she explained. It is a marked contrast from the present day, when families put enormous emphasis on education and children—whether boys or girls—study for long hours, including extra after-school tuition, in a high-pressure contest for the best possible opportunities.



Elderly South Korean woman Nam Yang-soon taking a spelling test in a classroom at Woldeung Elementary School.



Elderly South Korean woman Park Young-ae (third left) walking past young students at Woldeung Elementary School.

More than 7,000 copies have been sold since it was published in February, library director Na Ok-hyeon, told AFP, who is seeking an English-language publication and has taken three of the authors on a tour of the US. “I was at first worried whether the translation would capture subtle nuance expressed in Korean,” Na said, but added: “Then I saw many with tears in their eyes.” One entry in the book by Kim Young-bun, 80, recalls her family’s flight during the Korean War, when she was 11. “While fleeing, my younger brother died,” she wrote. “Seeing nowhere to lay him to rest, I couldn’t just leave him so I carried him on my back all day long. “To this day, I cannot forget him.” — AFP



Elderly South Korean women Park Young-ae (left), Nam Yang-soon (2nd L) and Shin Dong-hee (r) going home after school at Woldeung Elementary School.



An interior view of the Trisulti Monastery Certosa di Trisulti in Colleparado.



A general view of the Trisulti Monastery Certosa di Trisulti in Colleparado. — AFP photos

‘Populist school’ in Italy vows to fight eviction

The mastermind behind a would-be “gladiator school” for populists set up in a 13th-century Italian monastery vowed yesterday to fight Italy’s culture ministry in court over attempts to evict it. The ministry said Friday it had begun proceedings to oust the school from the sprawling Certosa di Trisulti former monastery near Rome in a blow to former Trump White House adviser Steve Bannon who pledged to help finance the project.

Students from across the globe had been readying to learn how to “defend the West” at the far-right political boot camp run by the Dignitatis Humanae Institute (DHI), founded by Benjamin Harnwell, Trump’s close associate in Europe. “While the ministry has announced it is initiating proceedings to revoke the lease, the DHI will contest this illegitimate manoeuvre with every resource at its disposal no matter how many years it takes,” Harnwell told AFP yesterday. “And we will win,” he said.

The ministry said it had been advised by the state’s attorney general there were “all the necessary conditions” for eviction. Under the previous government, the ministry had awarded custody of the site to the institute for 19 years in February 2018.

But the institute did not have the statutory status, or required experience in managing a historical site, to participate in the government tender, and had not been paying for the site’s upkeep since moving in, the ministry now claims. “I hate those who cheat to get an advantage over others,” Culture Minister Alberto Bonisoli said Friday, adding that the institute had “got one better over those who had the necessary requisites to be awarded the concession in their place”.



This photograph shows a general view of the Trisulti Monastery Certosa di Trisulti in Colleparado.

‘Fight in court’

Harnwell had been preparing to renovate parts of the former monastery, with its frescoed ceilings, Baroque chapel, library, and 18th-century pharmacy, where the monks brewed medicines from herbs gathered in the surrounding woods. He had hoped to offer a small number of students the first three-week course later this year, and had been in the process of getting planning permission to put bathrooms in the monk cells, redo the sewer system and install Internet access.

More than 1,000 people already expressed an interest, some 80 percent from the English-speaking world, Harnwell said. Bannon, who since being ousted from the White House spends his days fomenting right-wing populism in Europe, had pledged \$1 million to the project. He appears to be the only benefactor to have

stumped up funds so far. Italy is ruled by an uneasy alliance of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S) and the far-right League, whose leader Matteo Salvini has been supported by Bannon. The culture minister is a M5S posting: When an investigation into the tender was announced in May, Harnwell said the school was caught in a political crossfire between the endlessly bickering parties. “The culture ministry might be prepared to surrender to every whim of the extreme left—the DHI will never do so,” Harnwell said yesterday. The school “will proceed as planned this Autumn, and in the meantime, we relish the opportunity to fight our case in court”. — AFP

Classifieds

Sunday, June 2, 2019

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h causing rising dust over some areas.

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h.

WEATHER WATCH			Fresh wind	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 01/06/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	34 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	45 °C	24 °C		
ABDALY	44 °C	27 °C		
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C		
JAHRA	46 °C	29 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	44 °C	27 °C		
SALMIYAH	43 °C	34 °C		
AHMADI	41 °C	33 °C		
NUWAISIB	46 °C	28 °C		
WAFRA	45 °C	24 °C		
SALMY	44 °C	27 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	06/02	Hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas	46 °C	28 °C	NW	15 - 42 km/h
Monday	06/03	Hot with a chance for blowing dust over open areas	46 °C	28 °C	NW-NE	12 - 40 km/h
Tuesday	06/04	Hot and some high clouds will appear	45 °C	27 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 28 km/h
Wednesday	06/05	Hot and some scattered clouds will appear	45 °C	26 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:15
Sunrise	04:49
Zuhr	11:46
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:43
Isha	20:13

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	45 °C
MIN. Temp.	25 °C
MAX. RH	33 %
MIN. RH	06 %
MAX. Wind	NW 50 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

NOTICE
 May 26, 2019

Mr. Gajapathi Ammeneni, son of Mr. Ammeneni Krishnaiah Naidu, Indian national, resident of Chinthalgiripalli, H 0 Timmasamudram, T S Paili, Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh and Ms. Clara Tingzon Lagbo, daughter of Mr. Carita Lagbo, Philippines national, resident of Motong, Western Samar Poblacion, Philippines, both presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (welfare2@indembktv.gov.in)/letters / telephonic calls (00965-22533315, 00965-22533125).

(Rameer Bhatti)
 Second Secretary (Cons) and Marriage Officer,
 Embassy of India, Kuwait.
 Email: welfare2@indembktv.gov.in

Ph: 00965-22533315 - 00965-22533125
 Fax: 00965-22539910
 Email: welfare2@indembktv.gov.in

CHANGE OF NAME

I, George Vishnu, holder of Indian Passport No. 55764774 issued at Kuwait on 28-5-2019 permanent resident of George Vishnu Stanmore Estate OC. Valparai, Coimbatore Dist. Pin 642127, Tamil Nadu, India, and presently residing Salmiya block 10, my change name from George Vishnu to Viju George with immediate effect. (C 5542)

name Omprakash Ramchandra adhar No. 960505763436 (C 5540)

I, Bishar Mohammed Kutty S/o Andipatil Eusooof Mohammed Kutty, holder of Indian Passport No. Z3830803 hereby change my name to Bisher Mohammed Kutty for all official purposes. (C 5541) 28-5-2019

MATRIMONIAL

Proposals are invited for a Keraleite boy, RCSC, 32/172, B.Sc very fair, working in Kuwait, upper middle class, from parents of suitable girls, preferably working in Kuwait. Interested please contact email: joekarintholli36@hotmail.com (C 5539) 27-5-2019

EMERGENCY

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

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 2/6/2019				Departure Flights on Sunday 2/6/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	JZR	715	Sohag	12:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	MAR	301	Mykonos/ATH	12:30
AHY	119	Baku	00:55	FEG	1246	Cairo	12:30
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	JZR	735	Alexandria	13:10
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	JZR	723	Doha	13:25
KAC	504	Beirut	01:00	ETH	3621	Addis Ababa	13:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	541	Cairo	13:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	MSR	611	Tehran	13:45
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	515	Istanbul	14:00
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	THY	767	Kozhikode	14:10
QTR	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	AXB	394	Riyadh	14:15
OHA	1086	Bangkok	02:40	JZR	221	Dubai	14:15
KAC	414	Bahrain	02:40	UAE	872	Taif	15:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	UAE	878	Doha	15:30
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
PGT	856	Istanbul	03:10	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	JZR	405	Kochi	16:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:10
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
PGT	7464	Istanbul	04:00	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:20
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	KAC	619	Doha	16:25
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	FEG	442	Asyut	16:55
JZR	1738	Cairo	04:45	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	FDB	052	Dubai	17:10
THY	1414	Trabzon	05:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	503	Beirut	17:40
THY	770	Ataturk, Istanbul	05:20	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:40
KAC	402	Mumbai	05:25	FEG	242	Alexandria	17:45
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	343	Chennai	17:50
UAE	873	Dubai	05:40	KAC	621	Doha	17:50
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	SAW	706	Delhi	17:55
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	KAC	381	Damascus	18:00
QTR	8511	Doha	06:05	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:10
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	JZR	127	Dubai	18:20
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	204	Lahore	06:45	IRA	664	Shiraz	18:35
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	JZR	733	Cairo	18:35
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	JZR	253	Amman	19:10
IGO	1755	CNN	07:10	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
MEA	406	Beirut	07:55	FDB	064	Dubai	19:45
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	JZR	501	Lahore	19:45
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	RJA	641	Amman	20:05
JZR	708	Luxor	08:45	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:30
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
GFA	209	Bahrain	09:05	KAC	351	Kochi	20:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:50
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	DLH	624	Dammam	20:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
SAW	703	Damascus	10:00	KAC	333	Trivandrum	21:05
OMS	223	Muscat	10:20	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:25
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
ORF	05	Muscat	11:00	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
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
MAR	103	ATH	11:30	THY	1403	AYT	22:25
FEG	1445	Asyut	11:30	FEG	1446	Asyut	22:30
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
JZR	410	Delhi	11:50	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
JZR	252	Amman	12:20	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
ETH	3620	Addis Ababa	12:30	KA	C411	Bangkok	23:00
				KAC	551	Cairo	23:00
				ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:20



