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# Hashem: Charge expats for using beaches, causeway

## Lawmaker claims expats litter parks, pour cooking oil down sewers

### US envoy: Israel has 'right' to annex West Bank land

**JERUSALEM:** The US ambassador has said Israel has the right to annex at least "some" of the occupied West Bank, in comments likely to deepen Palestinian opposition to a long-awaited US peace plan. The Palestinians have rejected the plan before it has even been unveiled, citing a string of moves by US President Donald Trump that they say show his administration is irredeemably biased. They are likely to see the latest comments by US ambassador to Israel David Friedman as new nail in the coffin of a peace process that is already on life support.

In the interview published by the New York Times yesterday, Friedman said that some degree of annexation of the West Bank would be legitimate. "Under certain circumstances, I think Israel has the right to retain some, but unlikely all, of the West Bank," he said. Senior Palestinian official Saeb Erekat has said any such policy would be

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**KUWAIT:** A family watches the sunrise on the beach on the last day of Eid Al-Fitr's long weekend yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

**By A Saleh**

**KUWAIT:** MP Safa Al-Hashem yesterday warned the government of worse things to come unless the government acts and resolves the demographic imbalance by deporting marginal laborers, fighting visa traffickers and imposing fees on expat beachgoers. She also demanded holding the minister responsible accountable for alleged environmental violations by expats and collecting fees from expats using Jaber Causeway to prevent "the erosion of its infrastructure".

"I have repeatedly warned, and still do, of the existence of this number of expats - three million compared to only one million citizens, which erodes Kuwait's infrastructure," Hashem said. "Imposing more fees on expats is a must, especially after the chaos and endless amounts of waste they left behind at various beaches and parks during the Eid holiday," she charged.

She wondered about law enforcement and the role the environment police is supposed to play in the form of collecting immediate fines from violators. "All countries collect fees for using beaches, including the countries of those expats themselves, where they pay the fees," she claimed, questioning why this was not applied in Kuwait. Hashem also alleged that expats dispose used cooking oil in drains in Hawally, Khaitan, Farwaniya and Salmiya, which causes environmental pollution in the absence of any action by the environment authority.

### News in brief

#### Iran selling oil 'unconventionally'

**TEHRAN:** Iran is keeping up oil sales through "unconventional" means to circumvent US sanctions, Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said in an interview published yesterday. "We have unofficial or unconventional sales, all of which are secret, because if they are made known America would immediately stop them," he said. Zanganeh also said Iran has no plans to leave the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries despite being treated like an enemy by some fellow members. "Iran has no plans to leave OPEC...and regrets that some members of OPEC have turned this organization into a political forum for confronting two founding members of OPEC, meaning Iran and Venezuela," Zanganeh said. — Agencies

#### Qatar amir to visit White House

**WASHINGTON:** Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani will meet US President Donald Trump next month as the country continues to endure the two-year economic squeeze from its US-backed Gulf Arab rivals, the White House announced Friday. The amir will meet Trump in Washington on July 9 for talks on regional politics, security and counterterrorism cooperation, according to the announcement, amid a US effort to build pressure on Gulf power Iran. — AFP

#### Hundreds of Tehran restaurants shut

**TEHRAN:** Iranian police have shut down 547 restaurants and cafes in Tehran for not observing "Islamic principles", the capital's police chief said yesterday. The infractions included "unconventional advertising in cyberspace, playing illegal music and debauchery", Fars news agency reported. Also yesterday, the head of Tehran's guidance court, which deals with "cultural crimes and social and moral corruption", called on Tehran citizens to report cases of "immoral behavior" by texting a designated phone number. — AFP

#### Dubai bus crash kills 17

**DUBAI:** Twelve Indians were among 17 people who were killed in Dubai when their bus crashed into a road sign after entering a restricted lane, police and the Indian consulate said. The bus, registered in Oman, was making its way into Dubai from Muscat with 31 passengers of different nationalities on board when the accident occurred on Thursday night, Dubai police said in a tweet. It blamed the Omani driver, who was moderately injured, for the crash saying "at times a small mistake or negligence can lead to adverse consequences". — AFP

## Sudan arrests protest leaders after crackdown

**KHARTOUM:** Sudanese security forces have arrested two prominent rebels and an opposition leader, their aides said yesterday, just days after a bloody crackdown crushed hopes for a swift democratic transition. The three men were arrested after meeting Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in Khartoum Friday as he sought to revive talks between Sudan's ruling generals and protest leaders on the country's transition. That came days after men in military fatigues smashed up a weeks-long protest sit-in on Monday, leaving dozens of demonstrators dead.

Witnesses say the assault was led by the feared Rapid Support Forces, who have their origins in the notorious Janjaweed militia, accused of abuses in the Darfur conflict between 2003 and 2004. Yesterday, RSF members and soldiers cleared major Khartoum streets of roadblocks put up by protesters. Demonstrators had used tyres, tree trunks and rocks to erect the makeshift barricades, which the generals had warned would not be tolerated.

Sudan's military council seized power in April after ousting longtime dictator Omar Al-Bashir on the back of months-long protests against his three-decade rule. Since then, it has resisted calls from protesters and Western nations to transfer power to a civilian administration. Several rounds of talks with the demonstrators finally broke down in mid-May. In a bid to revive the negotiations, the

*Continued on Page 24*



**KHARTOUM:** Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (left) meets the chief of Sudan's ruling military council General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan on Friday. — AFP

## Ozil marries with Erdogan as best man

**ISTANBUL:** Former German international footballer Mesut Ozil was married in Istanbul on Friday with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as his best man. The 30-year-old Ozil, who has Turkish family roots, sparked controversy last year when he was photographed with Erdogan, raising questions about the footballer's loyalty to Germany on the eve of their dis-

astrous 2018 World Cup campaign.

The Turkish leader arrived in the early evening for Friday's ceremony at a luxury hotel on the banks of the Bosphorus to see the former Arsenal midfielder marry his fiancée, former Miss Turkey Amine Gulse. A smiling Erdogan and his wife Emine were seen standing next to the young couple as their marriage was formalized.

After 92 appearances for Germany, including a key role in the 2014 World Cup victory, Ozil suddenly quit the national squad last July, accusing German football officials of racism. Ozil announced in March that he had asked Erdogan to be his best man. German Chancellor Angela

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**ISTANBUL:** Arsenal's German midfielder Mesut Ozil and his fiancée Amine Gulse stand next to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his wife Emine during their wedding ceremony at the Four Seasons Bosphorus Hotel on Friday. — AFP

## First Athens mosque to open by September

**ATHENS:** Greece's leftist government on Friday said an official mosque in Athens, over a decade in the making, would open by September to satisfy a longstanding demand by tens of thousands of Muslims in the capital. "We hope the first prayer will be in September," Education Minister Costas Gavroglu said after inspecting the nearly-completed complex that can accommodate some 350 people. The mosque's imam, Zaki Mohammed, said construction had been completed but staff required for its operation would be hired after national elections on July 7.

Athens is the only European capital

without an official mosque. The project began in 2007 amid strong opposition from the influential Orthodox Church of Greece and nationalist sentiment against neighbouring Muslim Turkey. Greece was under occupation by the Ottoman Empire for centuries. There have been several laws passed on creating an official mosque in Athens since 1890.

Supervised by the Greek state, the minaret-less mosque is situated in the industrial area of Eleonas, near a refugee camp. There are an estimated 300,000 Muslims in the greater Athens area. Mosques in Greece were repurposed or demolished following the 1821 war of independence from the Ottoman Empire. The only officially sanctioned mosques in the country are in the northern border region with Turkey where up to 150,000 members of a Muslim minority live. Elsewhere in the country, Muslims - many of them refugees and migrants - pray in improvised sites in flats and basements. — AFP



**ATHENS:** A boy walks in front of a new mosque on Friday, the first official place of worship for Athens' Muslims in over a century. — AFP



## Local



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and senior state officials at the Grand Mosque where they performed the Eid Al-Fitr prayer. — Amiri Diwan photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrives at the Grand Mosque.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Eid Al-Fitr greetings from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Eid Al-Fitr greetings from National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Eid Al-Fitr greetings from Army Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khedhr.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Eid Al-Fitr greetings from Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Nahham.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Eid Al-Fitr greetings from Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's Director General Lt Gen Khaled Al-Mekrad.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Eid Al-Fitr greetings from Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah.

# Crown Prince thanks well-wishers on Eid

## Amir performs Eid Al-Fitr prayers at Grand Mosque

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed yesterday gratitude and appreciation to citizens and residents of Kuwait who congratulated His Highness on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr. His Highness also praised efforts exerted by all ministries and concerned authorities in the country for facilitating fes-

ivities that were associated with this occasion, asking Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait and to remain an oasis of peace and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the humanitarian leader.

His Highness the Amir had performed the Eid Al-Fitr prayer at the

Grand Mosque early on Tuesday. His Highness was accompanied by His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as other senior state officials. — KUNA

## NBK shares Eid celebration with passengers

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) family welcomed the passengers at its branch located in the new terminal (T4) and distributed travel gift items, in line with NBK's CSR commitment and as part of its strategic and unique partnership with Kuwait Airlines.

"NBK is always keen to participate in various social events to play an active role in strengthening human communication and giving back to the society," Yacoub Al-Baqer, NBK Public Relations Officer said. "We are proud of this deep-rooted partnership with Kuwait Airways, which has gained a remarkable humanitarian aspect during the holy month of Ramadan during which we have carried out this unique initiative," Baqer added, noting that Kuwait Airways facilitated the process of bringing us closer to our community members even when they are travelling.

Baqer added that NBK team was present at various strategic locations in the new airport terminal, and distributed presents and travel gifts to passengers. "We would like to thank Kuwait Airways for their business collaboration as they facilitated all the procedures required for our volunteers to carry out this social initiative, making it easier for them to extend Eid greetings to passengers," Baqer commented. "We are always keen on connecting with our customers;

hence we are present through our two branches at T1 and T4," Baqer said, adding that NBK is also keen to share holidays and other occasions with its customers, as this social commitment is ingrained in NBK's culture.

For over six decades, NBK has carried out its CSR program including 'Do Good Deeds in Ramadan' program, which includes many events, contributions, social welfare and voluntary activities. This initiative is in line with NBK's keenness to reach out to various social institutions and all sectors of the society, maintaining its leading position as a dedicated private institution that is keeping true to its CSR values through translating them into valuable programs and initiatives that have substantive social dimension.





Local

# String of fires around Kuwait during Eid Al-Fitr holidays

Fire burns makeshift room, six vehicles in Naseem; seven cars in Dhahr

local spotlight

## The need for a unified Gulf army



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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KUWAIT: Firefighters battle a blaze reported in Naseem.



Paint buckets stored in a Khaitan building's basement where a fire was reported.



Flames engulf vehicles parked in a sandy open area in Dhahr.

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A string of fires were reported around Kuwait during the Eid Al-Fitr holidays. One of the fires was reported in Naseem where a blaze broke out in a makeshift room and six vehicles on Friday morning, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) said. The room was used to store tents in front of a house in Naseem, and the flames spread to the vehi-

cles parked next to it. The fire was put out and no injuries were reported. In the meantime, seven vehicles were engulfed in a fire in Dhahr while parked in a sandy open area. Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Qurain fire stations responded and put out the fire.

Meanwhile, fire broke out in the basement of a Khaitan building, prompting Farwaniya and Subhan fire stations to respond. The six-storey building was evacuated and the fire put out. The basement con-

tained foam, paint and wood supplies, which helped spread the flames. Separately, a power transformer caught fire in Fahaheel, and firemen dealt with it.

In other news, Jahra Occupational Fire Center responded to a fire on Salmi road, along with Shaqaya and backup centers. The fire was in a 5,000-sq-m feed enclosure. The fire was contained to keep it from spreading, and took firemen five hours to put it out.

## Interior Ministry officials inspect border outlets

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Naham accompanied by National Guard Undersecretary Lt Gen Hashem Al-Rafae, Interior Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs and Operations Maj Gen Jamal Al-Sayegh, Assistant Undersecretary for Border Affairs Maj Gen Mansour Al-Awadhi, Assistant Undersecretary for Border Security Affairs Maj Gen Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah and Director General for Border Security Brig Iyad Al-Haddad, held a tour of several border outlets in the north and south of the country to check their readiness during the holidays.

Naham, accompanied by senior interior ministry officials, also visited the southern and central areas' protection department as well as all security gates leading to oil facilities. He also checked the performance mechanism at Shuaiba and Abdullah ports, as well as Ahmadi. Meanwhile, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's (KFS) Director General Lt Gen Khaled Al-Mekrad, accompanied by Deputy Director General for Firefighting Affairs Maj Gen Jamal Al-Bulaihees and Public Relations Director Brig Khalil Al-Amir, toured several fire stations and conveyed greetings of Deputy Premier and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh to firemen on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr.

## 'Busy schedule' for parliament after holiday

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The parliament's secretary MP Oudah Al-Rowaei said that the parliament will have a busy schedule after the Eid Al-Fitr holiday, adding that various parliamentary committees will have to review 80-100 reports to list them on the agenda before concluding the third term. Rowaei expressed hope that in order to make up for the time lost during Ramadan and in grillings, enough time will be given to study various bills instead of going through them all in one session. He added that as head of the educational affairs committee, the committee will discuss various issues including degrees, impersonation, government universities and amending the audiovisual law, finalizing them during the first week after the Eid break.

### Nurseries' transfer

The Cabinet annulled its previous decision to transfer the nurseries department from the Ministry of Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education, said informed sources, noting that the Cabinet's assistant secretary general for preparation and follow up Fawwaz Al-Fadhil sent letters in this regard to Education Minister Hamed Al-Azmi. Fadhil explained that the education ministry had opposed the transfer on grounds that nurseries have a special nature and role, taking into consideration that learners are usually under four years of age.