KUWAIT: Muslim worshippers pray yesterday at Kuwait City's Grand Mosque on the occasion of Lailat Al-Qadr, which marks the night in the fasting month of Ramadan during which the Quran was first revealed to Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in the seventh century. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Politics and prayers for last days of Ramadan in Makkah

MAKKAH: Islam's holiest city Makkah is abuzz with pilgrims in the last days of the fasting month of Ramadan, despite tight security for high-profile gatherings of Muslim and Arab dignitaries. At a palace overlooking the Grand Mosque, Saudi Arabia's King Salman hosted back-to-back emergency summits of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab League in the early hours of Friday.

Some roads remained blocked as Makkah geared up to host a third meeting later in the day, a long-scheduled gathering of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. As the flags of participating countries fluttered in the streets, worshippers in white flocked towards the Grand Mosque that surrounds the Kaaba stone towards which Muslims pray.

Makkah sees an influx in the last 10 days of Ramadan,

which believers consider the holiest month. Pilgrims from all over the world spend those days praying in the Grand Mosque as well as other places of worship in the holy city, entry to which is forbidden for non-Muslims.

Emirati visitor Suheil Al-Zubeidy sat dressed in white at a hotel in the centre in Makkah, as journalists hurried by to cover the summits which saw Saudi Arabia look to whip up support against rival Iran. "Makkah was a message of love in the past, and today it is again sending a message to avoid war and for coexistence, but firmly," he said.

Tens of millions of Muslims go to Makkah every year to perform pilgrimage or even just pray. The city is where Muslims believe Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) received revelations of the Muslim holy book, the Quran. On Thursday night, dozens of men and women

gathered near a mosque to break their day-long fast. They laid out a white blanket on the green grass and sat on the floor to share an iftar meal, as calls to prayer from loudspeakers filled the air.

An administrative worker at the mosque said many people spend the last 10 days praying. "They want nothing but to pray," he said. "Some pray for a lover, some pray for work, and some pray that God heal them. They spend all their days in the mosque and only come out to break their fast."

Khaled al-Ghamdi from the south of the kingdom has been living in Makkah for the past two months. The increased number of worshippers coupled with the closure of roads due to the meetings has resulted in heavy congestion, he said. "But, there's no problem at all. Everything becomes easy, thank God," he said.

Saudi Ahmed Al-Rajhi said the last 10 days of the holy month is when "you can pray for anything you want in your life". "Every person has his own unique story here," he said. But not everyone's story is pretty. Pakistani Ahmed Nuaim's trip to Makkah turned into one of tragedy after his wife was killed and his mother seriously injured in a car accident in the holy city.

Nuaim, who resides in the Saudi city of Khobar, was in Makkah with his family to perform Umrah—a lesser pilgrimage than Islam's main one, the Hajj. "This has been our custom the past few years. We prefer to perform Umrah in Ramadan because it is said we get more benefits," the father of four said. "We buried my wife near the Grand Mosque," he said, holding back tears. "For my children, this is another incentive to come back here... to visit their mother's grave and pray for her." — AFP

N Korea executes nuke envoy and 4 other officials

SEOUL: North Korea executed its nuclear envoy to the United States as part of a purge of officials who steered negotiations for a failed summit between leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump, a South Korean newspaper said. Kim Hyok Chol was executed in March at Mirim Airport in Pyongyang, along with four foreign ministry officials after they were charged with spying for the United States, the Chosun Ilbo reported, citing an unidentified source with knowledge of the situation.

"He was accused of spying for the United States for poorly reporting on the negotiations without properly grasping US intentions," the source was quoted as saying. The February summit in Vietnam's capital Hanoi, the second between Kim and Trump, failed to reach a deal because of conflicts over US calls for complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and North Korean demands for sanctions relief.

Reuters was unable to independently confirm the report. Previously, some North Korean officials who

were reported to have been executed or purged reappeared later with new titles. A spokeswoman at South Korea's Unification Ministry declined to comment. An official at the presidential Blue House in Seoul said it was inappropriate to comment on an unverified report. White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders declined to comment on the reports, saying, "I am not going to comment on intelligence one way or another."

"I can tell you we are monitoring the situation and continuing to stay focused on our ultimate goal, which is denuclearization," she told reporters in Washington. The United States is attempting to check on the reports of the envoy's execution, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said during his visit to Berlin on Friday. When asked about reports of a "shakeup" of Kim Jong Un's negotiating team in a May 5 interview with ABC News, Pompeo said it did appear that his future counterpart would be somebody else "but we don't know that for sure."

A diplomatic source told Reuters there were signs Kim Hyok Chol and other officials were punished, but there was no evidence they were executed and they may have been sent to a labour camp for re-education. The newspaper reported that other officials had been punished, but not executed. Kim Yong Chol, Kim Jong Un's right-hand man and the counterpart to Pompeo before the Hanoi summit, had been sent to a labour and reeducation camp in Jagang Province near the Chinese border, the Chosun Ilbo reported. — Reuters

Hassan Nasrallah said, "Any war on Iran will mean the whole region will erupt," said the head of the Iran-backed movement in a televised speech, explaining that such a war was therefore unlikely.

"And any American forces and American interests will be permissible" as a target, he said. Hezbollah is listed as a "terrorist group" by the United States, and has fought several wars with US-ally Israel to the south of Lebanon. Nasrallah on Friday also slammed a proposed US peace deal to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that Trump has dubbed "the deal of the century".

"It's a void deal... a historic crime," he said of the plan, that has already been rejected by the Palestinians as it is expected to largely favor Israel. "This deal is a loss of Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic rights," Nasrallah said. Thousands of Iranians joined annual rallies in support of the Palestinian cause on Friday, also rejecting the US peace plan. Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner has been drafting the long-awaited peace plan, the economic aspects of which are to be presented at a conference in Bahrain next month.

The United Nations earlier on Friday said it would not be taking part in that meeting on June 25 and 26 in Manama. Gulf countries in Makkah expressed "support for the US strategy towards Iran", which includes crippling sanctions and deploying an aircraft carrier task force, B-52 bombers and an amphibious assault ship to the Gulf.

Nasrallah warned that Hezbollah was a force to reckon with. "We have precision missiles in Lebanon, and enough to be able to change the face of the region," he said. The movement has been backing the Damascus regime in the civil war in neighboring Syria, and stands accused of also backing rebels in the conflict in Yemen.

In December 2017, Trump broke with decades of bipartisan policy to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital in a move that prompted the Palestinians to cut all contacts with his administration. Israel insists the whole of Jerusalem is its "eternal, indivisible capital". The Palestinians demand the city's eastern sector as the capital of their long promised state. — Agencies

Ramadan: I have seen the enemy...

Continued from Page 1

In the Quran, it states that Satan was Commanded to prostrate before Adam (the first man). Satan refused. He threatened humankind with misguidance. In essence, he said he would come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left. His goal became leading the sons of Adam astray. (Quran: 7:16-17)

Now, how does all of this relate to Ramadan? Since the jinn (Satan and his followers from his offspring) are chained, therefore unable to tempt humans during the month of Ramadan, it means that whatever evil a person commits in this month is from his/her own choosing. Temptation is gone. That is one of the reasons that Muslims find it not just easy but pleasurable to fast all day and pray all night. It's also one of the reasons that the same actions are so hard the rest of the year.

Ramadan is a beautiful Blessing because we are freed from the constant whisperings of Satan that tempt and cajole us into being less than stellar Muslims. When we live in a Muslim country, we can see some of the obvious changes in the people around us. People who don't pray the rest of the year, start to pray. People who are rebellious become a bit tamer. People who are downright evil, become nice, friendly and even charitable.

But... There are those who don't change at all. There are those who become more impatient, more irritable, meaner, or nastier. How do we account for them? How do we explain their behavior? The answer is simple. Whatever comes out from people during Ramadan is basically them. It is from their own imperfections without the aid of temptation from Satan.

Now you can see why that meme is so scary! During the year, we fool ourselves into the false idea that we

disobey Allah due to temptation. During the year, we lull ourselves into the illusion that were it not for temptation, we would be better, but Ramadan rolls around, and we see the stark reality. We basically recognize, to rephrase an old saying, "I have seen the enemy, and it is me." Now, don't get me wrong. Islam does not teach Muslims that we are perfect, near perfect or that we can even come close to perfection. We believe that Allah is The Only Perfect One.

We are taught that we are not only imperfect, but imperfection is expected from us, and to counteract this imperfection, we repent and increase our good deeds. This is another reason Ramadan is so special. During Ramadan, it is easier to recognize our own personal (non-temptation-based) faults and it is easier to work on them by doing as many good deeds as we can manage, begging for forgiveness with every prayer, giving charity, helping people... The list is endless.

Add to this that all good deeds are multiplied countless times, and it is clearly a huge opportunity. This is one of the greatest beauties of Ramadan and it is a massive motivation and justification for all the positive attributes we see emerge in people during the month. Ramadan is a month of Good Tidings to Muslims. It is a month of renewal, hope and a chance to start over.

So, to my fellow Muslims, I say, 'Instead of getting scared when we see which of our sins are purely from us, we should thank our Lord that He has exposed them to us and given us yet another chance to repent and return.' For everyone spending Ramadan in Kuwait, Muslim or not, I wish y'all a Beautiful and Blessed Ramadan and I pray that the Beneficence of Ramadan fall upon us all.

Courtesy of the TIES Center: the TIES Center aims at empower Kuwait's expats through social and educational services that promote a positive and productive role in society, and to facilitate opportunities for intra- and interfaith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, please call 25231015/6 or e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.

Makkah summit supports...

Continued from Page 1

The summits came after Trump's hawkish National Security Advisor John Bolton said Wednesday that Iranian naval mines were "almost certainly" responsible for the damage to the four ships off the United Arab Emirates on May 12. The findings of a five-nation inquiry into what happened have yet to be released. Tehran dismissed Bolton's accusation as "laughable" and accused him of pursuing "evil desires for chaos in the region".

Erdogan absent

Regional tensions have risen sharply since US the Trump administration reimposed crippling unilateral sanctions against Iran, after he abandoned a landmark 2015 nuclear deal between major powers and Iran in May last year. But Trump has appeared to soften his tone towards Tehran, saying that his government does not seek "regime change". Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was notably absent from the key OIC summit, an AFP photographer said.

A regional heavyweight, Turkey—which maintains close ties with Iran—was instead represented by Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani was also not present but sent a representative to the talks, an AFP reporter said. Erdogan's visit would have been his first to the kingdom since the brutal murder last October of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, which tarnished the international reputation of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Meanwhile, the head of the Lebanese Shiite movement Hezbollah has warned that if there was a war against Iran the whole Middle East region would "erupt", amid escalating US-Iranian tensions. US President Donald Trump, his administration, and his intelligence know well that any war on Iran will not remain confined to Iran's borders",

Disgruntled worker kills...

Continued from Page 1

The first victim was shot in a vehicle outside the public works and utilities building at the city municipal center before the suspect entered that building and "immediately and indiscriminately fired upon all the victims," Cervera said.

The chief said the suspect engaged in a "long-term gun battle" with four police officers who confronted him inside, preventing the gunman from "committing more carnage in that building." One officer was wounded in the shootout, but his bullet-proof vest saved his life, Cervera said. Authorities said the gunman ultimately was shot by police and was declared dead at a hospital.

Cervera said the suspect was a longtime public utilities employee, and described him as "disgruntled," but declined to say more about what may have precipitated the attack. "We have more questions than we really have answers," he told reporters about two hours after the shooting.

The shooting was believed to be the deadliest act of workplace gun violence in the United States since

February, when a factory worker shot five colleagues to death in Aurora, Illinois, just after he was let go from his job. Authorities have determined the suspect's identity but are not ready to make the name public, Cervera said.

"We will release his name once," the chief said. "Then he will be forever referred to as 'the suspect,' because our focus now is on the dignity and respect of the victims and their families." The bloodshed unfolded, according to police, at Building Two of the municipal center complex, where office space for more than 400 employees houses information technology, public works, planning and utilities departments next door to City Hall.

The complex lies several miles inland from the town's popular seashore, situated on the Atlantic coast at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Southeast Virginia's most populous city has roughly 450,000 year-round residents. "This is the most devastating day in the history of Virginia Beach," Mayor Bobby Dyer said in a news conference with the police chief. "The people involved are our friends, co-workers, neighbors, colleagues."

Arriving in town a short time after the shooting, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam said: "This is just a horrific day." "Our hearts ache for victims of the senseless violence that has been inflicted on the community," he told a news conference hours later. In Washington, a White House spokesman said President Donald Trump had been briefed on the shooting and "continues to monitor the situation." — Reuters

Sports

Carpenter's 10th-inning hit lifts Cardinals over Cubs

Padres bash three homers, down Marlins

ST LOUIS: Matt Carpenter hit a game-ending, bases-loaded single in the 10th inning to send the host St. Louis Cardinals to a 2-1 victory against the Chicago Cubs on Friday night. Carpenter sent a fly ball the opposite way to a largely vacant left field, as the Cubs had loaded four defenders on the right side of the infield. The hit off Steve Cishek scored Kolten Wong, who had doubled into the right field corner with one out, and secured the Cardinals' first walk-off victory of the season. Chicago relievers Kyle Ryan, Brad Brach and Brandon Kintzler collaborated on three innings of perfect, three-strikeout relief before St. Louis' 10th-inning rally against Mike Montgomery (1-1), Dillon Maples and Cishek. Jordan Hicks (2-2) was the winner, pitching hitless ball in the ninth and 10th with two walks and two strikeouts.

YANKEES 4, RED SOX 1

Aaron Hicks hit a tiebreaking two-run single in the third inning, and New York beat visiting Boston. The Yankees improved to 3-0 against the Red Sox this year and continued to roll. New York beat Chris Sale (1-7) for the second time this year and won for the 14th time in 17 games overall. DJ LeMahieu hit a game-tying double in the third inning, then belted his sixth homer in the fifth to make it 4-1. Rafael Devers homered in the second inning for the Red Sox, who dropped their third straight.

REDS 9, NATIONALS 3

Curt Casali homered among his three hits and drove in four runs for the third time in his career as host Cincinnati posted a victory over Washington. Joey Votto collected three singles for his fifth straight multi-hit performance, and Jose Iglesias scored three times for the Reds, who have plated 66 runs in their past nine games (5-4). Juan Soto belted a solo homer and a double to extend his career-high hitting streak to 14 games for the Nationals, who fell for just the second time in eight contests. The loss was Washington's first in Cincinnati since June 4, 2016.

WHITE SOX 6, INDIANS 1

Charlie Tilson ripped a go-ahead, two-run double in the third inning, and Chicago pulled away for a win over visiting Cleveland. Jose Abreu and Yolmer Sanchez

also drove in one run apiece for the White Sox, who increased their season-high winning streak to five games. Dylan Covey (1-4) allowed one run on eight hits in six innings. He walked one and struck out five while earning his first victory since Aug. 31, 2018. Francisco Lindor hit a solo shot to lead off the game for the Indians' lone run. Cleveland has dropped two in a row, five of seven and nine of 12.