### Close control

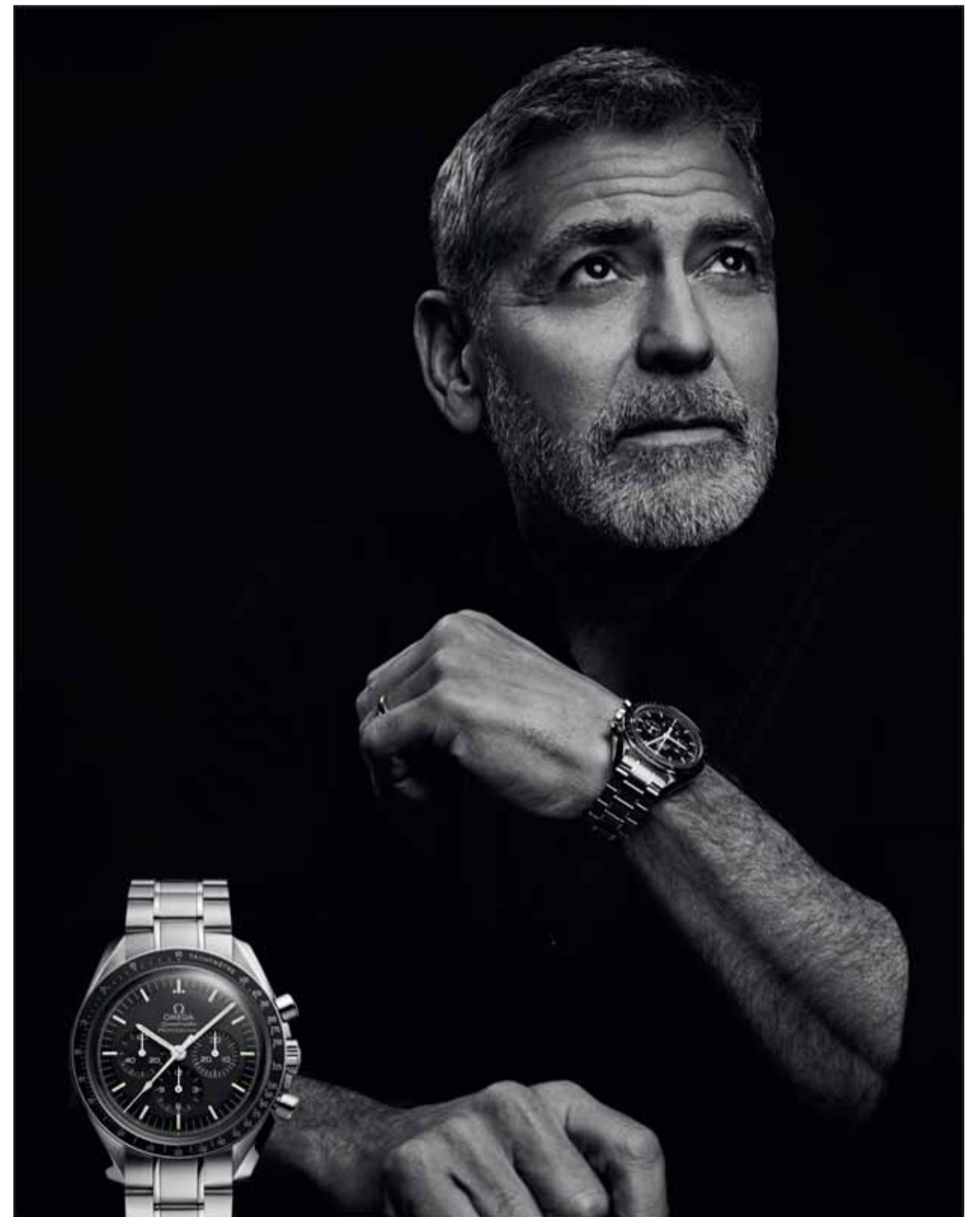
Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmad Al-Manfouhi instructed various municipal offices in Kuwait to have close control and follow up of various cleaning companies operating in Kuwait and make regular lists of the tasks they do so that those falling behind schedule or failing to do those tasks could be held legally accountable.

### 5G fees

The Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) set the fees to operate 5G services at KD 1 million, to be paid once by each mobile telecom company in Kuwait.



Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's Director General Lt Gen Khaled Al-Mekrad and other KFS officials pose with firefighters during a visit to a fire station.



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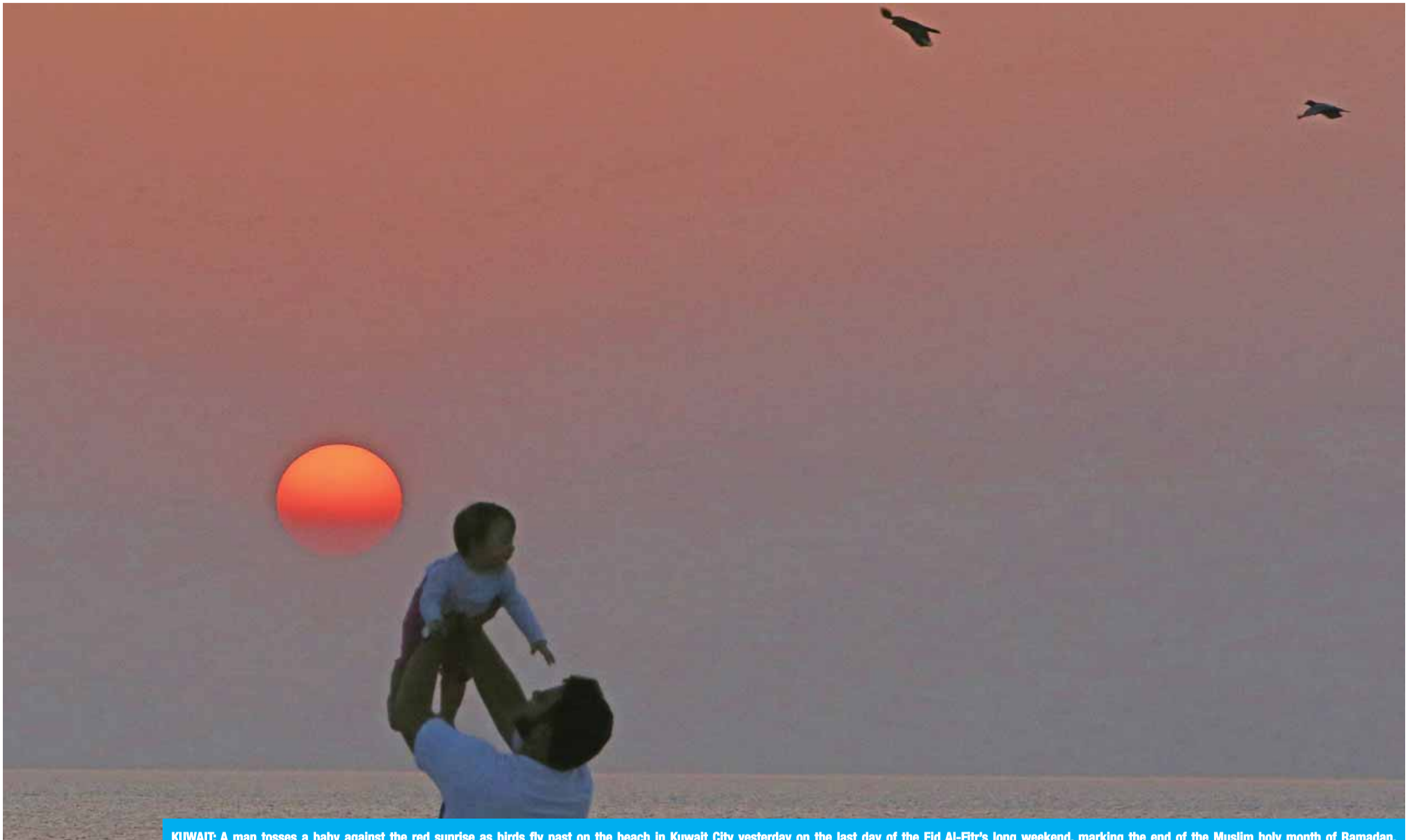
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## Local

## Photo of the Day



**KUWAIT:** A man tosses a baby against the red sunrise as birds fly past on the beach in Kuwait City yesterday on the last day of the Eid Al-Fitr's long weekend, marking the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Temperatures in the Gulf emirate have soared last week reaching the unusual record of 48 degrees Celsius for June at mid-day. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

# Kuwaiti institutions continue humanitarian aid during Eid Al-Fitr

## Health and educational help provided in Jordan, Iraq and Gaza

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti institutions and organizations have continued to locally and internationally provide relief assistance to refugees, displaced people and the needy during Eid Al-Fitr. The help Kuwait provided for health and education during the week ended on Friday in Jordan, Iraq and the Gaza Strip. In Jordan, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed a fourth grant agreement for the King Hussein Cancer Center (KHCC) worth \$2 million to treat Syrian refugees suffering from cancer in Jordan. It was signed by KFAED's Director-General Abdulwahab Al-Bader, and the Jordanian side, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of KHCC, Princess Ghida Talal, in the presence of Kuwaiti Ambassador to Jordan Aziz Al-Deihani and senior officials of KFAED. Bader said after the ceremony at the KHCC in Amman that the total in collaboration with the Center amounts to \$5 million. The current grant is part of Kuwait's commitments to support the Syrian refugees announced at the fourth International Donors Conference, he explained.

KFAED provided three prior grants to the KHCC for humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees: first grant was signed in 2016 with a value of \$1 million, the second and the third signed in 2017 and 2018 with the same value each, he said. Previous grants from the KFAED helped about 117 Syrian refugee cancer patients, Bader pointed out. The grant agreement aims to fund the costs of diagnosing the patient through laboratory tests, chemotherapy, bone marrow transplantation and surgeries, Al-Bader said. In the meantime, Princess Ghaida Talal thanked KUNA for the support to the KFAED and spreading KHCC's message. KHCC treats patients from all over the world, providing the best and latest treatments according to international standards, recently placed on the top ranks in developing countries and sixth globally in terms of specialization in cancer treatment, she said. KFAED toured KHCC to learn about its advanced equipment used in treating cancer patients and visited Syrian refugee children.

Meanwhile in the Gaza Strip, the association for dis-

abled families in the Gaza Strip distributed medical aid and equipment to hundreds of people with special needs in the Kuwait emergency health relief project for the disabled in the Gaza Strip. Chairperson of International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) Heba Adwan said in a statement that the project targeted about 1,500 people with special needs suffering from various disabilities. The aid included vehicles for disabled people, medical devices, as well as providing medical care through a mobile medical clinic. The project comes in the context of the eagerness of the Secretary-General of Awqaf and Zakat House in Kuwait to alleviate the burden of Palestinian citizens from the Israeli siege and harsh economic conditions, coming at a time when various institutions are unresponsive, she added.

Adwan underlined that the implementation of the project reflects the Islamic and national responsibility of aiding and thanked Kuwait, the Amir and the government. Then in Iraq, Kuwait's Consul-General in Erbil Omar Al-Kanderi supervised the distribution of 15 tons of foodstuffs provided by the Secretary-General of Awqaf and the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) in Kuwait to the disabled. Kanderi said that this aid comes within the framework of the Kuwaiti campaign launched by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to alleviate the suffering of Iraqis. Various assistance provided by Kuwait to Iraqis will continue and vary to include all segments of society, he pointed out. In a similar statement, Omar Talal is thankful for Kuwait's humanitarian organizations, pointing out that 576 food baskets were distributed to people with special needs in Erbil. At the start of Ramadan, over 10 thousand meals were given to the needy, workers and students in the Kurdistan region. This was given by IICO who distributed food baskets to displaced Iraqis from camps, totaling to aiding 3,507 families of Nineveh that has a population of 17,300.

At the local level, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) said Al-Bayan Bilingual School (BBS) students



**Distribution of Kuwait's humanitarian aid to the needy in Irbil.**

raised donations of KD 49,000 (about \$161,000) to children of poor families inside Kuwait who cannot pay tuition fees. KRCS Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said that the aim of the donation is to encourage students to participate in voluntary charitable work, thankful of the leadership responsibility students took such as Hussa Al-Kharafi.

Kharafi said that BBS places education as a social priority because it is the foundation for the development and building of societies, adding that the project aims to raise a knowledgeable generation. The student is glad that BBS is donating, recalling the school's success last year in donation, encouraging those wishing to donate to take this step. Contextually, the KRCS collaborated with Avenues to continue the campaign to

provide nurseries for newborns in Yemen, ending on June 16. KRCS Secretary-General Maha Al-Barjas said that the donation campaign was welcomed by Kuwaitis and many donated to support the children in Yemen. Despite the availability of screening, diagnosis and maternity programs by health authorities in Yemen, early births of undeveloped children are still a huge issue. This could hinder the delivery of reproductive health services and supplies, hazardously affecting mothers and their children, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) said. The Avenues Mall allocated two cash donation machines in the Grand Plaza area, as well as an electronic payment link to facilitate the donation process, underlining that it gets sent to the special account of KRCS, Barjas pointed out. — KUNA



**Distribution of Kuwait's humanitarian aid to the needy in Gaza.**



**KFAED signs a grant agreement for the King Hussein Cancer Center to treat Syrian refugees suffering from cancer in Jordan.**



Local

# Int'l cooperation needed to countering transnational organized crime: Kuwait

## Kuwait calls for abstaining from vetoing humanitarian issues

NEW YORK: Transnational organized crime could only be countered through a solemn regional and international effort to rid people from this criminal and social problem, said a Kuwaiti diplomat. Delivering Kuwait's speech to the UNSC Arria-Formula meeting on Friday, permanent representative to the UN headquarters in New York, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi said that "transnational organized crime constituted one of the most serious threats to international stability through the activities of criminal organizations, including the trafficking of arms, drugs, humans and smuggling of migrants."

He indicated that terror and radical groups were amongst evildoers who highly benefited from such illicit behaviors, which weakened the rule of law and security. Terrorism and extreme radicalism also benefit from organized crime in a sense that the chances to defuse conflicts would become more difficult with the increasing rate of crimes occurring in any given society or country.

The selling of narcotics and other criminal acts require concentrated efforts on part of the international community to eradicate, indicated Otaibi who called on the global community to implement international resolutions and laws associated with efforts to combat organized crime. He affirmed that the UN - through collaboration with various entities, agencies and organizations - supported all efforts aimed at eradicating organized crime pre-emptive measures to eliminate the source of the problems. Ambassador Otaibi reiterated that the international

community was willing to cooperate on countering organized crime through cooperation and enforcing the rule of law worldwide.

### Humanitarian issues

Separately, Kuwait has called for refraining from using veto in humanitarian issues such as allowing urgent humanitarian aid to civilians, medical evacuations and imposing a humanitarian truce. Otaibi made the remarks Thursday night in an open debate on the working methods of the Security Council,

which was organized by Kuwait in its current membership of the Security Council to improve the work making it more transparent. It has been a year and a half since Kuwait took over the chairmanship of the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions

(IWG) with many proposals made by Member States, Otaibi said.