PIRATES 9, BREWERS 4

Kevin Newman and Colin Moran each drove in two runs as Pittsburgh used a small-ball game to beat visiting Milwaukee. Pittsburgh, which had lost eight of its previous 11 games, including the series opener Thursday, had 13 hits—all singles. Chris Archer (2-5) pitched seven innings, allowing four runs—all on homers—and five hits, with seven strikeouts and two walks. The Pirates rode a six-run third inning to the win. Jesus Aguilar and Keston Hiura homered for Milwaukee.

ORIOLES 9, GIANTS 6

Dwight Smith Jr. hit a grand slam, Trey Mancini added a two-run shot, and Baltimore defeated visiting San Francisco. Renato Nunez added a solo homer for the Orioles. Andrew Cashner (6-2) survived a five-run first inning and gave up six runs on eight hits in five innings. Three Orioles relievers strung together four innings of one-hit relief, with Richard Bleier picking up his second save. Former Orioles farmhand Mike Yastrzemski hit his first major league homer and tripled for the Giants.

TWINS 5, RAYS 3

Eddie Rosario hit a two-run, bases-loaded single in the ninth inning to break a tie and give Minnesota a victory over Tampa Bay in St. Petersburg, Fla. Polanco scored three runs and had two doubles and a RBI, and Willians Astudillo had two RBI singles for Minnesota, which improved to 15-3 following a loss. Kevin Kiermaier hit a two-run homer and Austin Meadows stole home for Tampa Bay, which had a season-best six-game winning streak snapped.

PADRES 5, MARLINS 2

Franmil Reyes, Hunter Renfroe and Ian Kinsler con-



ST LOUIS: Matt Carpenter #13 of the St. Louis Cardinals hits a walk-off single against the Chicago Cubs in the tenth inning at Busch Stadium in St Louis, Missouri. — AFP

ected for solo homers, and Joey Lucchesi held Miami to one run on two hits over 6 1/3 innings as San Diego opened a 10-game homestand with a win. Reyes and Renfroe connected off Marlins starter Caleb Smith (3-3). Kinsler homered in the seventh off Austin Brice. Rosell Herrera belted his second pinch-hit homer of the season for the Marlins.

TIGERS 8, BRAVES 2

Leadoff hitter Niko Goodrum had five hits, including two solo homers, and Detroit overpowered host Atlanta to win its third straight. Goodrum's first career five-hit night included four runs and three RBIs. Nicholas Castellanos and Grayson Greiner also homered for the Tigers while Brandon Dixon added two hits and an RBI. Detroit had lost 12 of 13 prior to the winning streak. Detroit's Spencer Turnbull (3-4), who was activated off the bereavement list, gave up two runs (one earned) on

five hits in six-plus innings. Atlanta's Mike Foltyniewicz (1-4) gave up five runs, including three homers, on seven hits in five innings while striking out eight.

ROCKIES 13, BLUE JAYS 6

Trevor Story hit two home runs and had a career-high seven RBIs, German Marquez pitched seven strong innings, and Colorado beat Toronto in Denver. Story followed up Thursday's four-hit game with three more and scored four runs. Nolan Arenado also had three hits and Raimel Tapia scored four times for Colorado, which has won six in a row. Marquez (6-2) allowed two runs on six hits and struck out seven and had two of the Rockies' 17 hits. He now has a five-game hitting streak. He is three shy of Mike Hampton's club record for a pitcher set in 2002. Randal Grichuk and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. homered for the Blue Jays, who have lost four in a row. — Reuters

Late Abed Ali Bahman Ramadan squash tourney concludes



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The 23rd late Abed Ali Bahman Ramadan Squash Tournament concluded at Al Arabi Club. Sponsor of the tournament Mustafa Abed Ali Bahman who is also the dean of squash pioneers at the club was on hand along with, Al Arabi Club secretary Fuad Al-Mazidi, former chairman of Squash Federation Hussein Maqseed, board member Waleed Al-Mazidi and actor Mohammad Al-Mansour were on hand.

Results of the tournament are as follows: first place in the doubles was won by Abdullah Maqseed and Adnan Dashti, second place went to Qais Al-Mizyad and Ayman Al-Farra and third place went to Saleh Al-Khudhari and Dr Nasser Behbehani.



KUWAIT: Deputy Director General of Public Authority for Sports for Competitive Sports Sector Dr Saqer Al-Mulla received Qadisiya Club and national team players Fahad Al-Ansari and Saud Al-Mijmed as he lauded the efforts of Al-Ansari at Al-Faisaly Saudi Club.



Tanak and Toyota roar through Portuguese dust

MATOSINHOS: Toyota's Ott Tanak survived a brake failure at the dust shrouded Rally of Portugal yesterday, but clung to a narrow lead over Jari Matti Latvala. Tanak, an Estonian, who won the last rally at Chile, had to pull over for emergency repairs after the eighth special 20.53km speed test at Vieira do Minho, where he was second fastest.

Tanak, in a Toyota, finished the morning 5.1 sec ahead of Latvala, a Finn driving another Toyota, who won the last two stages of the morning. Briton Kris Meeke, winner of the first stage of the day in a third Toyota, was next 18.4sec back.

Belgian Thierry Neuville was fourth in a Hyundai at 23.7 sec. While Tanak was left to complain about his brakes most of the other drivers were complaining about the thick clouds of dust on the dirt roads round Porto. "The dust is very bad. We could do the Paris-Dakar," said Finn Esapekka Lappi, sixth in a Citroen. "There is just too much of it, I actually had to stop because I couldn't see anything." Sebastien Ogier said the gaps between cars needed to be increased to allow the dust to settle.

"The shame is that we asked for a four minutes interval yesterday," said the Frenchman, who is 26 sec off the pace in a Citroen. "Four minutes gap is the minimum but it's working," said Neuville. Petrucci tops practice with new MotoGP record at Mugello.

Meanwhile, Ducati's Danilo Petrucci topped yesterday morning's three practice sessions with a new fastest-ever lap at Mugello and also hit the highest speed ever in MotoGP ahead of the Italian Grand Prix, the sixth round of the world championships series.

Petrucci clocked 1min 46.056sec, surpassing the previous record achieved by Italian star Valentino Rossi last year. The 28-year-old also hit the highest speed ever achieved in MotoGP of 356.7 km/h to overtake teammate Andrea Dovizioso's mark of 356.5 km/h also achieved at Mugello last year.

Spanish pair Pol Espargaro (KTM) and reigning world champion Marc Marquez (Honda) were second and third fastest.

Dovizioso, second in the world championship standings behind Marquez, finished outside the top ten and must pass by Q1 session for Sunday's race in Tuscany along with Yamaha's Rossi.

Times

1. Danilo Petrucci (ITA/Ducati) 1min 46.056sec, 2. Pol Espargaro (ESP/KTM) at 0.207sec, 3. Marc Marquez (ESP/Honda) 0.224, 4. Takaaki Nakagami (JPN/Honda-LCR) 0.400, 5. Jack Miller (AUS/Ducati-Pramac) 0.422, 6. Fabio Quartararo (FRA/Yamaha-SRT) 0.432, 7. Maverick Vinales (ESP/Yamaha) 0.453, 8. Cal Crutchlow (GBR/Honda-LCR) 0.460, 9. Franco Morbidelli (ITA/Yamaha-SRT) 0.462, 10. Francesco Bagnaia (ITA/Ducati-Pramac) 0.657. — AFP

Sports

'Blessed' Paes closing in on fourth decade as pro and 1,000 racquets

'Tennis has been a beautiful journey for me'

PARIS: Indian veteran Leander Paes says he feels "blessed" to have had such a long career, as he closes in on his fourth decade as a professional, having accumulated 18 Grand Slam doubles titles and an impressive racquet collection.

Paes continued to defy his years on Friday, two weeks before his 46th birthday, winning his opening doubles match alongside in-form Frenchman Benoit Paire as he goes in search of fifth Roland Garros trophy.

For a man who once beat a young Roger Federer in Indian Wells qualifying and won singles bronze at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, it has been some road. "I've been around for 30 years, I've been around a long time. I've seen 12 generations. I've seen guys like (Pete) Sampras here, I've seen guys like (Pat) Rafter," he said at the French Open.