IWG held 15 formal and informal meetings in which many issues relating to the working methods were discussed, including Member States' proposals. Otaibi appreciated many of the Member States supporting IWG since Kuwait took over the presidency, especially former non-permanent members. Improving working methods is crucial to carry out responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security and there have been many improvements over the past 25 years, in procedures, methods, especially after the end of the Cold War, he said. Communication between the Council and non-



NEW YORK: Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi speaks during a UN Security Council session. —KUNA

member countries, other UN organs such as the General Assembly and the increase of official meetings are clear improvements, Otaibi explained. Improvements to the Security Council, non-permanent members and other initiatives launched by many groups and States within the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. Kuwait is among the signatories to the UN

Security Council Code of Conduct, in which member states of the Security Council undertake not to object to draft resolutions that deal with crimes against humanity, genocide and war corruptions, Otaibi said. The open debate, attended by 37 countries, follows Kuwait's first open debate on the subject, which Kuwait has chaired since joining the Security Council since January 2018. —KUNA

## Kuwait keen on addressing climate change

GENEVA: The State of Kuwait is keen on benefiting from global expertise in the field of climate change and the methods in which to address this environmental problem, said a Kuwaiti diplomat yesterday. While meeting with a delegation from Kuwait Directorate General of Civil

Aviation (DGCA) partaking in the Eighteenth World Meteorological Congress (Cg-18), on June 3-14, Kuwait's Ambassador to the UN and International organizations' headquarters in Geneva Jamal Al-Ghunaim said that his country was keen on sharing the concerns of the world regarding climate change. He lauded the efforts of the DGCA's during the congress, affirming that the current climate situation required a firm stance from the world to prevent further damage to the earth's environment. Kuwait is willing to cooperate with global partners to protect the environment from harm, stressed the diplomat. —KUNA



GENEVA: Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim with Kuwait Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Officials. —KUNA

## Kuwait's participation in ILO to be remarkable

GENEVA: Kuwait's participation in the International Labor Conference (ILO) this year will be marked by many activities, said Kuwaiti Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim on Friday. In a statement to the press, Ghunaim added that Kuwait's relationship with the International Labor Organization is strategic and based on common understandings on labor-related issues. The Ambassador pointed out that Kuwait is keen to support the issues of

Palestinian workers through the International Labor Organization's agenda for the appropriate work in the occupied Palestinian territories. Kuwait's contributions since 2009 constitute 85 percent of the funding for the organization's programs in the occupied Palestinian territories, he added.

Ambassador Ghunaim pointed to the joint cooperation between Kuwait and ILO's regional office in Beirut, Lebanon, through training programs, developing skills and abilities, and meeting international labor standards, adding that this close cooperation between the two sides was reflected in multiple achievements in various fields. The Kuwaiti government delegation is headed by Minister of Economic Affairs Reem Al-Aqeel. ILO will be held from 10 to 21 June with the participation of government delegations, trade unions and private sector representatives. —KUNA

## 8 activities added to GCC economic list

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) has added eight more activities to the GCC unified economic activities guide. According to a

MOCI statement, the new activities include the production of anti-erosive substances, gaseous and sedimentary materials, anti-bacterial products, emulsifiers, production, marketing and sale of smart fire extinguishing substances, studying and executing projects in Kuwait and abroad and preparing environment-related economic studies and consultancies. The guide includes a standardized list of definitions and classifications of economic activities used for statistical purposes at the GCC level.

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Indian MP accused of mosque bombing appears in court

## Could Germany's next chancellor be 'Green'?



BINNISH, Syria: A child watches as a local artist works on a mural painting showing the late Syrian rebel fighter Abdel-Basset Al-Sarout in the town of Binnish in the jihadist-held northern Idlib province yesterday. —AFP

# Goalkeeper turned rebel fighter dies

## Syria flare-up kills over 100 fighters

BEIRUT: A Syrian goalkeeper turned rebel fighter who starred in an award-winning documentary died yesterday of wounds sustained fighting regime forces in northwestern Syria, his faction and a war monitor said. Abdel-Basset Al-Sarout, 27, was a goalkeeper from the central city of Homs, who became its most popular singer of protest songs after the Syrian uprising broke out in March 2011.

Following a brutal government crackdown on peaceful protests, he took up arms against the forces of President Bashar Al-Assad's regime. Sarout starred in the documentary "Return to Homs" by Syrian director Talal Derki, which tracked his evolution from protest leader to fighter, and won a top prize at the Sundance film festival in 2014.

Jameel Al-Saleh, the commander of the rebel faction Jaish Al-Izza, announced Sarout's death in a message on Twitter, describing him as a "martyr" who died "fighting for the sake of God". The message was accompanied by a video showing Sarout singing "We will be back, Homs". The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Sarout was wounded in clashes in the northern Hama countryside in the night of Thursday to Friday while fighting in the ranks of Jaish Al-Izza.

"He died of his wounds yesterday," the head of the Britain-based Observatory, Rami Abdel Rahman, said. Sarout was evacuated from Homs in 2014 under a surrender deal with the regime to end a two-year siege of its historical centre, according to the Observatory. His father and four of his siblings were killed during bombardment and clashes in Homs, it said.

## Heatstroke kills monkeys as India suffers in searing temperatures

NEW DELHI: A troop of monkeys died from suspected heatstroke in India as scorching temperatures that have lasted more than a week take a mounting toll on humans and animals, media reports said yesterday. Vast swathes of the country have been sweltering in temperatures that have risen to over 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit) in Rajasthan state.

The monkeys died in Joshi Baba forest range in Madhya Pradesh state where the thermometer reached 46 Celsius (114 Fahrenheit). District forest officer P N Mishra said the primates were believed to have fought with a rival troop over access to a water source. "This is rare and strange as herbivores don't indulge in such conflicts," Mishra told NDTV network.

"We're probing all possibilities, including the possibility of conflict between groups of monkeys for water... which led to the death of 15 monkeys from a 30-35-strong group of monkeys living in the caves," Mishra was quoted as saying. "Certain groups of monkeys which are large in number and dominate that particular part may have scared away the smaller group of monkeys from the water," Mishra said.

An autopsy said heatstroke likely caused the deaths. Tigers have also been reported to be moving out of forest reserves into villages in search of water, causing alerts.

Temperatures touched 50.3 degrees Celsius in the Rajasthan town of Churu last week, just shy of India's record of 51 degrees. The heatwave has exposed falling

**'Goalkeeper, bard' and fighter**  
Yesterday, Syrian activists and opposition figures took to Twitter to mourn the loss of the footballer turned fighter. "The goalkeeper of freedom, the icon of Homs, the bard of the squares, the unforgettable sound of the Syrian revolution has been martyred," researcher and opposition supporter Ahmad Abazeed said. Hadi al-Bahra, a member of the opposition Syrian Negotiations Commission, posted: "Sarout will remain alive." "He died hoping to realise the dreams of Syrians," he added.

Sarout was wounded in the push to take the village of Tal Maleh from regime forces, the Observatory said. The village lies on the southwestern edge of the Idlib region, which is dominated by an alliance led by Syria's former Al-Qaeda affiliate Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS). Almost half of the region's three million residents have been displaced from other parts of the war-torn country, including after deals to return government control to those areas. Late Thursday, HTS and rebel allies launched a counterattack against government forces in the north of Hama province, after weeks of deadly regime bombardment on the Idlib region.

**100 fighters killed**  
Meanwhile, fierce clashes between Russia-backed government forces and jihadists have killed more than

100 combatants in northwestern Syria in the past 24 hours, a war monitor said. The clashes on the edge of the jihadist-controlled Idlib region have killed at least 53 government loyalists along with 48 jihadists and Islamist fighters since Thursday, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The region of some three million people - almost half of them displaced from other parts of the country-is dominated by the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham alliance led by Al-Qaeda's former Syrian affiliate.

### Sarout starred in the documentary 'Return to Homs'

forces in the northwest of Hama province.

They have since seized the villages of Tal Maleh and Jibein amid heavy clashes and airstrikes by regime and Russian forces, the Observatory said. The area saw "the fiercest fighting since the start of the escalation in late April," Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said. The fighting is raging near Christian and Alawite areas under regime control, he said. State news agency SANA said

army units in northern Hama had "responded with force to attacking terrorist groups... and took back a number of positions".

In the Idlib province, two children were killed overnight - one in regime rocket fire in the village of Frike and another in an airstrike in the town of Khan Sheikun, the Observatory said. The jihadists who took part in the counterattack include some from the Al-Qaeda-linked Hurras Al-Deen and Turkistan Islamic Party. Idlib is supposed to be protected from a massive regime offensive by a September buffer zone deal signed between regime ally Russia and rebel backer Turkey.

But it was never fully implemented, as jihadists refused to withdraw from the planned demilitarized zone. The government and Russia have upped their bombardment of the region since late April, killing more than 300 civilians, according to the Observatory. The United Nations say more than 270,000 people have fled their homes. A total of 24 health facilities and 35 schools have been hit in the latest escalation, according to the UN's humanitarian office.

Analysts predict that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his allies will continue to chip away at the area, but not unleash a major assault that would create chaos on Turkey's doorstep. Eight years into Syria's civil war, two regions largely remain beyond regime control: a large northeastern swathe held by the country's Kurds, and Idlib. The war, which started in 2011 with the brutal repression of anti-government demonstrations, has killed more than 370,000 people and displaced millions. —Agencies



GUJARAT: Indian migrant shepherd Ranabhai, from Vaundh village of Kutch, kneels down amongst his dead Sheep at a field in Ranagadh village of Surendranagar district, some 85 kms from Ahmedabad. —AFP

water levels in underground reservoirs and there have been a number of human deaths reported. In Jharkhand state, a man stabbed six others after he was stopped from filling extra water barrels at a public tank, media reported yesterday. On Friday, a 33-year-old man died after a similar fight in Tamil Nadu state.

The Indian peninsula has seen a drastic change in rainfall patterns over the past decade, marked by frequent

droughts, floods and sudden storms. In Uttar Pradesh state, 26 people died after freak dust storms, rain and lightning hit the northern plains on Thursday, officials said. Kerala in the south got some respite from heat yesterday after annual monsoon rains arrived, more than a week later than expected. Farmers across South Asia depend rely on the four-month monsoon season due to a lack of alternative sources of irrigation. —AFP

## Two women attacked 'for refusing to kiss'

LONDON: Two women were punched and robbed in what police on Friday called a disgusting homophobic assault on a London bus, after one of the victims said their attackers tried to force them to kiss each other. The incident took place in the early hours of May 30 after the women, in their 20s, boarded a night bus in West Hampstead.

"As they sat on the top deck, they were approached by a group of four males who began to make lewd and homophobic comments to them," a police statement said. "The women were then attacked and punched several times before the males ran off the bus. A phone and bag were stolen during the assault." Both women were treated in hospital for facial injuries. Four men aged 15 to 18 have been arrested, police said later, and they were looking for other suspects.

Melania Geymonat, 28, told BBC radio the men began harassing them when they discovered she and her girlfriend Chris were a couple. "They surrounded us and started saying really aggressive stuff, things about sexual positions, lesbians and claiming we could kiss so they could watch us," she said. "To ease the situation I tried to make some jokes, like Chris wasn't understanding because she didn't speak English. She even acted as if she was sick... but they started throwing coins. The next thing I know Chris is in the middle of the bus and they are punching her."

"So I immediately went there by impulse and tried to pull her out of there and they started punching me. I was really bleeding." Detective Superintendent Andy Cox said: "This was a disgusting attack on two women who appear to have been picked out and targeted by a group of youths. "The suspects have made a number of homophobic comments towards the couple before throwing coins at them," he added in a statement. "When the women tried to reason with the group, the attack escalated to an assault." —Reuters



International

# Government 'in denial' as Cameroon violence rages

## Civilians abused; despite overtures, neither side wants peace talks: HRW

PARIS: Prospects for talks between authorities and separatist movements to end escalating violence in Cameroon's English-speaking region are slim, a senior human rights official said on Friday, dismissing assertions by both sides to be open to dialogue. A separatist insurgency broke out in 2017 following a government crackdown on peaceful protests in the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest, which complain of being marginalized by the French-speaking majority.

Prime Minister Joseph Ngute has said the government would be willing to talk to the rebels, but would not consider their demand for secession - a position headline separatists have said they will never accept. Eleven movements representing Anglophone Cameroon, including the main armed factions, last month said they were willing to enter mediated discussions with the state.

But almost daily violence from both sides has intensified, forcing thousands of civilians to seek refuge in Cameroon's French-speaking regions and neighboring countries. "There is no desire for dialogue ... The abuses are coming from both sides and the civilians are finding themselves in the middle," Ilaria Allegrozzi, Senior Central Africa Researcher at Human Rights Watch, told reporters in Paris. "The position of the gov-

ernment is an almost complete denial ... and there is total impunity for the violence."

Allegrozzi said separatists were not in denial of the scale of the crisis, but of human rights abuses by their fighters. The oil, cocoa and timber-producing nation was among western Africa's most settled until a few years ago. But the United Nations estimates that, since 2017, about 1,800 people have been killed and more than 530,000 displaced with 1.3 million in need. Authorities have promised to act over accusations of rights violations by security personnel.

Allegrozzi, who was refused entry to the country in May over her research, said divisions among armed separatist groups could be an obstacle to form a platform to negotiate, an element the government was using to its advantage. She cited an International Crisis Group report putting the number of separatist fighters at about 2,000-4,000 fighters and there was evidence that they were acquiring more sophisticated weaponry.

The crisis has tended to slip beneath the international radar given President Paul Biya's close cooperation with Western states in the fight against Islamist militant group Boko Haram in West and central Africa. But the United States has become increasingly critical of the



**Hundreds killed during separatist insurgency**



CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico: Migrants from Cameroon use their cell phones as they relax at the Albergue Para Migrantes El Buen Samaritano. —AFP

government and the separatist crisis was discussed for the first time at the UN Security Council last month. Allegrozzi said the Anglophone population was

increasingly in tune with idea of independence. "There is a growing feeling of support towards the separatists and secession," she said. —Reuters

## Iraq harvests go up in smoke, but who lit the fires?

KIRKUK: Resurgent jihadists, ethnic land disputes or regular field burning? Iraq's northern farmlands are on fire, but the area's complex patchwork of grievances has made it hard to identify the culprits. Farmers in the country's breadbasket had been hoping for bumper wheat and barley harvests in May and June, following heavy winter rains. Instead, many saw their hopes turned to ash. The Iraqi fire service says that in a single month, 236 fires destroyed 5,183 hectares (more than 12,800 acres) of farmland - the equivalent of more than 7,000 football pitches.

The blazes hit four northern provinces, all of which had been at least partly controlled by the Islamic State group and have remained prey to the jihadists' sleeper cells. IS has continued to carry out hit-and-run attacks despite losing its Iraqi foothold in late 2017 and its last Syrian enclave just a few months ago. Indeed, the group was quick to claim responsibility for the fires. In its weekly online magazine al-Naba, it said its fighters had destroyed "hundreds of hectares" owned by "apostates" in the provinces of Kirkuk, Nineveh, Salahaddin and Diyala.

Officials in those areas told AFP they believed IS was responsible for at least some of the fires. "IS fighters set fire to the fields because the farmers refused to pay them zakat," said one police officer in Kirkuk, referring to a tax imposed under Islamic law. "They came by motorcycle, started the fires and also planted explosives that would go off when residents or fire-fighters got there," he said. The mines have killed at

least five people and wounded 10 in Kirkuk province.

### Burning questions

But experts are reluctant to blame all of the fires on pyro-jihadists. The extreme heat of northern Iraq, where temperatures have been hitting 45 degrees Celsius (113 Fahrenheit), has created tinder-dry conditions in which a stray cigarette can easily set a field alight. Farmers are also known to burn off vegetation in fields left fallow to make the soil more fertile for future seasons. And the longstanding tug-of-war over land in northern Iraq likely plays a role, said security expert Hisham Al-Hashemi.

"IS claimed dozens of fires, but the others were certainly the product of land disputes, most often among tribes," he said. Kirkuk, whose status is disputed by federal government and autonomous Kurdish regional administration, has witnessed periodic violence between Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen. So has Nineveh, which has seen 119 fires in recent weeks, 16 of them on Thursday alone, according to its agricultural department chief Duraid Hekmat. "There could be a variety of reasons - it could be deliberate or just an act of God, it could be negligence or personal disputes," he said. Nineveh was among the provinces hardest hit by IS, which seized its capital Mosul as its headquarters in 2014 and slaughtered thousands of members of its Yazidi religious minority. "We're facing a huge shortage of fire trucks. We have 50-55 vehicles but it's not enough for 1.5 million hectares," said Zakaria Ahmad, deputy head of Nineveh's fire service.

### Harvest hopes dashed

The fires have been devastating for farmers banking on a good harvest to pay off their debts. Around a third of Iraqis rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, with the government subsidizing seeds and guaranteeing to



NAJAF: Iraqis visit their relative's grave in Najaf. —AFP

buy part of the harvest. Kirkuk's 200,000 hectares produce an average 650,000 tons every year, according to Burhan Assi, who heads the provincial council's agricultural service.

"This year, thanks to the rains, we were expecting around four tons per hectare, compared to just two last year because of the drought," he said. But most of that has been destroyed in fires he called "the biggest, most widespread we've ever seen". Raad Sami, who farms land in southern Kirkuk, lost 90 hectares of wheat to the fires, which he blamed on IS.

"We had been waiting for the end of the season to reap our harvest and sell it to pay back our debts," he said. "Right now, the government needs to compensate us." Youssef Ahmad, a Turkmen farmer, doesn't know who burned his fields. But he doesn't much care. "Either it was IS, people who want to seize our land, or the result of a dispute between Baghdad and the Kurds," he said. "All together, they successfully destroyed Iraq's economy and agriculture. Because of them, we're going to have to import wheat." —AFP

## India spends big on Maldives security

MALE: Indian leader Narendra Modi yesterday inaugurated a coastal radar system and military training centre in the Maldives yesterday, as New Delhi seeks to fend off Chinese influence in the strategically-placed nation. The Maldives, a low-lying archipelago of more than a thousand tiny coral islands south of the Indian subcontinent, straddles the world's busiest east-west maritime route.

India, the country's traditional ally, had watched former strongman leader Abdulla Yameen's growing political and financial reliance on Beijing with unease. But Yameen's election loss last September has seen the new administration under President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih gravitate

back to the nation's traditional benefactors in New Delhi.

Modi and Solih inaugurated the training facility yesterday, officials said, adding that both projects cost New Delhi \$26 million. A joint statement said the two sides discussed the need to maintain peace and security in the Indian Ocean region. The leaders pledged to combat piracy, terrorism, organized crime and trafficking through "coordinated patrolling and aerial surveillance, exchange of information, and capacity building," the statement said.

Modi is making his second trip to the Maldives in less than seven months. The two-day visit is also Modi's first foreign visit since taking the oath of office for his second term after an emphatic election win in May. Under Modi's leadership, India earlier this year granted a \$800 million line of credit to the Maldives, which remains heavily indebted to Beijing. The Indian premier next travels to neighboring Sri Lanka, where he will hold talks with political leaders during a brief stopover. —AFP



MALE: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (center) inspects the guard of honor during a welcome ceremony at Republic Square in Maldives capital yesterday. —AFP

## Netherlands' clinic sees jump in foreign euthanasia requests

THE HAGUE: The Netherlands' only euthanasia clinic says it has received a surge in calls from overseas from people who want to end their lives, after a flurry of incorrect reports that it had helped a troubled teenager to die. Since the wrongly reported story about 17-year-old Noa Pothoven went viral, the Levensidekliniek (End-of-life clinic) in The Hague said it had received at least 25 foreign requests for help. Pothoven - who published a book about her mental struggles following a childhood rape - was in fact not euthanized, but died on Sunday after refusing to eat and drink, her family and the government have said.

Steven Pleiter, the Levensidekliniek managing director said it "was not aiming for euthanasia tourist traffic" to the Netherlands. "That's absolutely not what we are aiming for and why we were set up," he told AFP in an interview. "A person cannot just come to the Netherlands to be euthanized. It's not like you arrive on

Monday and you will have a euthanasia on Friday." The Netherlands is one of a handful of countries where euthanasia is legal and by law all inhabitants older than 12 are entitled to ask for it - but have to first fulfill a strict set of criteria.

### 'End lives in a decent manner'

Pleiter said the Levensidekliniek was not involved in Pothoven's death, but declined to comment on Pothoven's claim in a newspaper interview in December that she had approached it to seek euthanasia or assisted suicide, but had been turned down because she was too young. "I feel very sorry for Noa Pothoven, who found that she could not live any longer and could not have the help that she was looking for and that she had to end her life," Pleiter said.

"Noa decided to end her life by stopping to eat and drink. The Levensidekliniek was not involved in providing euthanasia to Noa," he said. "But that's exactly what drives us to help as many people as we can. We try to help people end their lives in a decent manner," he said. Under Dutch laws legalizing euthanasia in 2002, children up to 16 need the permission of their parents and guardians, while parents must be involved in the process for children aged 16 and 17. From 18, any

Dutch citizen may ask for assisted suicide.

In all cases, the patient must have "unbearable and endless suffering" and adhere to a strict set of conditions as set out by Dutch law. However, the false reports about Pothoven sparked an international reaction - with even Pope Francis tweeting on the subject of euthanasia and assisted suicide - and turned the spotlight on the Levensidekliniek. "Usually we get one or two requests per week from abroad about euthanasia," the Levensidekliniek spokeswoman Elke Swart said. "Yesterday (Thursday) there were 25."

### 'Complex process'

Opening its doors in 2012 and based out of a stately home in a leafy street, the Levensidekliniek is the only Dutch institution that deals with euthanasia. It says it does not carry out euthanasia on its premises, but instead relies on a network of 140 doctors and nurses around the Netherlands who are qualified and willing to carry it out. Reaching the eventual decision to be euthanized "a complex process" involving exhaustive interviews with a potential patient and a physician, scanning of medical records and making sure the process complies to Dutch law. "In some situations that's three interviews, in other situations that's 10 or 15," said Pleiter. —AFP

### News in brief

#### 115 million married as kids

UNITED NATIONS: An estimated 115 million boys and men worldwide were married as children, 23 million of them before the age of 15, the UN children's agency said Friday in the first ever in-depth study of child grooms. The Central African Republic has the highest prevalence of child marriage among males, at 28 percent, followed by Nicaragua at 19 percent and Madagascar at 13 percent. Data from 82 countries showed that boys are being married at high rates around the world, from sub-Saharan Africa to Latin America, South Asia and East Asia, and the Pacific. "Child grooms are forced to take on adult responsibilities for which they may not be ready, said UNICEF executive director Henrietta Fore. "Early marriage brings early fatherhood, and with it added pressure to provide for a family, cutting short education and job opportunities." —AFP

#### Bosnian war-era grave

SARAJEVO: The remains of 12 Muslims killed in Bosnia's brutal 1992-95 civil war have been found in a mass grave on a mountain near Sarajevo, Fena news agency said yesterday. The war is thought to have left more than 100,000 people dead and over 7,000 people are still missing. "According to the evidence, they were liquidated while they were trying to go to the Free Territories," or areas under the control of the Bosnian army, Emza Fazlic, the spokeswoman of the Bosnian Institute for Missing Persons said. The bodies have been transferred from the grave site at Mt Igman, west of Sarajevo, to the capital for DNA tests and the results should be available in six to eight weeks, she said. When the conflict ended, 31,500 people remained missing. The bodies of some 25,000 have since been exhumed from mass graves, but few have been found in recent years. —AFP

#### 3.3 million flee Venezuela

GENEVA: An estimated 3.3 million people have fled the crisis in Venezuela since the start of 2016, including one million who have left the country since November, the United Nations said Friday. "The pace of the outflow from Venezuela has been staggering," the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) said in a joint statement. Economically-devastated Venezuela is suffering from shortages of food, medicine and other essentials amid a power struggle between President Nicolas Maduro and opposition leader Juan Guaido, who has been recognized as interim president by more than 50 countries including the United States. American actress and UNHCR goodwill ambassador Angelina Jolie will travel this weekend to a Colombian region on the Venezuela border "to assess the humanitarian response to exodus," the agency said. —AFP



BARINAS: A Venezuelan family travels along a highway between Barinas and Barquisimeto carrying extra jerry gas cans in Barinas State. —AFP



## International

# UK PM quits as party leader, triggering succession race

## Britain's tortuous departure from EU stalled

**LONDON:** Prime Minister Theresa May stepped down as leader of Britain's governing Conservative Party on Friday, formally triggering the race for a successor who will try where she failed to deliver Brexit. May, who quietly tendered her resignation in a private letter to the party, will remain prime minister until a new leader is chosen, likely in late July, but leaves Britain's tortuous departure from the European Union stalled.

Brexit is still scheduled for October 31 but while 11 contenders thrash it out over the leadership, the project remains stuck, with the only divorce plan agreed with Brussels having been repeatedly rejected by parliament. "Following notification from the Prime Minister Theresa May MP that she has resigned as leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party, (we) are inviting nominations from those Conservative members of parliament who wish to stand for election as the next party leader," the committee in charge of the contest said.

"(She) will remain as acting leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party until her successor has been announced." May took office after the shock 2016 referendum vote to leave the EU and has spent the past three years working on a departure plan, delaying Brexit twice to try to get the deal through. But she finally acknowledged defeat in a tearful resignation speech last month, the culmination of months of political turmoil that had slowly sapped her authority.

Eleven Conservative MPs have declared their intention

to stand to replace her, including former foreign minister Boris Johnson, but some are expected to drop out before the tomorrow 5:00pm (1600 GMT) deadline for nominations. The winner will have only a few months to decide whether to try to salvage May's plan, delay Brexit again - or sever ties with Britain's closest trading partner with no agreement at all.

### Brexit Party pressure

The government is under pressure from eurosceptic figurehead Nigel Farage, who has called for a "no deal" option and whose newly-formed Brexit Party comfortably topped the European Parliament elections last month. His single-issue party suffered a setback after narrowly missing out on winning its first parliamentary seat, losing to Labor in a by-election in the eastern city of Peterborough on Thursday.

But despite winning, Labor's vote share fell by 17 percent while the Conservatives' vote plummeted by 25 percent, highlighting the task facing May's successor. Polling guru John Curtice told the BBC that the result showed Britain was now in a "different political world".

Leadership contest frontrunner Johnson warned that the centre-right Conservatives "must deliver Brexit by October 31 or we risk Brexit Party votes delivering Corbyn to No 10", referring to leftist Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn getting into Downing Street. Meanwhile leadership rival Jeremy Hunt, the foreign minister, warned



**LONDON:** Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage reacts as he arrives to deliver a letter addressed to Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May outside 10 Downing Street in central London. — AFP

that there was "no future for our party" until Britain leaves the EU. May formally relinquished her leadership in the private letter to her party on Friday.

She spent the day in her constituency west of London. No official event took place and there was no statement from her 10 Downing Street office. She put on a brave face this week when hosting US President Donald Trump

for a state visit, before joining him and other world leaders to mark 75 years since the D-Day landings. "She remains prime minister for a good few weeks yet," May's spokesman insisted, noting that any successor must meet Queen Elizabeth II and assure the head of state that they have the support of enough lawmakers to take over.

### Johnson court victory

Johnson, a leading campaigner in the 2016 referendum who quit the government last year over May's plan, is among several would-be candidates who say they are willing to leave the EU without a deal if necessary. Environment Secretary Michael Gove, another frontrunner, is open to another Brexit delay, while Hunt has said leaving with no deal is "political suicide". Johnson cleared one hurdle on Friday after the High Court quashed a legal action brought by a citizen who accuses him of misconduct in public office for making misleading statements during the 2016 campaign about how much money Britain sends to the EU.

Nominations for the Conservative leadership contest open and close on Monday, and the 313 Conservative MPs - including May - will hold the first of a series of secret ballots on Thursday. With the worst performers eliminated each time, the goal is to have two candidates left by June 20. They will then be put to a ballot of an estimated 100,000 party members. The contest should be completed in the week commencing July 22. —AFP

## Could Germany's next chancellor be 'Green'?

**BERLIN:** With the popularity ratings of Angela Merkel's favored successor plunging and the centre-left SPD in disarray, speculation is growing that Germany's next chancellor might hail from the Greens. The environmental group recorded rocketing support in European elections in late May, boosted by the youth-led Fridays for Futures school strikes urging action against global warming.

With an all-time high 20.5 percent of votes in Germany, the Greens overtook Merkel's junior coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party, coming in second place in the May 26 EU vote. Since then, several surveys have put it neck and neck with Merkel's centre-right CDU-CSU alliance, with one even giving it a one percentage point lead for the first time.

With the numbers suggesting that Germany's highest office may be within reach for the Greens, the buzz is not whether the party could fill the seat at the chancellery but which of its two co-chiefs - Annalena Baerbock or Robert Habeck - could seize the top job. Habeck, 49, with his day-old stubble and broad smile, has for months challenged Merkel as Germany's most popular politician. With momentum clearly on the side of the Greens, Stern weekly magazine put the charismatic writer and politician on its cover and asked: "Our next chancellor?"

Conservative daily Die Welt plumped for his colleague, declaring in a page one commentary this week that "the next chancellor is named Annalena Baerbock". "If the misery plaguing the CDU and SPD continues, the Greens could end up installing the next chancellor, and will for feminist reasons decide in favour of the assertive Madame Baerbock," predicted the newspaper. "She also understands the economy... At the moment, she doesn't need to offer more, given the sad state of the competition."

### 'Dream team'

A mother-of-two, Baerbock, 38, has been described by Spiegel magazine as "the boss" among the two Greens co-leaders and the unifying force within the party. She once aspired to become a journalist but after an internship with the Greens at the European parliament, decided that politics was her future.

Credited with finding compromises on tough topics, she has also been praised for ensuring that policy implemented by regional Greens squares with the party's national line. But in public, it is Habeck who gets the popstar welcomes. A father-of-four, the personable doctor of philosophy is not shy about showing his sensitive side. As a writer co-authoring books with his wife from their home in the bucolic countryside by the Baltic coast, Habeck admitted that he had a comfortable family life.