"Tennis has been a beautiful journey for me, I've been very blessed to have such a long career. Especially here, to win this four times." Paes has no plans to stop any time soon, especially with the Tokyo Olympics coming up next year.

He has already appeared at seven Games, more than any other Indian and any other tennis player. "It (the Olympics) is a long ways away. I've already got the world record at the Olympics. Now to push it up one more would be amazing," he added. "But I've got a lot of hard work to do between now and then because it's almost 15 months away—I'm not counting though."

RESPECT OF LOCKER ROOM

Paes, whose father also won an Olympic bronze medal in field hockey in 1972, says even the best players in the world are still sometimes taken aback by his longevity. "I think in the locker room I have this respect," he said.

"I was just coming back and Rafa (Nadal) and Uncle Toni (Nadal's former coach) were walking in and Uncle Toni was like, 'Leo, you're 46?' I said 'Oui'. You played for the first time at Roland Garros in 1989 (juniors)? In 1989 you played?' I said 'Oui'. 'I saw you won the first set, did you win?' 'Oui'.

"He said 'woah, it's incredible. Hey Rafa, 46 years old and he's still playing and winning'. For me, this is beautiful, because Rafa is one of the greatest of all time. Toni is one of the great tennis minds of all time.

"And to have the relationship I have with all the players, to have the respect from all the locker room, it takes many years of hard work."

NEARLY ONE THOUSAND RACQUETS

Paes has played with some illustrious names down the years, and a tradition of swapping racquets with his partners has seen him garner an amazing collection. "I have a collection of close to 1,000 racquets. I have Rod Laver's, I have a lot of the champions'—Federer, Nadal, (Novak) Djokovic, Andy (Murray), (Martina) Navratilova I played with a lot. Serena, Venus, Hingis...

"Wooden ones going back to Bjorn Borg's. My first racquet, I have." He will surely still have chances to add even more big names to that list, revealing he has added power to his serve in only the last two years to keep up with the young guns by stepping up his training regime.

"The game has evolved so much that I've reinvented myself maybe 11, 12, 13, 14 times," added Paes, who tells a story of Australian legend Rod Laver showing him how to get bigger forearms when Paes was just 12.

"I've just come from the gym. I played a match, and now I've just come from the gym to do my work, because for me, if I play, I play to be the best in the



Leander Paes

world, to win. "I play for fun, but I play to win. To play against guys who are 20 years younger than me is not easy."

Opponents 20 years younger than Paes are small fry in reality—players as young as 19 were in this year's French Open doubles draw. It's that kind of statistic that

has current partner Paire in awe of the Indian.

"He's very old," joked the Frenchman. "But it's not easy to play with a good player like this, because I want to do my best, and sometimes when I miss, I say, Okay, if you play with someone better than me maybe he will win more." — AFP

Japan's Higa maintains lead at US Women's Open

MIAMI: Japan's Mamiko Higa birdied her final hole in fading light to maintain her lead at the US Women's Open where the second round was delayed for two hours due to thunderstorms and then suspended because of darkness.

The 25-year-old Higa, who is ranked 49th in the world, kept a one-stroke lead from the first round when she shot the lowest debut round in tournament history with a six-under 65. "I was really happy because I could finish up a tough day with a birdie," said Higa. "I was so happy."

Higa rolled in a birdie on the par-five ninth hole Friday for an even-par 71 and a two-round total of six under 136 to lead American Jessica Korda, who shot a bogey-free three-under 68. There were 45 players still on the Country Club course in Charleston, North Carolina when play was suspended. The players had to endure a two-hour weather delay which included lightning striking a large elm tree along the 18th fairway. There were several people standing nearby when the bolt hit but no one was injured.

Higa is the first Japanese player to lead the tournament since 2011 when Mika Miyazato shot a 67 to top the leaderboard heading into the weekend. Gina Kim, who shot a 72, and Celine Boutier, who was at four under on the tournament with four holes to go in her round, are tied for third.

Several of the Tour's top players are just a couple strokes back of Higa, including Aussie Lee Min-je (69) and two time US Women's Open winner Park In-bee (70), who are both



CHARLESTON: Mamiko Higa of Japan hits her tee shot on the 10th hole during the second round of the US Women's Open Championship at the Country Club of Charleston. —AFP

at two under. World number eight and the top ranked American Lexi Thompson is at three under overall with two holes to go.

Higa struggled with four birdies and four bogeys in a mixed round on Friday. She made consecutive bogeys to start her back nine but recovered with back-to-back birdies on the holes No. 4 and 5 before adding another birdie on the par-five No. 9.

Korda, who was one of the early starters, also began on the back nine. Her round featured birdies on two of the three par fives and another the par-three 17th. Korda is seeking her first major championship win but said she is going to need some luck.

his attitude is "more relaxed".

"I was trying to force it a little bit, the success," he said. "And obviously we all know in golf what happens. You try to pull back, but the frustration comes out because you work hard, everything is there, you just can't get the scores on the scorecard.

"You don't get the results, so you need to change something," he said, adding that stepping away from social media and other distractions had helped him break that cycle. "That automatically makes you more aware, makes me more conscious and I think leads to more calmness," he said. "It helped me."

South Korea's Lee positioned himself for a weekend run at a first US PGA Tour title with a bogey-free five-under par 67. Merritt, a two-time tour winner who is working his way back after having surgery to remove a rib in January, had an eagle and six birdies in a six-under 66.

Merritt teed off early and fully expected someone to move past him atop the leaderboard. Kaymer was the only one to do it but he couldn't stay there. "We put myself in a good position for this weekend," said Merritt, who had surgery in January to remove a rib that was positioned so close to his clavicle that it pinched a vein and caused a blood clot.

The leading trio were one stroke in front

"That's what you play for," said Korda. "At the same time, I feel a lot of luck is always a big part of winning a major championship, making the most putts and the least amount of mistakes.

"It's really hard to win out here. I think everybody can see that, watching us week in week out. Solid golf will always put me up top. If I have a chance, I'll try to take it."

Among those left to finish are defending champion Ariya Jutanugarn of Thailand, who is two over with two holes to go. Nelly Korda, the sister of Jessica, is at three under overall and tied for fifth with three holes to play in the second round. — AFP

of three-time major-winner Jordan Spieth, who carded a 70 for 136. Australian Adam Scott carded a 66 to head a group of five players on 137 that also included Rickie Fowler and Emiliano Grillo.

On a day that saw England's Justin Rose charge up the leaderboard with a spectacular nine-under par 63, Tiger Woods was spinning his wheels with an even par 72 that was marred by an ugly double bogey at the par-five 15th.

Woods was comfortably in the fairway, but found deep greenside rough. After two poor chips he finally put the ball within five feet, then missed the putt for bogey. Woods, seven shots off the lead, hadn't abandoned hope of nabbing a sixth Memorial title.

"Seems like everyone is bunched together," he said. "I just need to get something going in the front nine where the pins are definitely gettable tomorrow." Rose played his way into contention as he rebounded from a three-over par first round. He played the last five holes of the front nine in six-under with two eagles and two birdies and picked up four more birdies coming in to lie three strokes off the lead on 138.

"The two eagles on the front kind of kick started everything," Rose said. "I kept just pushing myself to keep trying to go as low as I could. It was a great day." — AFP

Arthur promises Pakistan will bounce back

NOTTINGHAM: Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur has insisted they can bounce back from a "shocking" start to the World Cup. Hostile fast bowling by the West Indies saw Pakistan slump to just 105 — their second-lowest World Cup total in a mere 21.4 overs at Trent Bridge on Friday.

The West Indies, two-time former champions, then polished off the meagre target in 13.4 overs on the back of dashing opener Chris Gayle's 34-ball 50 which included six fours and three sixes.

Arthur did not hide from the scale of a seven-wicket defeat, saying it had gone against everything he had seen from his players in the build-up. "Yes, it was a shocking start—the players did not take the preparations into the middle," Arthur told AFP. "But we will dust ourselves off and come back strong."

Pakistan's batsmen were undone by the short-pitched bowling of the West Indies pace trio. Oshane Thomas led the way with four for 27, while captain Jason Holder (three for 42) and Andre Russell (two for four) also made telling contributions to a match that was all finished in under half of the scheduled 100 overs.