But he "started scolding stupid politicians" and finally "pulled (himself) together, drove to a Green meeting and came back as district chairman." "Since then I've been a politician through and through." Although different in style, the Greens leaders have been described as a "dream team". With attention now trained on them, both have sought to deflect the limelight, saying that "we don't want to revolve around ourselves". For now, the pair can afford to hang back as their competitors struggle to turn the situation around. Merkel's CDU is under pressure in eastern Germany, where the far-right anti-migrant AfD is expected to make big strides in three state elections in September and October. On a national level, Merkel is also facing heat as Germany fails to meet its own climate target. — AFP



**LEIPZIG:** In this file photo, leaders of the German Green party Robert Habeck (right) and Annalena Baerbock chat on stage during the party's congress in Leipzig. — AFP

## Ex-cop sentenced to 12.5 years for killing of Australian woman

**MINNEAPOLIS:** A former Minneapolis police officer was sentenced Friday to 12 years and six months in prison for the fatal shooting of an unarmed Australian woman who had been trying to report a crime. Mohamed Noor, 33, was convicted in April of second-degree manslaughter and third-degree murder in the 2017 death of Justine Damond, in a case that shocked the Midwestern city and sparked outrage in the victim's home country. Noor was responding to her late-night report of a possible sexual assault in an alley in Minneapolis.

At sentencing Noor told the judge of his fear of an ambush and then his horror over learning he had shot an innocent woman. "That mistake is my hardship to bear," Noor told the judge, his voice breaking. "The act may have been based on a miscalculation, but it was an intentional act." Hennepin County District Judge Kathryn Quaintance said in handing down her sentence.

During the trial Noor testified that he shot Damond, an Australian who had moved to the US, to protect his partner, because he had feared an ambush when responding to an emergency call she had made. But prosecutors insisted the shooting was unreasonable and contrary to police department training policy. Noor tar-

geted Damond from the passenger seat of the police cruiser he was in with his partner, Matthew Harrity.

The 40-year-old victim had approached the cruiser after calling 911 twice to report a possible rape in the dark alley behind her home. No such assault was found to have occurred. The shooting came at a time of heightened tensions over officer-involved shootings in the US. Shot in the abdomen, Damond died at the scene. Her last words were: "I'm dying," according to earlier testimony from Justine's fiancé, Don Damond of Minneapolis. He was out of town on business and with her on the phone when she was slain. Justine Damond had moved to the Midwestern city to marry him and had planned to legally change her name from her maiden name, Ruszczyk.

Friday, Damond read a victim impact statement as if he were speaking to the woman he'd known as his soulmate. "My beloved, my dear friend, my future-wife-to-be," he began, pausing to compose himself between tears and jagged breaths. "How do I sum up the pain, the trauma, of these last 23 months in this proceeding?"

### 'As your breath slipped away'

That day, on July 15, 2017, Damond said, was the last time he felt a sense of happiness, of trust that everything would be OK. "I miss you so much every day, every moment," he said, voice wavering. He had been on the phone with her when she made her call, upon his advice, and left to walk toward the police cruiser, barefoot in her pajamas. She told him she was going to talk to the police, and then he heard her say, "I'm dying," as she fell to the ground. "I wish I could have held you as your breath slipped away," he said softly.



**Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May**

Conservatives' image as "the nasty party" if they wanted to unseat then-popular Labor premier Tony Blair. But a 2010-16 stint as home secretary saw May adopt isolationist rhetoric that included a vow to create "a really hostile environment for illegal migration".

### 'Maybot'

She became prime minister in the aftermath of the 2016 Brexit referendum which swept away her predecessor David Cameron. She took office pledging to fight the "burning injustices" in British society, but made little headway as her entire premiership became dominated by the Brexit drama. Despite having made a cautious case to stay in the EU, May embraced the cause with the mantra "Brexit means Brexit". Her promise to leave the EU's institutions and end free movement of workers delighted eurosceptic MPs, but caused dismay among many pro-Europeans. The splits in her Conservative Party became a serious problem after a disastrous snap election in June 2017, when she lost her parliamentary majority.

May was forced to strike a deal for support with Northern Ireland's pro-Brexit Democratic Unionist Party, and since then has struggled to keep her party and its allies together. Naturally reserved and reliant on her husband and a few close aides, she often says she is just quietly "getting on with the job". But in the 2017 election, the leader struggled to engage with voters and was dubbed the "Maybot" after churning out the same answers and "strong and stable" soundbytes over and over again.

May was written off several times before announcing on May 24 that she would step down. Columnist Matthew Parris - a former Conservative MP - called her the "zombie prime minister" for her ability to stagger on despite multiple attacks. She survived a no-confidence vote, the resignations of a string of high-profile Brexit supporters, notably former foreign secretary Boris Johnson, and has endured constant sniping from MPs on the sidelines. But ultimately her closed style of leadership and Brexit gridlock in parliament doomed her premiership. "It's hard to think of a Tory politician who would have been the perfect PM in such circumstances," Tim Bale, politics professor at Queen Mary University of London said. "But it's just as hard to think of anyone who would have been much worse than her." — AFP



**MINNEAPOLIS:** Former police officer Mohamed Noor listens to victim impact statements during his sentencing hearing as his lawyers Peter Wold and Thomas Plunkett look on at the Hennepin County District Court on Friday. — AFP

Damond's parents had called for the maximum punishment for Noor, describing their daughter as an intelligent, kind, and vivacious woman who died trying to help someone else. Under Minnesota sentencing guidelines, second-degree manslaughter carries a penalty of 120-180 months, with the presumptive sentence of 150 months. The judge noted that third-degree murder calls for a 150-month sentence, but given it is a lesser offense, she did not impose a sentence for that crime. In addition to his imprisonment, Noor is now banned from using or possessing guns or explosives. He must pay a \$6,000 fine and restitution yet to be determined, and provide a DNA sample. — AFP

## Marine vs Marion: Rivalry in far-right dynasty returns

**PARIS:** The rivalry between the two heirs to France's far-right Le Pen dynasty resurfaced on Friday, with Marine Le Pen dismissing her niece Marion Marechal's proposal for a new rightwing coalition. Marechal, a popular lawmaker in the former National Front (now known as the National Rally or RN) until she stepped down in 2017 to found a political college, has repeatedly spoken in favor of an alliance between the right and far-right.

During the recent European elections, she pointedly held off calling on voters to back the National Rally (RN), which came out on top with 23.31 percent of the vote. In a LCI television interview last week, Marechal said she was available to help unite the National Rally with the conservative Republicans, one of the big losers of the European polls, whose leader Laurent Wauquiez quit over the party's abysmal tally of 8.48 percent.

Marechal appeared however to condition her continuing support for the party on its readiness to form such an alliance, even though the Republicans have so far balked at a tie-up with the far-right National Rally. "If the RN manages to create alliances that allow it to win the (presidential) election I will have no problem supporting it," she said.

### Far-right has 'not peaked'

Le Pen, who has built up the National Rally into a major force with a nationalist message with appeal on both the far right and far left, said Friday she "regretted" Marechal's failure to endorse the party. Le Pen told BFM broadcaster that her niece's view that the far-right could not win power in France by itself and needed a tie-up with the traditional right, was "sad". The new faultline in French politics, she said, is not between left and right, but between nationalists and "globalists" led by President Emmanuel Macron, whose party came a close second to the RN in the European election, two years after he beat Le Pen for the French presidency.

"The new divide is blowing up the traditional parties. It has blown up the Republicans, in the past it blew up the Socialist Party and it is also blowing up the (hard-left) France Unbowed," Le Pen said. While Macron's new, centrist Republic On the Move party has been a big beneficiary of the realignment, taking votes both from the right and left, Le Pen said her party also had the capacity to grow further. "I don't believe we've peaked. Far from it," she said, calling Marechal's view "pessimistic". The squabbles of the Le Pen family have repeatedly made the headlines in recent years. In 2015 Marine Le Pen threw her father, far-right patriarch Jean-Marie Le Pen, out of the anti-immigration, anti-EU party he founded in the 1970s for repeating his view that the Holocaust was a mere "detail" of World War II. — AFP

### 'Goody two shoes'

The daughter of a Church of England vicar, May was born on October 1, 1956 in Eastbourne - a seaside town in southern England where her father was a chaplain at the local hospital. She has described herself in interviews as a "goody two shoes" whose Protestant faith defined her upbringing. She listened to cricket matches on the radio with her father and knew that she wanted to become a politician when she was just 12. May studied geography and met her husband Philip at Oxford University before joining the Bank of England.

The two never had children and May devoted herself to a life of public service that saw her become Conservative Party chairwoman in 2002. May made her first splash by telling their annual conference to change the



## International

# Turkey says 43 Kurdish militants 'neutralized' in northern Iraq

## US gives Turkey until July 31 to backtrack on Russia missile deal

**ISTANBUL:** Turkey's Defense Ministry said yesterday a total of 43 members of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) had been "neutralized" as part of an operation Ankara launched in northern Iraq 13 days ago. The Turkish military launched what it dubbed "Operation Claw" in northern Iraq's Hakkurk region on June 27 with artillery and air strikes followed by operations by commando brigades.

The PKK militant group is based in northern Iraq, notably in the Qandil region to the south of Hakkurk. Ankara said the operation aimed to destroy shelters and caves used by the PKK and "neutralize" its members - a term it commonly uses to refer to deaths, but also to those wounded or captured. "43 PKK terrorists have been neutralized as part of Operation Claw, which has continued successfully for 13 days in the Hakkurk region of northern Iraq," the ministry said in a statement yesterday.

It said 53 mines and improvised explosive devices had been destroyed and 74 caves and shelters used by the PKK made unusable, adding that it had also seized weapons and ammunition belonging to the militants. Defense Minister Hulusi Akar has said the operation would continue in the region until "the last terrorist is neutralized". The PKK insurgency in mainly Kurdish southeast Turkey began in 1984 and more than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict. It is designated a terrorist group by Ankara, the European Union and United States.

Turkey's pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), the third largest in parliament, has said such operations create crises and that tens of similar operations in the past have not produced a solution. Separately, two PKK members, one of whom was on Turkey's wanted list,

were "neutralized" in Turkey's southeastern Diyarbakir province, as well as five others in the eastern Tunceli province, the Interior Ministry said. Another PKK member was arrested in Diyarbakir at a traffic checkpoint, the local gendarmerie said.



### US threatens to expel Turkish pilots

#### Russian missile deal

In another development, United States on Friday gave Turkey until the end of July to abandon its purchase of a major Russian missile defense system, which Washington considers incompatible with Ankara's participation in the F-35 fighter jet program. If by July 31 Turkey does not renounce the S-400 system, Turkish pilots training in the United States on the F-35 will be expelled, and agreements with Turkish firms subcontracted for manufacturing the F-35 stealth warplane will be cancelled, Ellen Lord, undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, told reporters. Lord said the deadline "will allow sufficient

time for Turkish personnel associated with the F-35 program to be reassigned and depart the United States... to facilitate an orderly cessation of Turkish participation." She justified the US ultimatum by the fact that Turkey, a NATO ally of the United States, had already sent its personnel to Russia to start training with the S-400.

On Tuesday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his country was "determined" to proceed with the Russia deal. US officials have said they expected Turkey to opt for the American Patriot air defense system instead, arguing that would allow the F-35 program to continue. Turkey plans to buy 100 US F-35s and its defense industry has invested significantly in the warplanes' production.

Erdogan said he told the US that Ankara would take steps to buy Patriots only if Washington's conditions of delivery were as positive as Moscow's. "But unfortunately we haven't received a positive proposal from the American side on the subject of Patriots like the S-400s from Russia," he said. Acting US Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said he had sent a letter to his Turkish counterpart Hulusi Akar informing him of Washington's decision. The US offer for the Patriots was "very competitive," Shanahan told reporters.

#### Turkey can 'change course'

The F-35s are designed to operate in sync and in real-time with NATO's military systems, including anti-missile defenses, raising US fears that Russia could fine-tune the S-400's capacities against the Western alliance through information gleaned in Turkey. The United States in June 2018 "delivered" four of the F-35s to Turkey but kept the

planes in the United States, officially to train the Turkish pilots. If Turkey does not renounce the deal with Russia by July 31, Turkish companies - which make 937 different parts of the F-35 - will be granted no further subcontracts with their roles reassigned to other firms, Lord said. Of the components, around 400 are made only in Turkey, notably landing gear parts and titanium rotor blades. Aeronautics giant Lockheed Martin and engine maker Pratt & Whitney have already started to seek new suppliers, although Turkish companies will be able to finish orders that were already in the works, Lord said.

She said that Turkey's participation would be finished by early 2020. "Turkey still has the option to change course," she said. "If Turkey does not accept delivery of the S-400, we will enable Turkey to return to normal," she said. Launched in the 1990s, the F-35 is the most expensive program in the history of the US military. The Pentagon estimates its cost at \$400 billion, with a goal of manufacturing nearly 2,500 planes in the decades to come.

Tensions have been on the rise in recent years between the United States and Turkey as Erdogan increasingly seeks a major role in the Islamic world. Turkey has pressed President Donald Trump to remove US troops from Syria but the United States has worried over the fate of US-allied Kurdish fighters, who are linked by Erdogan to separatists at home. Removing one impediment to ties, Turkey last week freed a NASA scientist with dual citizenship, the second American released after being rounded up in Erdogan's sweeping crackdown following a failed 2016 coup. — Agencies

## Why is Japan's Abe going to Iran? What can he accomplish?

**TOKYO:** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is due to visit Iran next week in an apparent mediation mission to ease tension between Iran and the United States. Following are some of the reasons for Abe's June 12-14 trip, and what it might accomplish.

#### Why is Abe going to Iran?

Japan is in a unique position as a US ally because it has long maintained close ties with Iran, making Abe an ideal mediator. US-Iran ties have frayed since President Donald Trump pulled out of an Iran nuclear deal in which it agreed to curb its nuclear program in return for the lifting of sanctions. The United States has also hinted at military confrontation, sending extra forces to the region to counter what it describes as Iranian threats. During a visit to Japan last month, Trump welcomed Abe's help in dealing with Iran, highlighting the "very good relationship" between Tokyo and Tehran. "I do believe that Iran would like to talk," Trump said at the time. "And if they'd like to talk, we'd like to talk also." For its part, Japan is keen to see stability in the Middle East as the bulk of its oil imports come from the region, although it stopped buying Iranian oil this year because of US sanctions.

#### What can Abe achieve?

The most Abe could probably achieve

would be to persuade Iran and the United States to resume direct talks, possibly in a third country. Both sides may be seeking a face-saving way out of the confrontation, experts say. Abe could, for example, invite Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to a G20 summit that Japan is hosting at the end of June, said Momoyo Kondo, a research fellow at the Middle East Institute of Japan.

If that is not possible, Abe could relay a message from Iran to the United States, perhaps at the G20 summit, said Motohiro Ono, an opposition lawmaker and former diplomat who served in various Middle Eastern countries. Japan is not a party to the Iran nuclear agreement, which was signed by Iran, Russia, China, Britain, France, Germany and the United States, so he would not be able to directly address that. Japan won Russia's endorsement to try to ease tension with Iran when Japanese and Russian foreign and defense ministers held four-way talks in Tokyo last week.

#### History of Japan-Iran ties

Japan has had a generally positive relationship with Iran going back about 70 years, mostly revolving around oil. In the 1950s, Japanese refiner Idemitsu broke a British oil embargo of Iran and sent a tanker to get a shipload of gasoline and diesel oil. Thirty years later, during the Iran-Iraq war, Abe's father, then Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe, visited both countries to try to mediate. A young Shinzo Abe joined him as his secretary.