Opener Fakhar Zaman and number three Babar Azam scored 22 each while Wahab Riaz (18) and Mohammad Hafeez

Du Plessis urges S Africa to get WCup campaign back on track

LONDON: South Africa captain Faf du Plessis has challenged his side to make amends for the painful start to their World Cup campaign as they aim to bounce back against Bangladesh today.

The Proteas suffered a 104-run thrashing against hosts England in the tournament's opening match on Thursday. South Africa restricted England to manageable 311 for 8 on a tricky pitch at the Oval but, tormented by Jofra Archer's pace and bounce, their run chase never got going.

Dismissed for 207 by England, South Africa's bid to win the World Cup for the first time is off to the worst possible start. But they have a chance to get back on track when they return to the Oval to face Bangladesh and Du Plessis says now is not the time to panic.

The lengthy nature of the 10-team group stage, in which each country plays nine matches and the top four make the semi-finals, gives South Africa time to

(16) were the only other Pakistan batsmen to reach the double figures. Arthur said his team's batting performance was all the more disappointing as they had expected to face short-pitched bowling and prepared accordingly.

"We knew that we were going to get short-pitched bowling and had prepared very well for it, so was disappointing to see us play like that because we were prepared," the South African said. Pakistan have now lost their last 11 completed one-day internationals but Riaz insisted they did not have a mental block when it came to facing fast bowling.

"We didn't play the short ball well but we've seen in past series that we can score runs against that sort of bowling," said Riaz. "If people want to bowl us bouncers, then we will have no problems with that."

"It's not a mental issue. We have been losing in the past, we need to find a way to get out of this pattern," he added. Pakistan have a short turnaround in which to put their abject defeat behind them before they return to Trent Bridge for their second World Cup game against tournament hosts England tomorrow.

England, the world's top-ranked ODI side, launched their World Cup campaign in style with a 104-run victory over South Africa at the Oval on Thursday. They came into the World Cup on the back of a 4-0 ODI series rout of Pakistan—which included a three-wicket win at Trent Bridge.

But Arthur said Pakistan would be a better side for that experience. "Yes, we know how good England are but we know them and are battle-hardened against them." — AFP

recover, a point Du Plessis was keen to emphasise to his players. "This is where it's important for us to make sure that you look at the World Cup for what it is. You know, you're going to play games. You're going to come up against quality opposition," Du Plessis said.

"England were better than us in all three facets of the game. They showed why they are such a good cricket team, and now we have to look at the league. It's a league competition. "For me, it's about making sure we look at the areas that we got it wrong and just move on."

South Africa's disciplined bowling against England gives Du Plessis reason to believe they still have plenty to offer. Lungi Ngidi was their leading wicket-taker with three in his 10 overs, including the prize scalp of the destructive Jos Buttler.

Fellow pace bowler Kagiso Rabada also offered a glimpse of his talent with two wickets and Du Plessis expects them to put Bangladesh under pressure. "Lungi, he's got a beautiful action. The way he came back (from a slow start) was beautiful. You know, to get Jos Buttler out, he's probably one of the best strikers in the world," he said.

"So to get him out with good thinking, good tactics. Lungi, Kagi, those guys are going to play a role when it comes to close games at the death as the tournament moves on." Bangladesh will be playing their first match of the World Cup as they look to better their run to the quarter-finals in the 2015 edition. — AFP

Former world No 1 Kaymer shares Memorial lead

WASHINGTON: Former world number one Martin Kaymer, seeking his first win since his 2014 US Open triumph, shared the halfway lead at the US PGA's Memorial Tournament Friday with rookie Lee Kyoung-hoon and Troy Merritt.

Germany's Kaymer, now ranked 186th in the world as he battles his way back from wrist and shoulder injuries, birdied all four of the par-fives at Muirfield Village in Dublin, Ohio, rolling in a five-footer at the par-five seventh-hole of the day—to take a one-stroke lead.

But he bogeyed the par-four ninth, where he was unable to get up and down from a greenside bunker, his four-under par 68 giving him a nine-under total of 135. "It's been five years pretty much since I was leading the US Open in 2014, so it would be nice to get a little bit of reward for all the work I put in the last two or three years," Kaymer said, adding that while not much has changed in his game in recent weeks,

Sports

Warriors seek answers after NBA Finals loss to Raptors

Warriors also have a new appreciation for the Raptors' speed

TORONTO: Confident despite losing their NBA Finals opener, the defending champion Golden State Warriors say they must hustle faster defensively and reduce mistakes to defeat the Toronto Raptors.

Seeking their third consecutive title and fourth crown in five years, the Warriors had won 12 consecutive playoff series openers before falling 118-109 Thursday, gaining hard-earned wisdom for Sunday's game two.

"We're down 0-1 but it's not the end of the world," Warriors guard Stephen Curry said. "We've proven our resiliency and ability to win games we need to, answer the bell and learn."

"They obviously played well but our confidence remains the same. It's just come out, play hard, get game two and take it from there. I like the vibe that we have in the locker room in terms of everybody focusing on what they need to do differently and the overall energy bump we need to have to go steal game two."

Warriors coach Steve Kerr has stressed fast-moving defensive work because he sees familiar challenges in how the Raptors play. "Transition defense is where it starts. We were just careless getting back," Kerr said. "When you've got a team that can push the ball from a lot of different positions and plays fast, you've got to be vigilant every possession."

"If anything, they remind me of us," Warriors forward Draymond Green, who took the blame for Pascal Siakam's 32-point performance for Toronto in the opener, vows a more aggressive style Sunday. "We can do a lot better in executing and there are some adjustments we can make," Green said. "I have to be more

aggressive. Aggressiveness starts with me and everybody else will follow. If I'm on my heels, everyone else is on their heels."

"All five guys got to do a better job of just being physical, being alert, and we'll be all right. We're champions. We understand what it takes. People hold us to a higher standard, but we hold ourselves to an even higher standard."

Curry, who has sparked Golden State's attack with forward Kevin Durant out with a calf injury, said a 10-day break between games and being unfamiliar with the Raptors contributed to the Warriors' loss.

"The first half after that 10-day break it was a little bit sloppier than we might have thought and a little bit more rust that we had to shake off," Curry said. "I don't think it's that complicated what we need to do differently—it's just play better, take away easy buckets for them and control momentum a little bit better."

Green agrees the Warriors will be able to better compete against a team that has the speed and quick-strike ability of their reptilian namesakes. "We got our conditioning back," Green said. "It was a bit rough after 10 days off. Now we've got a feel for them. We know what we can do better. I like where we're at. Yeah, we lost but I think we figured some things out, and we'll be better next game."

"Our rotation has got to be better. We've got to fly around a little bit more. We can still play better and I know we will." But the Warriors also have a new appreciation for the Raptors' speed. "They're very fast, a little faster than it even looks on tape," Green said. "They definitely have a lot of speed. It's different once you see



TORONTO: Danny Green #14 of the Toronto Raptors shares a laugh with Matt Winer, Grant Hill, Isiah Thomas, and Charles Barkley after the game against the Golden State Warriors during Game One of the NBA Finals at Scotiabank Arena in Toronto, Canada. — AFP

it and once you feel it.

"So now that we got a feel for it, we know how to adjust. We know how important it is." The Warriors accept that all of Canada, and much of the United States, want them dethroned. "People in the States

are rooting against us because we beat all their teams," Green said. "When you're at the top, no one's ever cheering for you to stay there. They want to see you fall. That's just kind of the mind of most human beings." — AFP

Grief as Arsenal 'Invincibles' star Reyes killed in car crash

MADRID: Former Arsenal, Real Madrid and Spain star Jose Antonio Reyes has been killed in a car crash, his hometown club Sevilla said yesterday. He was 35.

Reyes shot to fame at Sevilla before a switch to Arsenal where he was part of the unbeaten 'Invincibles' 2003-2004 Premier League winners, before spells at Real and Atletico Madrid. UEFA announced they would hold a minute's silence in his honour ahead of Saturday's Champions League final between Tottenham and Liverpool.

Former Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger signed Reyes on the back of Spain's Under-19's European championships win where he played alongside Fernando Torres and Andres Iniesta, and a dazzling series of matches with Sevilla the following season.