"Japan has been seen in the Middle East as a country that links the United States with the rest of the world," said Kondo. Broadly speaking, Japan has maintained neutral ties with many Middle Eastern countries because it relies on them for oil. "Japan's focus on commercial and diplomat-



**TEHRAN:** Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei leads prayer at the Imam Khomeini Mausoleum in Tehran. — AFP

ic relations in the region, rather than military deployments, may also mean Tehran perceives it to be more neutral than other US allies," said Richard Mallinson, a senior analyst at Energy Aspects in London.

#### Is Iran a big source of oil?

Iran has been a major supplier of crude to Japan, providing 10-15 percent before 2012, when US sanctions began to tighten. That still lagged imports from Saudi Arabia, however, long Japan's main supplier. Japan has at times been caught in the political crossfire between Iran and the United States, with Japan invariably falling into line with its old ally.

In 2004, Japan's Inpex agreed to take a 75% stake in Iran's Azadegan oil field, one of the world's biggest oil discoveries

in the last 30 years. But under US pressure, Inpex reduced the stake to 10 percent in 2006, and then exited completely in 2010. Japan stopped importing Iranian oil by a deadline to avoid US sanctions last month - although it has pushed for imports to continue. Japan wants to keep open the option of Iranian oil to protect it from possible disruptions in Saudi Arabian or UAE supplies, a US diplomat told Reuters recently.

There is not a lot of downside for Abe. Even if he is not able to achieve a breakthrough, he will be seen as an international statesman seeking peace. A successful trip would make him look good ahead of an upper house election this summer, and might encourage him to call a snap general election at the same time. — Reuters

## Indian MP accused of mosque bombing appears in court

**MUMBAI:** A firebrand Hindu nationalist nun accused of participating in the deadly bombing of a mosque appeared in court Friday, two weeks after she won a parliamentary seat in India's election. Sadhvi Pragya Thakur is being tried on terrorism and criminal conspiracy charges over the 2008 attack in western India that killed six people and injured more than 100 others.

The MP for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) appeared before a special terror offences court in Mumbai, her first appearance since charges were laid last October. Thakur, 49, had been instructed by the judge to attend at least one hearing per week. The court granted her an exemption on Thursday



**MUMBAI:** Indian BJP MP Pragya Thakur arrives to appear in the special court on Friday. — AFP

due to ill health. Police say her motorbike was used to carry the explosives used in the attack in Malegaon, and that she took part in a key planning meeting before it was

staged. Thakur spent nine years in detention as India's notoriously slow legal system dragged before she was bailed in 2017. She won an emphatic victory in India's mammoth general election, taking 62 percent of the vote for a seat in the central industrial city of Bhopal.

Indian election rules allow anyone to stand for office as long as they have not been convicted of a crime. Thakur only joined the BJP in April and the party stunned many when it named her as a parliamentary candidate the next month. She courted controversy throughout the campaign, telling journalists that the radical Hindu assassin of Indian independence hero Mahatma Gandhi was a "patriot" - earning her a rebuke from Modi.

Thakur also raised eyebrows for claiming that drinking cow urine had helped cure her cancer and extolling the benefits of drinking a concoction of milk, butter and cow dung. The opposition Congress party, which was trounced in the election, have denounced her as symbolic of the rise of extreme Hindu nationalism in India under Modi. The BJP has regularly jumped to her defense. Party president Amit Shah, now India's home affairs minister, has called the terrorism charges against her "fake". — AFP

## Sri Lanka president sacks intelligence chief over attacks

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka's president has sacked the national intelligence chief and will not cooperate with a parliamentary investigation into security lapses before the Easter suicide bombings, officials said yesterday. Maithripala Sirisena summoned an emergency cabinet meeting on Friday night to oppose a parliamentary select committee probe into the April 21 attacks that killed 258 people, including 45 foreigners, and wounded nearly 500. Chief of National Intelligence Sisira Mendis was sacked after testifying to the inquiry last week that the attacks could have been averted.

He also said the president had failed to hold regular security meetings to assess the threat from Islamic radicals who carried out the bombings on three hotels and three churches. Sirisena's office did not give a reason for the sacking. Halfway through the testimony, the live telecast of the proceedings was stopped on the president's orders, official sources said. A ministerial source told AFP Sirisena

has refused to allow any police, military or intelligence personnel to testify before the committee.

The source added that the heated cabinet meeting ended "inconclusively" without taking a decision on whether to suspend the parliament probe. Sirisena's office did not comment on the meeting, but said the president had told senior police officers on Friday that he will not allow any serving officer to testify. Sirisena's defense secretary and police chief have suggested that the president, who is also defense minister, did not follow proper protocols in dealing with intelligence warnings about the Easter Sunday bombings. Sirisena has repeatedly denied he was aware of an impending threat. A local jihadist organization and the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attacks. The country has been under a state of emergency since the bombings. Sirisena said last week that he met with the national police chief and his top brass 13 days before the attacks but no officer raised warnings passed on by India and based on information from a detained jihadist.

The crisis erupted ahead of a visit to Sri Lanka by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday. The Indian premier is to make a brief stopover in Colombo on his return from an official visit to the Maldives. The Sri Lankan government has admitted there were intelligence failures before the attacks. Sirisena suspended police chief Pujith Jayasundara and dismissed his top defense official Hemasiri Fernando after the bombings. — AFP



**COLOMBO:** Sri Lankan Muslim women search devotees at the entrance of the Grand Mosque in Colombo. — AFP

### News in brief

#### Blast kills 4 Pakistan soldiers

**ISLAMABAD:** Four Pakistani soldiers have been killed by an improvised explosive device in a tribal region along the Afghan border, Prime Minister Imran Khan said yesterday. "Deeply saddened to learn of the shahadat of 3 officers & 1 soldier from a terrorist-planted IED blast in Kharkamar, N.Waziristan," Khan said on his Twitter account. He gave no more details but Dawn, Pakistan's biggest English-language newspaper, cited the military's media wing as saying four other soldiers were wounded when the blast targeted a military vehicle in North Waziristan on Friday. The report did not say who was behind the bombing. Violence in Pakistan has declined in recent years following a series of military operations along the northwestern border with Afghanistan, but militant groups are still able to carry out deadly attacks. — AFP

#### Bhutan gays celebrate

**THIMPU:** Bhutan's LGBT community celebrated yesterday after the tiny Himalayan kingdom's parliament became the world's latest to decriminalize homosexuality. The lower house overwhelmingly voted late Friday to repeal two sections of the 2004 criminal code which made "unnatural sex" illegal. "A lot of us cried," said Tashi Tsheten of Rainbow Bhutan that represents the country's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. "We are a small and marginalized community and when our rights are discussed in parliament, it makes us extremely happy," Tashi said. The law had never been used, but Finance Minister Namgay Tshering, who submitted the recommendation to repeal sections 213 and 214 of the penal code, said they had become "a stain" on the country's reputation. — AFP

#### Four Islamists killed in Sinai

**CAIRO:** Egyptian security forces killed four suspected jihadists in restive North Sinai allegedly involved in a deadly attack this week on a police checkpoint, the interior ministry said yesterday. It said the suspects were killed in a shootout as security forces raided a building used as a hideout in the town of El-Arish, and three assault rifles and an explosive vest were seized. Since Wednesday's attack claimed by the Islamic State group on a checkpoint, southwest of El-Arish, the capital of North Sinai, in which eight policemen died, operations by security forces have killed a total of 26 "terrorists", according to the ministry. The hotspot of North Sinai in eastern Egypt has long been a centre of insurgents affiliated with IS. — AFP



## Analysis

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## Washington Watch

## Continuing struggle for Palestinian rights among Calif Dems

By Dr James J Zogby

It was back in the mid-1980s that Jack O'Dell, a long-time advisor first to Martin Luther King Jr and then to Jesse Jackson, taught me a lesson I never forgot. The gist of his advice was that when struggling against adversaries to secure your rights, never be devastated by setbacks and never become overly confident after feeling you've made progress.

What prompted this advice were a few incidents that occurred in the early 1980's. In the lead up to the 20th anniversary of Martin Luther King-led 1963 "March on Washington", the organizers of the commemorative event invited the participation of Arab Americans, through our organization, the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC). Our chairman, former Senator James Abourezk, was asked to serve on the National Steering Committee and invited to speak at the event, and I was asked to serve on the National Planning Council. On learning of this, major American Jewish organizations protested and threatened to withdraw their support and involvement in the event. They objected to our participation and to Abourezk's speaking role. After weeks of heated exchanges, we won. Arab Americans marched and our chairman's role was secured on the steering committee and as a speaker.

Later that same year, Jesse Jackson announced his candidacy for president of the United States and appointed me as a deputy campaign manager. Early in a campaign, a group of liberal American Jewish leaders requested a meeting with Jackson to express their concerns both with his expanded outreach to the Arab American community and the fact that he had brought me on board. The meeting took place, they raised their objections, and Jackson rejected their concerns.

Throughout this entire ordeal, I sought support from Jack O'Dell and his advice as to how best to weather these storms. When I had first learned of their objections to my being in the campaign, I was so frustrated at having to go through much the same fight we had just gone through over our involvement in the 20th anniversary march, I told both Jackson and O'Dell that I felt like quitting. Their response was "if you quit, you give your adversaries exactly what they want. What they fear most is that you'll stick around and fight." Then, after my role in the campaign was affirmed by Jackson, I told Jack O'Dell how good it felt to win. He offered another piece of advice - a cautionary note. When you think you're winning, he said, don't turn your back, because your adversaries haven't given up. They'll come after you again.

I've carried these words wisdom with me throughout my political career and it has helped carry me through many political storms. I thought about O'Dell's lessons after learning about developments at last week's California Democratic Convention. In the lead up to the convention, a group of Arab American and progressive Jewish Democrats prepared five resolutions on various aspects of Palestinian rights and the path to an Israeli-Palestinian peace. Buoyed by polls demonstrating the extent to which attitudes among rank and file Democrats had shifted on the question of Palestine, their resolutions: Condemned recent actions by the Trump Administration (aid cuts, moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem, turning a blind eye to Netanyahu's settlement expansion); called for the Palestinian right of return; condemned Israel's Jewish Nation-State Law; criticized equating criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism; and called for an end to the blockade of Gaza.

After protests from a number of major American Jewish organizations, the California Democratic Party leadership undertook to blunt the criticism by rewriting and "watering down" the resolutions and, in violation of the party's own rules, refused to allow the original resolution language to be brought to a vote. The Jewish press crowed that the party "Rejects Resolutions Critical of Israel". And members of the Arab American and Progressive caucuses who had drafted the original language were justifiably frustrated by having been steamrolled by the party leadership. Some saw the entire enterprise as a loss. But on closer examination, a different picture emerges. On the one hand, the fact that the pro-Israel groups and the party leaders had to resort to heavy-handed tactics to sideline the original resolutions and feared losing if they had allowed them to come to a vote by the membership, they only served to expose the weakness of their position. At the same time, on closer examination, while the rewritten resolutions struck language they found objectionable (for example, "the right to return" or the language about anti-Semitism) and included more pro-Israel language, they also felt obliged to maintain significant parts of the Arab American/Progressive resolutions.

NOTE: James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

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



Dancers open a march as part of the World Oceans day in Paris yesterday to raise concerns about global warming effects and other threats such as surface warming, ocean heating, deoxygenation and acidification. — AFP

## Crucial oceans get chance in climate spotlight

Armed with better data than ever before, scientists have in recent months sounded the alarm over the rising pace of global warming and the parlous state of nature. But there is another area of concern, one that covers two thirds of the planet and plays a crucial role in absorbing dangerous greenhouse gases and regulating everything from food chains to weather patterns. Oceans are crucial to life on Earth, yet they frequently only feature in the environment debate when plastic pollution or fish-stock declines are discussed.

But experts believe that might be changing. "We have an important opportunity over the next 18 months to do something for oceans," said Dan Laffoley, from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which released a landmark report in October 2018 warning of the effects of global temperature rises, will this September publish its latest assessment on the state of oceans.

"The IPCC report will be fairly grim," said Lisa Speer, director of the international

oceans program at the Natural Resources Defence Council. As greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere climb ever higher, so do sea-levels; oceans currently encroach on the land around 3.3 mm a year, and the rate is accelerating. The last IPCC assessment, in 2014, predicted that sea levels could rise as much as one metre by the end of the century. But more recent studies using more varied scenario planning have said that current warming trends could lift the seas as much as two metres by 2100.

Laffoley said there were four main threats, or "horsesmen", facing the world's oceans: surface warming, ocean heating, deoxygenation and acidification. "We scientists are taken aback by the scale, depth and speed of the change," he said ahead of World Oceans Day on Saturday.

## Sea sick

Oceans absorb around a third of all manmade CO2, and 90 percent of the excess heat created by those emissions goes into the sea. In doing so, the ocean surface heats and becomes more acidic, something that has already decimated

coral populations on reefs throughout the seas. Oceans contain 97 percent of all living space on Earth and, just like forests, they help keep the atmosphere breathable. But there is a limit to how much CO2 they can absorb. "Every second breath we take comes from oxygen produced by the ocean, so it's time for us to make some radical changes," said Peter Thomson, UN special envoy for oceans.

Activists and monitors hope that the IPCC oceans report will spark similar alarm among policymakers that its climate assessment did last year. Chilean President Sebastian Pinera, whose country will host the COP25 UN climate summit in December, has dedicated the conference to oceans. "It will stay in our memories as the blue COP," he said this year.

## 'A win-win-win'

While environmentalists have welcomed the increasing political attention on oceans, they stress that concrete action is needed to arrest the rapid damage spreading through the seas. Countries must "introduce measures related to oceans in their national commit-

ments" to battle climate change, according to Raphael Cuvelier, projects coordinator at the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, which focuses on oceans. "Working for the preservation and appreciation of marine ecosystems is working for the climate," he said.

In particular, conservationists want governments to extend protected areas to allow species to recover. "Living areas in the oceans are shrinking," said Callum Roberts, an oceanologist at the University of York. "We are seeing how larger marine protected areas can reverse these trends. We can counteract the changes caused by climate change." Other experts stress the importance of what is known as "blue carbon" - the amount of CO2 absorbed by ocean plants such as seagrass and mangroves. A diplomat involved in the UN climate change discussion said preserving areas rich in blue carbon was beneficial for both the climate and humanity. "There are significant synergies between climate change mitigation, with carbon storage, and adaptation, looking at the importance of mangroves in protecting against storms and rising sea levels, as well as for biodiversity," he said. "It's a win-win-win." — AFP

## How Italy's migrant model town Riace veered far-right

The sign reading "Riace, land of welcome" still hangs in the small town, but its dream of migrant integration is over after the far-right's "Italians first" election victory. The new mayor of the one-time "global village" in southern Italy's rural Calabria elected on May 26 with the support of Matteo Salvini's anti-migrant Lega party, Antonio Trifoli, has so far left the sign up. "We will welcome refugees again," he told AFP. "But we can't have 500 to 600 asylum seekers in a town with 1,500 residents," said the former town policeman.