Arsenal described the accident as "awful news". "Reyes was, of course, a member of the Invincibles," Arsenal said on their website. "(He) made a significant contribution to that unbeaten season."

"Thanks for what you gave us, and rest in peace," Arsenal said. He won Premier League and FA Cup medals at Arsenal and came on as a late substitute when the Gunners lost the 2006 Champions League final to Barcelona.

But it was at Sevilla where the pain will be most keenly felt. "We couldn't be confirming worse news," Sevilla said when breaking the news. "Beloved Sevilla star Jose Antonio Reyes has died in a traffic collision. Rest in peace," Sevilla, where he spent two four-year spells, said on Twitter.

He helped Sevilla win the Spanish second division in his first stint at the club. He won the Europa League five times, twice with Atletico Madrid and three times in his second spell at Sevilla.

The emergency services in Andalusia and the



EIBAR: In this file photo taken on April 29, 2015 Sevilla's forward Jose Antonio Reyes celebrates after scoring during the Spanish league football match SD Eibar vs Sevilla FC at the Ipurua Municipal Stadium in Eibar. — AFP

authorities in the town where his family live, Utrera, said Reyes died in an accident on the main road from Sevilla to Utrera. They said another member of his family also died and a third person was injured.

Spain captain Sergio Ramos, who is also from the province of Seville, came through the youth team just after Reyes and later played with him at Real Madrid also tweeted his grief. "Broken. Shattered," wrote Ramos. "I have no words. All the affection for the family. We will always remember you, my friend! RIP brother."

Reyes played 21 times for Spain between 2003 and 2006, scoring four goals. He also won domestic league titles with Real Madrid and Benfica. After leaving Sevilla in 2016, Reyes played for Espanyol, Cordoba

and Xinjian Tianshan in China, before arriving at Extremadura this year as a free agent.

"With broken hearts we announce the news of our player Jose Antonio Reyes' death in a car crash and we ask for you to pray for his soul," Extremadura said. Monchi, who overlapped with Reyes as a player at Sevilla and is now the club's director of football, also tweeted his sadness and referred to wingback Antonio Puerta, who died of a cardiac arrest playing for Sevilla in 2007.

"Impossible news to believe, impossible to digest, that hard my God," wrote Monchi. "What a left flank you are going to make, Antonio and you, up there." — AFP

Injury hit France edge past China in last warm up

CRETEIL: France eked out victory in their final warm up for the Women's World Cup when they beat China 2-1 in Creteil in the Paris suburbs. France won without several of their regular starters, including captain Amandine Henry, striker Eugenie Le Sommer and a third Lyon star Amel Majri.

France open their campaign against South Korea on June 7 and viewed China as presenting similar problems. China kick off their campaign the next day against another European power, Germany.

France took the lead after 30 minutes when striker Valerie Gauvin found herself in the right place after a shot from Marion Torrent was blocked. After that the home team created few chances as China presented a tougher test than Thailand, who France beat 3-0 in their previous match. Defender Wang Shanshan levelled after 52 minute, set up by Paris Saint-Germain playmaker Wang Shuang. France's best attacking player Kadidiatou Diani, a PSG left winger, rescued the home team with an unstoppable shot six minutes later.

"We responded well," said French coach Corinne Diacre. "It's already better than last week," she said. "And I hope it's not as good as next week." Henry added to France's injury problems earlier in the day. "It was a surprise for me too, I must confess that I would have done without it this morning," said Diacre. "She's fine, she's better, she just locked her back this morning when she woke up. Considering how she was walking, I think it would have been difficult for her to run tonight."

Diacre went on to say that the injuries to Henry, Le Sommer and Majri suggest France could be paying for Lyon's success in winning the Champions League. "There are three Lyon women, long season. Women who have played in every competition. We would have done without it, but now we're dealing with it." — AFP

South African federation joins Semenya appeal over CAS verdict

CAPE TOWN: Athletics South Africa (ASA) said on Friday it had joined Caster Semenya's appeal against the ruling that currently prevents the double Olympic champion from running her preferred distance races unless she takes testosterone-suppressant medication.

Semenya announced on Wednesday that she would appeal the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) ruling that supported the IAAF's rule that means XY chromosome athletes with differences in sexual development (DSDs) can race in distances from 400m to a mile only if they take the medication and reach a reduced level.

Semenya has asked the Swiss Federal Supreme Court to set aside CAS's decision, which she said did not consider medical protocols and uncertain health consequences of taking such medication. Athletics South Africa said in a statement that, once it had received full details of the CAS award, it would file its own appeal through Swiss lawyers. "ASA is aware that our athlete,

Caster Semenya, has lodged her own appeal against the CAS award with the request that the IAAF regulations be wholly suspended pending the finalisation of the appeal," the statement said.

"ASA has informed the Swiss Federal Court that insofar as it participated in the CAS arbitration and to the extent that Ms Semenya is a registered member of the ASA, the federation wishes to be considered as an interested party in the stay proceedings, and in the appeal against the award and will file its appeal papers shortly. "Accordingly, ASA wishes to confirm that it will participate in the stay proceedings and in the appeal before the Swiss Federal Court."

Semenya, who previously took testosterone suppressants and saw her performance level drop off before the IAAF rules were lifted, says she will not go through the process again. Testosterone is a hormone that increases muscle mass, strength and haemoglobin and the IAAF said its own research showed it gave a significant endurance advantage to athletes in the 400m-mile range.

The CAS verdict was highly controversial, with many high-profile current and former athletes lining up on both sides of the debate. Semenya won her last competitive 800 metre race at the Doha Diamond League on May 3 and if she is unable to overturn the CAS verdict, or gain a suspension, she will not be able to defend her two-lap title at the world championships in Qatar in September. — Reuters

Wilder says Fury rematch to follow Ortiz bout

LOS ANGELES: World Boxing Council heavy-weight world champion Deontay Wilder said Friday that he has lined up a highly anticipated rematch with Britain's Tyson Fury, to take place after Wilder's September rematch with Luis Ortiz.

"Well, as I always say I'm the realest champion in the business and as I've mentioned before I must handle all my controversial fights ASAP. Luis Ortiz is first, then Tyson Fury," Wilder said on Twitter, announcing a fight that fans have itched for since he and Fury battled to a bruising split decision draw in December in Los Angeles.

Fury was leading on the scorecards before he was knocked down by Wilder in the 12th round. The big Briton beat the count, but his second knockdown of the bout helped cost him a victory.

Chances of a rematch seemed slim after Fury signed with promoters Top Rank for his fights to be televised in America on ESPN. Wilder fights for Premier Boxing Champions which deals with broadcasters Showtime and Fox.

Further details—such as date, venue and telecaster—for Wilder-Fury II have yet to be confirmed, although multiple US outlets reported it would be scheduled in the first quarter of 2020. In the meantime, Wilder said he would focus on Ortiz. Wilder won his first encounter with the Cuban with a 10th-round stoppage, but not before the 40-year-old had badly shaken the undefeated champion.

"By no means I'm looking past Ortiz, He's a dangerous fighter but I am looking through him," tweeted Wilder, who is unbeaten in 41 fights with 40 knockouts and draw-against Fury.

Fury, 27-0 with 1 draw and 19 knockouts, is scheduled to return to the ring against German Tom Schwarz on June 15, fighting for the first time in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Meanwhile, world heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua weighed in more than 20 pounds lighter than challenger Andy Ruiz Jr. on Friday as he prepares to make his US debut at Madison Square Garden.

The unbeaten Joshua, the WBA, IBF and WBO heavyweight champion, tipped the scales at 247.8 pounds (112.4 kilos) ahead of today's bout against the lightly regarded Ruiz. Ruiz, who agreed to face Joshua at the 11th hour last month after original opponent Jarrell Miller failed a drug test, weighed in at a chunky 268 pounds.

Joshua, who weighed 246 pounds for his last fight against Alexander Povetkin in September, is an overwhelming favourite to defeat Ruiz, who is 32-1. Bookmakers are offering odds of 1/20 for Joshua to make Ruiz the 23rd victim of his career.

Ruiz has shrugged off taunts about his physical conditioning, telling reporters this week he was "chubby and short, but fast as lightning." "I've never been knocked out. I'm still young, 29, I've never been hurt and I've never been in a big war," he said. "This is the hardest fight of my career but I know I will pull off an upset."

"I believe in my heart that we can win, and we are going to win. It will be one of the biggest upsets in the world. I can be the first one to stop him. In America, you have to have a dream, and have the heart to pursue it. I am a family man and a nice guy but, inside the ring, I am an animal. AJ, get ready, get prepared. Don't underestimate or overlook me."

Ruiz Jr is coming off three consecutive victories, defeating Germany's Alexander Dimitrenko in five rounds in his last outing. — AFP

25 Carpenter's 10th-inning hit lifts Cardinals over Cubs



26 'Blessed' Paes closing in on fourth decade as pro and 1,000 racquets



27 Grief as Arsenal 'Invincibles' star Reyes killed in car crash



PARIS: Czech Republic's Katerina Siniakova returns the ball to Japan's Naomi Osaka during their women's singles third round match on day seven of The Roland Garros 2019 French Open tennis tournament in Paris yesterday. —AFP

Zverev, Tsitsipas into last 16

Osaka's Roland Garros dream shattered by Siniakova

PARIS: Alexander Zverev and Stefanos Tsitsipas turned up the heat at Roland Garros yesterday, booking their places in the last 16, as headline acts Novak Djokovic, Naomi Osaka and Serena Williams waited to join them.

German fifth seed Zverev needed another five-setter to reach the fourth round, defeating Serbia's Dusan Lajovic 6-4, 6-2, 4-6, 1-6, 6-2. Zverev, whose best run at a Slam came in Paris last year when he made the quarter-finals, will face Italy's Fabio Fognini for a place in the last-eight.

Zverev, 22, had also needed five sets to defeat Australia's John Millman in the first round. Yesterday, he hit 18 aces and 52 winners past 30th seed Lajovic, the runner-up to Fognini on Monte Carlo clay in April.

Fognini needed four sets to defeat Spanish 18th seed Roberto Bautista Agut 7-6 (7/5), 6-4, 4-6, 6-1. The 32-year-old Fognini trails Zverev 2-1 in head-to-head meetings but crucially won their most recent meeting in Monte Carlo.

Crowd favourite Tsitsipas became the first Greek player in 83 years to reach the second week at Roland Garros as he survived a scare against Filip Krajinovic. The sixth seed led by two sets when the match was

suspended at 5-5 in the third due to darkness just before 10:00pm on Friday.

GREEK BREAKTHROUGH FOR TSITSIPAS

On the resumption yesterday, Tsitsipas lost the set in a tie-break but sealed a 7-5, 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (8/6) success on Court Philippe Chatrier. The 20-year-old will take on either former champion Stan Wawrinka or Grigor Dimitrov for a place in his second Grand Slam quarter-final, after their match was also suspended on Friday evening. "It's really tricky when you come back after a day. It's unusual, you don't do it that often," said Tsitsipas, who stunned Roger Federer en route to the Australian Open semi-finals earlier this year.

"It was important I saved those set points. Closing in the fourth set, it's important to save energy." The last Greek player to reach the second week at Roland Garros was Lazaros Stalios in 1936. As temperatures nudged close to the 30-degree mark, defending champion Simona Halep decided not to hang around.

The Romanian third seed stormed to a 6-2, 6-1 thrashing of Ukrainian 27th seed Lesia Tsurenko. "I'm feeling good, and I have expectations for myself to play good tennis," said Halep who next faces either Olympic

champion Monica Puig or Polish teenager Iga Swiatek.

Later yesterday, Djokovic continues his bid to become only the second man in history to hold all four Slams at the same time twice. Top seed Djokovic, the 2016 champion, has been untroubled in Paris so far, easing through in straight sets against Hubert Hurkacz and Swiss lucky loser Henri Laaksonen.

In his bid to make the last 16 for the 13th time, the 15-time major winner faces Italian qualifier Salvatore Caruso, ranked at 147. Meanwhile, world number one Naomi Osaka's hopes of winning a third successive Grand Slam ended yesterday when she was knocked out of the French Open in the third round by unheralded Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic.

Japanese top seed Osaka, the reigning US and Australian Open champion, crashed to a 6-4, 6-2 defeat to the 42nd-ranked Czech.

"Losing is probably the best thing that could have happened," said 21-year-old Osaka, the reigning Australian and US Open champion.

"I felt very tired. In the other matches I had headaches, maybe that's the stress. 'I felt there was a weight on me. This hasn't been the happiest of times.'"

Osaka's defeat left just four of the women's top 10

seeds in the tournament including three-time winner Serena Williams and defending champion Simona Halep. Osaka was undone by a shocking 38 unforced errors as she finally ran out of luck in Paris having had to come back from a set down in her first two matches.

"I played my best tennis and I hope it continues," said Siniakova, who was the women's doubles champion in Paris in 2018 alongside Barbora Krejickova.

Osaka dropped the first set for the third successive match at the tournament, squandering seven break points in all.

Siniakova made her pay, breaking for 5-4 and taking the opener when Osaka sent back her 16th unforced error of the set.

Williams, the three-time champion, is bidding to reach the second week for the 13th time as she continues her pursuit of equalling Margaret Court's record of 24 Grand Slam titles.

The 37-year-old faces fellow American Sofia Kenin who wasn't born when Williams made her debut in Paris in 1998. Playing in the third round at Roland Garros for the first time, the world number 35, won't be overawed. "She's a machine," said her doubles partner Andrea Petkovic. — AFP

Henry shines as NZ Zealand thrash S Lanka in WCup

CARDIFF: New Zealand made a flying start to their World Cup campaign as paceman Matt Henry struck three times in a 10-wicket thrashing of woeful Sri Lanka yesterday. Henry returned figures of 3-29 and combined with fellow paceman Lockie Ferguson, who also took three wickets, to bowl out Sri Lanka for just 136 in 29.2 overs in Cardiff.

Martin Gupthill and Colin Munro then hit unbeaten half-centuries to make short work of their modest target. The Kiwis cruised home in 16.1 overs to register

their third win in a World Cup game by 10 wickets.

The right-left batting combination of Gupthill, who hit 73, and Munro, who scored 58, had little trouble in smashing the Sri Lankan bowlers to all parts of the ground. Gupthill hammered eight fours and two sixes including one hit that sailed out of the ground.

But it was Henry's spell of seven straight overs that opened the gates for New Zealand's domination against the 1996 champions. "It's a great start for us. You want a balanced attack going into any surface. It is important that you have that to have aggressive options for different occasions," New Zealand captain Kane Williamson said.

"The two at the top played beautifully. It was nice for those guys to play a few shots. It was a good all-round performance." Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne added: "It was a good toss to win. In the morning it was seaming and swinging. They had that advantage and they have good bowlers to do that, so

they took their chance.

"The batters aren't low on confidence. We batted well in some practice games and we work really hard. We need to think about the game."

Henry stood out in the absence of senior paceman Tim Southee, who missed the game due to a calf injury, with his incisive pace and swing. He struck with the second delivery of the game to send Lahiru Thirimanne trudging back to the pavilion after the left-handed opener had hit a boundary from the first ball.

Thirimanne was initially ruled not out by the on-field umpire, but the Kiwis successfully reviewed the lbw call in their favour after replays suggested the ball pitched on line and would have hit the batsman's leg stump.

The left-handed Karunaratne, who has returned to the one-day side after a gap of four years, then put on 42 runs for the second wicket with Kusal Perera. But Williamson kept Henry on for the bowler's fifth over and

the decision paid off as he got Perera for 29 and Kusal Mendis without scoring on successive deliveries.

Dhananjaya de Silva played the hat-trick ball with a glorious off drive, but soon fell to the pace of Lockie Ferguson after being trapped lbw. Karunaratne fought on to register his third ODI fifty in 81 balls before he ran out of partners after Lasith Malinga was bowled by Ferguson for one.

Karunaratne's unbeaten 52 made him only the second opener in World Cup history to carry his bat through a completed innings. The feat had previously been achieved by the West Indies' Ridley Jacobs, who made an unbeaten 49 against Australia in 1999.

Pacemen Colin de Grandhomme, James Neesham, Trent Boult and Mitchell Santner, the team's only spinner, claimed a wicket each. New Zealand, runners-up in the 2015 edition, will next face Bangladesh on June 5, while Sri Lanka meet Afghanistan on June 4. — AFP