Trifoli was first on the independent "Riace reborn" list, backed by the Lega, whose supporters provided many of the 41.8 percent of the 1,103 votes he won. Until just a few years ago, the Lega was a separatist party at the other end of the country which sneeringly referred to southerners as "bumpkins" or worse. "The problem is that we had too many migrants and we lost the spirit of openness there was initially," said Trifoli. "A whole economic system developed with the migrants, but without making the village dynamic again... The model destroyed itself," he said.

Former mayor Domenico "Mimmo" Lucano encouraged migrants and refugees to come to the village to counter a gradual decline of inhabitants and workers and show how



A musician waits by a mural reading the names of various African and Middle-Eastern and Asian countries and the inscription "Where do clouds go?" on June 4, 2019 in Riace, southern Italy. — AFP

migrant integration could be done. But now he is no longer even a member of the town council after his left-backed list lost in the elections, and he has been barred from the town. Lucano is due in court next week to face charges including that he failed to put to tender a garbage collection contract that went to a migrant-linked cooperative.

German director Wim Wenders made a documentary in 2010 featuring the leftist mayor and Riace's refugees, but Lucano was last year placed under house arrest for allegedly setting up fake marriages to help foreign women stay in the country after their asylum applications were rejected. The debacle came after a populist coalition formed by Salvini, the country's hardline anti-immigrant

## Wrecked mosques and police watch

The corner where Heyitkah Mosque in the restive Xinjiang region once hummed with life is now a concrete parking lot where all traces of the tall, domed building have been erased. While Muslims around the world celebrated the end of Ramadan with prayers and festivities last week, the recent destruction of dozens of mosques in Xinjiang highlights the increasing pressure Uighurs and other ethnic minorities face in the heavily policed region.

Behind the lot in the city of Hotan, the slogan "Educate the people for the party" is emblazoned in red on the wall of a primary school where students must scan their faces upon entering the razor-wired gates. The mosque "was beautiful," recalled a vendor at a nearby bazaar. "There were a lot of people there." Satellite images reviewed by AFP and visual analysis non-profit Earthrise Alliance show that 36 mosques and religious sites have been torn down or had their domes and corner spires removed since 2017.

In the mosques that are open, worshippers go through metal detectors while surveillance cameras monitor them inside. "The situation here is very strict, it takes a toll on my heart," said one Uighur, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisals. "I don't go any more," he added, referring to mosques. "I'm scared." In the ancient Silk Road city of Kashgar, no longer does the sunrise prayer call echo throughout the city - a ritual the manager of the city's central mosque once proudly shared with tourists.

On Wednesday, locals celebrating Eid al-Fitr quietly filed into the entrance of state-approved Idkah Mosque - one of the largest in China - as police and officials fenced off the wide square surrounding the building and plain-

clothes men monitored every person's actions. It was another low-key Ramadan for Muslims in Xinjiang, with restaurants busy serving food to customers throughout the day, when practicing Muslims fast.

In Hotan on Friday - a holy day for believers - the only mosque in the city was empty after sundown, an important prayer session when Muslim families typically break their daily fast. Earlier in the day, at least 100 people attended a midday session but the vast majority were elderly men. The ruling Communist Party "sees religion as this existential threat," said James Leibold, an expert on ethnic relations and policy in China at La Trobe University.

Over the long term, the Chinese government wants to achieve "the secularization of Chinese society," he told AFP. The Xinjiang government told AFP that it "protects religious freedoms" and citizens can celebrate Ramadan "within the scope permitted by law", without elaborating. The authorities have thrown a high-tech security net across the region, installing cameras, mobile police stations and checkpoints in seemingly every street in response to a spate of deadly attacks blamed on Islamic extremists and separatists in recent years. An estimated one million Uighurs and other Turkic-speaking ethnic groups are held in a vast network of internment camps. After initially denying their existence, Chinese authorities last year acknowledged that they run "vocational education centres" aimed at steering people clear of religious extremism by teaching them Mandarin and China's laws. In those centres, it was a different Ramadan. The Xinjiang government told AFP that people in the centres are not allowed to hold religious activities because Chinese law forbids it within education facilities, but they are free to do so "when they return home on weekends".

In recent years, Chinese authorities have ramped up controls on public displays of religion and Islamic traditions in Xinjiang. AFP reporters did not see any veiled

deputy prime minister who also holds the interior ministry portfolio, and Luigi Di Maio's anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S) formed a government in June last year.

The shops and workshops previously occupied by migrants are now shuttered. The village's historic streets are largely deserted, with funeral music occasionally punctuating the silence. Colorful, multi-ethnic murals can still be seen on walls, testimony to the experiment that took place here and the hopes for migrant integration it spawned in Italy and beyond, before it failed amid alienated locals and allegations of fraud.

"Here, we need order and discipline," said agricultural engineer Claudio Falchi, a Milan native who moved here 25 years ago. Three years ago he became Lega leader in Riace. "They were fighting among themselves, they didn't want the crucifix, or the creche," Falchi said of the migrants. "It's not racism, it's just that this is our home. We welcome them and then they make problems." Locals are reluctant to talk about the past or discuss the predicament of the village, which, like so many in Calabria is seeing its youth leave in search of work as the elderly slowly die off.

"People wanted things to change. After 15 years of talking only about welcoming and refugees, they got tired," said mayor Trifoli. "Taking in refugees gave Riace prestige around the world but its inhabitants lost interest." Over the years the town took in around 6,000 migrants, opened shops and workshops and even launched its own currency stamped with the heads of Nelson Mandela or Martin Luther King. But that model of tolerance and inclusion has disappeared. "Almost everyone has gone. There aren't even any more children," said Daniel, a 37-year-old Ghanaian, in perfect Italian. — AFP

women and few men sporting long beards during a week-long visit to the region. Former internment camp inmates have said they were incarcerated for these outward signs of their religion. Places of worship too have become targets of Beijing's draconian security measures. In the satellite images analyzed by AFP and Earthrise Alliance, 30 religious sites were completely demolished while six had their domes and corner spires removed. AFP reporters visited about half a dozen sites, and found that some mosques had been repurposed into public spaces. Police officers blocked journalists from entering Artux, just north of Kashgar, where the town's grand mosque and dozens of other community mosques were destroyed.

The area is some 22 km away from an enormous complex believed to be a re-education centre. Visible from a nearby village, the facility has razor-wired walls, watchtowers and imposing block buildings. In Kashgar, two cameras perched on the columns of a former mosque point at its entrance. There is no minaret or dome - instead, a shop selling dresses lies to its right alongside dwellings. A demolished mosque in Hotan has been converted into a garden, paved with concrete walkways and sparsely planted trees.

On the outskirts of town, situated between a cemetery and sand dunes, two white flags and a pile of burned refuse and debris was all that was left of an old shrine named Imam Asim. Uighurs consider these mosques and shrines "their ancestral heritage," said Omer Kanat, director of the Uyghur Human Rights Project. "The Chinese government just wants to erase everything... that is different from Han Chinese, everything which belongs to Uyghur culture or Islamic culture in the region," he said.

Juma Maimaiti, the official imam of Idkah Mosque, told AFP in an interview arranged by the propaganda department that the demolition of mosques "has never happened here". "But our government has proceeded to protect some key mosques," he added, and said that the city of Kashgar has over 150 mosques. — AFP



# Business

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FUKUOKA: A family photo of the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors during their meeting in Fukuoka yesterday. — AFP

## G20 finance chiefs warn of rising trade risks

### Main progress on trade to be at Trump-Xi summit: Mnuchin

**FUKUOKA, Japan:** Global trade tensions threaten an expected pick-up in economic growth this year and in 2020, a draft communique by the world's financial leaders showed yesterday, but the policymakers were divided on whether the need to resolve them was "pressing".

Finance ministers and central bank governors of the world's 20 biggest economies, the G20, are meeting in the southern Japanese city of Fukuoka to discuss the global economy amid rising trade tensions between China and the United States. "Global growth appears to be stabilizing and is generally projected to pick up moderately later this year and into 2020," the draft G20 communique, seen by Reuters, said. "However ... risks remain tilted to the downside. These include, in particular, intensified trade and geo-political tensions," said the draft communique, which may yet change before it is released today.

The draft statement, to which all the G20 financial leaders have to agree, contains a sentence in square brackets—which means it was not yet agreed—that trade and investment were important engines of growth. "We reaffirm our leaders' conclusions on trade from the Buenos Aires Summit and recognize the pressing need to resolve trade tensions," the sentence still under discussion said.

If the sentence is dropped from the final statement, it would mean rowing back on an agreement reached by G20 leaders last year in Argentina that while the existing international trade system—the World Trade Organization—needs improvement, it helps world growth and should be fixed. G20 leaders also agreed last December to review the WTO reform in Osaka later this month. But progress in overhauling the WTO, which still functions under rules created a quarter of a century ago, has been slow, partly because of US actions to block appellate judge appointments. A Japanese finance ministry official who attended yesterday's G20 session told reporters that most of the group's members voiced concern that escalating trade tensions posed a huge downside risk for the global economy.

"With so many countries expressing concern over the fallout (from the trade tensions), there seems to be some momentum to reflect that in the communique. But there's no conclusion yet" on the language of trade, the official told reporters.

Relations between the United States and China have deteriorated since US President Donald Trump in early May accused Beijing of renegeing on commitments to change its ways of doing business with the rest of the world. Washington raised tariffs on Chinese goods and threatened new levies, while Beijing has retaliated.

#### 'Great outcome'

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who will hold talks with China's Yi Gang on the sidelines of the G20 gathering, said the United States wants free, fair and balanced trade with China, in part to close a gaping US trade deficit with China.

But the United States is prepared to levy tariffs on virtually all remaining Chinese imports if the "right deal" cannot be reached to satisfy US demands for better Chinese protections of intellectual property and curbs to technology transfers and state subsidies, Mnuchin said. "If we can't have that, the end result will be that my expectation is that many companies will move their production out of China to other locations," due to tariffs, Mnuchin said.

The treasury secretary said he did not believe that the current trade tensions were harming the global economy, one of the key topics being discussed by G20 officials in Fukuoka. "So I don't think in any way that the slowdown you are seeing in parts of the world are the result of trade tensions at the moment," he said.

Nevertheless, if a deal were found, it would be a boon

to the global economy as a whole, he predicted. "People talk about the economic risk of trade wars... people should be even more focused on the benefits of having a great trade agreement and how that creates economic opportunities in both economies, especially for a growing middle-class in China," he said. The potential economic benefits for China were "part of the reason I don't understand why they went backwards because I think this could be a great

outcome for them".

He said his scheduled meeting with People's Bank of China Governor Yi Gang will not be a "negotiating meeting" on trade issues, reinforcing the view there will be little breakthrough in the row between the world's two largest economies.

He added that any major progress will rest with Trump's expected meeting with Chinese President Xi

Jinping at a G20 leaders' summit late this month. In a rare positive development, the US administration said it will put off imposing tariffs against Mexico after the two countries reached a deal to contain the migration of immigrants crossing the southern US border. "It's a very good outcome not just for the United States and Mexico, but for the global economy," Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda told reporters. — Agencies

### US and Mexico hammer out last-minute deal

**WASHINGTON:** The United States and Mexico reached an 11th-hour deal late Friday to crack down on migration from Central America, with President Donald Trump relenting on threats to slap potentially devastating tariffs on the neighboring country.

With Trump ready to impose five percent tariffs on all Mexican goods starting tomorrow, senior officials hammered out an agreement after three days of intense negotiations at the State Department.

Under the deal, Mexico acknowledged and agreed to expand its policy of taking back migrants from violence-riven Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador as the United States processes their asylum claims. In turn, Mexico managed to avoid a proposal it had continually rejected—that it process asylum claims on its own soil before migrants try to reach the United States. "I am pleased to inform you that The United States of America has reached a signed agreement with Mexico. The Tariffs scheduled to be implemented by the U.S. tomorrow, against Mexico, are hereby indefinitely suspended," Trump wrote on Twitter shortly after returning from a trip to Europe. "Mexico, in turn, has agreed to take strong measures to stem the tide of Migration through Mexico, and to our Southern Border. This is being done to greatly reduce, or eliminate, Illegal Immigration coming from Mexico and into the United States."

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who had planned to head to the border city of Tijuana to show solidarity ahead of the tariffs, said that his trip would instead be to "celebrate."

"Thanks to the support of all Mexicans, we were able to avoid tariffs on Mexican products exported to the United States," tweeted Lopez Obrador, who since his election last year has tried studiously not to antagonize Trump.

#### Skirting economic blow

Trump, who ran for president pushing a tough line on immigration that included denouncing undocumented Mexicans as rapists, had vowed to raise tariffs as high as 25 percent unless Mexico—which exports \$350 billion in goods each year to the United States—takes further action against migrants. The tariffs would have clobbered Mexico's economy, which is integrated with the United States and Canada under the North American Free Trade Agreement, with experts warning of a recession and Fitch rating service already downgrading Mexico's credit rating.

But the tariffs also drew unusually strong opposition from Trump's fellow Republicans, especially lawmakers from farm states who worried about losing their second

largest international market. Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard, who quickly flew to Washington and had stayed ever since following Trump's tariff threat by Twitter on May 30, said he believed the two sides had found a compromise.

"I think it was a fair balance, because they have more drastic measures and proposals," he told reporters as he left the State Department following a final day of talks that lasted 12 hours.

"We have reached some middle point," he said. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin hailed the deal between the US and Mexico as "very, very significant."

Speaking to reporters yesterday on the sidelines of the G20 meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors, Mnuchin said: "We couldn't be more pleased with the agreement that we reached. It is very, very significant and we very much appreciate the commitments that Mexico has made to help us on those important immigration issues."

#### 'Unprecedented steps'

Mexico pledged in a joint statement to take "unprecedented steps to increase enforcement to curb irregular migration." "The Governments of the United States and Mexico will work together to immediately implement a durable solution," it said.

Mexico will deploy National Guard troops throughout the country, "giving priority to its southern border" with Guatemala. It will also target human smuggling and trafficking groups.

Making official a policy that has triggered opposition in both countries, the United States said it would systematically send back asylum seekers who cross the border, with Mexico offering them jobs, health care and educa-

tion. Thousands of asylum seekers have already been sent back to Mexico, prompting criticism from human rights campaigners that the migrants will lack due process and face new danger in border cities such as Ciudad Juarez.

Trump, who has declared a crisis at the border and earlier deployed troops, says that asylum seekers can too easily slip into the population while on US soil.

In a shift from the past when most undocumented immigrants were men seeking work, a majority of recent arrivals are families or unaccompanied children fleeing violence. The number of migrants detained or blocked at the border surged to 144,000 in May, triple the level a year earlier.

#### 'Sigh of relief'

Senator Joni Ernst, who represents the farming state of Iowa and had broken with Trump on the tariffs, said that her state was "breathing a sigh of relief" with the deal. But Democrats denounced Trump for taking the United States and Mexico to the brink. "What we see is yet another example of him trying to be both the arsonist who created this problem in the first place and the firefighter who wants credit for addressing it," said Democratic presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke, who represented the Texas border city of El Paso in Congress.

Chuck Schumer, the top Democrat in the Senate, mocked Trump's triumphant announcement of a deal to reduce illegal immigration. "Now that that problem is solved, I'm sure we won't be hearing any more about it in the future," Schumer tweeted.

In the joint statement, the US and Mexico said they would continue discussions and could announce further measures if the plan does not lead to "the expected results." — AFP



WASHINGTON: The United States and Mexico reached an 11th-hour deal late Friday to crack down on migration from Central America, with President Donald Trump relenting on threats to slap potentially devastating tariffs on the neighboring country. — AFP



Business

# France ready to cut Renault stake to shore up Nissan ties

## Le Maire: Renault and Nissan should work on beefing up ties

**FUKUOKA, Japan:** France is ready to consider paring back its 15-percent stake in Renault in the interests of consolidating the automaker's alliance with Japanese partner Nissan, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said yesterday.

In an interview with AFP on the sidelines of the G20 finance ministers' meeting in Japan, Le Maire also said Renault and Nissan should work on beefing up ties before exploring further merger possibilities.

Le Maire's comments came only days after Italian-US carmaker Fiat Chrysler (FCA) pulled the plug on a proposed merger with Renault, saying negotiations had become "unreasonable" due to political resistance in Paris. "We can reduce the state's stake in Renault's capital. This is not a problem as long as, at the end of the process, we have a more solid auto sector and a more solid alliance between the two great car manufacturers Nissan and Renault," the minister told AFP.

On May 27, FCA stunned the auto world with a proposed "merger of equals" with Renault that would-together with Renault's Japanese partners Nissan and Mitsubishi Motors-create a car giant spanning the globe.

The combined group would have been by far the world's biggest, with total sales of some 15 million vehicles, compared to both Volkswagen and Toyota, which sell around 10.6 million apiece.

But the deal collapsed suddenly on Thursday, with FCA laying the blame at Paris' door. "It has become clear that the political conditions in France do not currently exist for such a combination to proceed

successfully," FCA said in a statement. Le Maire said it was "legitimate" for France, as the "shareholder of reference" in Renault to have a say. "You cannot criticise the state for fulfilling its obligations," he added.

### 'House of cards'

Nissan and Renault have been partners for more than 20 years after former boss Carlos Ghosn stepped in to save the Japanese firm from the verge of bankruptcy by tying it to the stronger French manufacturer. Renault is the dominant partner in terms of the capital structure-owning 43 percent of Nissan-but the Japanese firm has outsold its French ally in recent years, sparking complaints that the balance of power was no longer fair.

The tensions have burst into the open with the arrest of Ghosn on financial misconduct charges in Japan-which he and his family see as a plot by some within Nissan to prevent closer integration of the two firms. While Le Maire said that it was "not the time" for a full merger, he urged Renault to pursue closer ties with Nissan before seeking other alliances-such as with FCA.

Things need to be done "in the right order.... First the alliance (between Nissan and Renault) should be consolidated and then consolidation (more generally) and not one before the other."

"Otherwise, everything risks collapsing like a house of cards," he warned. The minister said it would be up to the bosses of Renault and Nissan to decide how to push the alliance forward as ties between the two firms have been strained after Ghosn's shock



In this file photo, Renault chairman Jean-Dominique Senard speaks during a press conference at the Nissan headquarters in Yokohama, Kanagawa prefecture. —AFP

arrest. "We will simply monitor to make sure, as the shareholder of reference, that things are done in the

correct order, within a reasonable timeframe," Le Maire said. —AFP

## Walmart one-ups Amazon with deliveries direct to refrigerator

**WASHINGTON:** Walmart said Friday it was readying a new home delivery service where its employees could come inside and stock up customers' refrigerators.

The new "InHome" service expected to launch this year in several US cities aims to outdo retail rival Amazon, which brings goods inside customer homes through its electronic access program called Amazon Key. Walmart said on its website that consumers who opt in for the service will need smart devices allowing remote access for the delivery team, which may enter when no one is home.

"You can be anywhere you want, but you don't have to be home," Walmart said on its promo page. "We deliver fresh groceries from your local store, to your kitchen or garage. Literally. Directly into your fridge. Where they belong." The new service will launch later this year in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Kansas City, Missouri; and Vero Beach, Florida; with more cities coming soon.

"Your groceries will be delivered by a trained and vetted Walmart associate, who has been with a local store for at least a year. So, you may actually see a familiar face," Walmart said.

The delivery personnel will be equipped with wearable cameras, so consumers can watch the process live, or view it later. "You'll be able to see the whole process, from the opening of your door, to the stocking of your fridge and every step in between, until our associate leaves and locks up," the company said.

Amazon Key was introduced in 2017 as a secure and trackable way for packages to be delivered inside homes when people aren't there, using internet-connected locksets.

Amazon also allows deliveries to consumers' cars or garages. The move by Walmart ramps up its competition between the two giants of electronic commerce. Walmart said last month it would begin offering free next-day deliveries of online purchases without a subscription fee, aiming to counter Amazon's move to one-day deliveries to its Prime members. —AFP

## BOJ's Kuroda warns of uncertainties on global recovery prospects

**FUKUOKA, Japan:** Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda yesterday maintained his view the global economy will recover in the latter half of this year, but warned that uncertainties remain as fallout from the Sino-US trade war deepens.

Kuroda said the global economy is "stabilizing somewhat" from its weakness late last year, as central banks maintain supportive policies and China takes stimulus measures to prop up growth.

"There's no change to the view the global economy will pick up in the latter half of this year," Kuroda told reporters

ahead of the Group of 20 finance leaders' meeting to be held in the southern Japanese city of Fukuoka. "But uncertainties remain, particularly those regarding trade," he added.

Kuroda's view on global risks is important because the BOJ's forecast on the Japanese economy is based on the assumption global growth will rebound in the latter half of this year. Global investors' hopes for a pick-up in the second half of the year have been thrown into doubt by last month's sudden escalation in the US-China trade war and a slew of weak data from major economies that threaten to further weigh on business and consumer confidence.

Widening fallout from the US-China trade war will test the resolve of G20 finance leaders to show a united front at their two-day gathering ending today, as investors worry if they can avert a global recession with dwindling policy ammunition. The BOJ is among major central banks that could come under pressure to ramp up its already massive stimulus program, as the trade dispute raises fears



FUKUOKA: Japan's Finance Minister Taro Aso (center) stands with IMF managing director Christine Lagarde (left) and Bank of Japan governor Haruhiko Kuroda (right) before a family photo of the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors meeting in Fukuoka yesterday. —AFP

of a global recession. Kuroda praised US President Donald Trump's decision to put off imposing tariffs against Mexico after the two countries reached a deal to contain the migra-

tion of immigrants crossing the southern US border. "It's a very good outcome not just for the United States and Mexico, but for the global economy," Kuroda said. —Reuters

## 'Hurry up!': G20 urged to speed up digital tax

**FUKUOKA:** Top G20 finance officials agreed yesterday there was an urgent need to find a global system to tax internet giants like Google and Facebook but clashed on the best way to do it.

The G20 has tasked the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to fix an international tax system that has seen some internet heavyweights take advantage of low-tax jurisdictions in places like Ireland and pay next to nothing in other countries where they make huge profits. OECD chief Gurria presented G20 finance ministers and central bank chiefs meeting over the weekend in the western Japanese city of Fukuoka with a "roadmap", already signed off by 129 countries, in a bid to clinch a long-term solution by 2020.

"We have to hurry up," stressed French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire during a panel discussion of top policymakers before the G20 meeting officially opened. Le Maire called for a more ambitious timeframe to forge a global consensus, saying: "The right schedule is to find a compromise by the end of this year." British finance minister Philip Hammond said taxing internet giants fairly was a response to something that is "perceived by our population to be a gross injustice in our tax system."

Ministers are weighing a new tax policy based on the amount of business a company does in a country, not where it is headquartered.

But there are rival proposals in the mix, including a wider US-led approach that could affect European and Asian multinationals in other sectors than technology. US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin took a blunt view of policies in Britain and France, which have already introduced their own taxes on digital players, given a lack of global consensus. "I would say the US has significant concerns with the two current taxes that are being proposed by France and the UK but let me give them some good credit for proposing them in the sense (that) they

have created an urgency to deal with this issue," said Mnuchin.

"Although I don't like them, I do appreciate the impetus for these issues," added the top US finance official. "We are not looking to rewrite the entire tax code, but we do need to look at the balance between what may be the issue in digital and perhaps how this new environment affects non-digital companies as well," he said.

While there were gaps on the exact make-up of the reform, the policymakers agreed there needed to be a global approach to taxing the big internet firms. Gurria said there was a risk of "cacophony" and a "race to the bottom" without an agreed global framework and Mnuchin agreed that "having a fragmented tax approach is not good for any of us."

The other topic dominating the G20 finance ministers' meeting was the impact of spiralling global trade conflicts on an increasingly fragile economic outlook. But the ministers were given a boost just hours before the meeting started with news that Washington had scrapped threatened tariffs on Mexico after a deal on immigration. —AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
<b>EUROPEAN &amp; AMERICAN COUNTRIES</b>	
US Dollar Transfer	304.750
Euro	348.370
Sterling Pound	391.170
Canadian dollar	231.670
Turkish lira	53.920
Swiss Franc	312.300
US Dollar Buying	296.550
<b>ASIAN COUNTRIES</b>	
Japanese Yen	2.816
Indian Rupees	4.390
Pakistani Rupees	2.097
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.722
Nepali Rupees	2.743
Singapore Dollar	225.080
Hongkong Dollar	38.814
Bangladesh Taka	3.600
Philippine Peso	5.888
Thai Baht	9.744
Malaysian ringgit	77.916
<b>GCC COUNTRIES</b>	
Saudi Riyal	81.294
Qatari Riyal	83.730
Omani Riyal	791.813
Bahraini Dinar	809.490
UAE Dirham	83.000
<b>ARAB COUNTRIES</b>	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.750
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.171

Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.224
Tunisian Dinar	105.050
Jordanian Dinar	430.570
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.170
<b>Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd</b>	
<b>Rate for Transfer</b>	<b>Selling Rate</b>
US Dollar	304.290
Canadian Dollar	227.140
Sterling Pound	388.330
Euro	342.520
Swiss Frank	306.445
Bahrain Dinar	809.220
UAE Dirhams	83.250
Qatari Riyals	84.490
Saudi Riyals	82.040
Jordanian Dinar	430.470
Egyptian Pound	18.055
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.724
Indian Rupees	4.383
Pakistani Rupees	2.016
Bangladesh Taka	3.604
Philippines Peso	5.807
Cyprus pound	18.105
Japanese Yen	3.780
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.741
Malaysian Ringgit	73.530
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.545
Thai Bhat	10.545

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.381644	0.395544
Czech Korune	0.005484	0.014784
Danish Krone	0.042193	0.047193
Euro	0.338439	0.352139
Georgian Lari	0.132152	0.132152
Hungarian 0.001148	0.001338	
Norwegian Krone	0.031333	0.036533
Romanian Leu	0.065299	0.082149
Russian ruble	0.004701	0.004701
Slovakia	0.009111	0.019111
Slovenia	0.028439	0.033439
Swedish Krona	0.302422	0.313422
Swiss Franc		
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.205373	0.217373
New Zealand Dollar	0.197343	0.206843
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.224483	0.233483
US Dollars	0.300550	0.305850
US Dollars Mint	0.301050	0.305850
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003010	0.003811
Chinese Yuan	0.042615	0.046115

Hong Kong Dollar	0.037068	0.039818
Indian Rupee	0.003739	0.004511
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002738	0.002918
Korean Won	0.000247	0.000262
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069596	0.075596
Nepalese Rupee	0.002680	0.003020
Pakistani Rupee	0.001456	0.002226
Philippine Peso	0.005757	0.006057
Singapore Dollar	0.218411	0.228411
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001353	0.001933
Taiwan	0.010169	0.010349
Thai Baht	0.009387	0.009937
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013
<b>Arab</b>		
Bahraini Dinar	0.793520	0.810020
Egyptian Pound	0.018106	0.020706
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424785	0.433785
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020508	0.044508
Omani Riyal	0.784981	0.790661
Qatar Riyal	0.079413	0.084353
Saudi Riyal	0.080153	0.081453
Syrian Pound	0.001292	0.001512
Tunisian Dinar	0.098560	0.106560
Turkish Lira	0.045861	0.055706
UAE Dirhams	0.081520	0.083220
Yemeni Riyal	0.000990	0.001070



## Business

# Facebook to cut off Huawei to comply with US sanctions

## People with existing Huawei smartphones won't be affected

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Facebook said Friday it would cut off Huawei from its popular social networking apps to comply with US sanctions, further isolating the Chinese tech giant considered a national security threat by Washington. The social media giant said it took the step after President Donald Trump's order barring Huawei from US technology exports over concerns that it works with Chinese intelligence.

"We are reviewing the Commerce Department's final rule and the more recently issued temporary general license and taking steps to ensure compliance," a Facebook spokesperson told AFP.

The California company said people with existing Huawei smartphones with Facebook apps will continue to be able to use and download app updates provided by Facebook. The move by Facebook is the latest to isolate Huawei, which had become the world's second largest smartphone vendor despite security concerns voiced in Washington. Google last month said it would cut ties to Huawei, making it harder to

obtain major apps from the US giant.

The Google decision would leave Huawei without the Play Store, the marketplace for most Android apps, and other elements of the mobile operating system.

Facebook—which is banned in China but has more than two billion users worldwide—said its decision would affect its core social network as well as applications such as Instagram, Messenger and WhatsApp, which each have at least one billion users. The US sanctions were imposed May 15, but the administration allowed a 90-day compliance period that gives users of Huawei devices time to install updates and avoid a major disruption of the mobile economy.

### Isolating Huawei

Huawei has indicated it would create its own operating system to replace the Google Android platform, but would need to develop its own app marketplace as well if it wants to retain users outside China. To keep

up in the smartphone market, Huawei would also need to find a new supply of chips and related hardware, without US suppliers such as Intel, Qualcomm and Broadcom.

To make matters more difficult for Huawei, it will likely be cut off from ARM Holdings, the British designer of semiconductors whose technology is used in most mobile chips. Trump's move came amid US concerns that Huawei, a leader in 5G networks, would allow Chinese snooping on the high-speed wireless networks. His administration has also been trying to stop US allies from using Huawei equipment. Trump told reporters last month that Huawei was "very dangerous" from a security standpoint but then held out the possibility of dropping sanctions on the Chinese firm as part of a trade deal.

The fight over Huawei comes amid a broader trade war between the two largest economies and sanctions imposed by the US president, who accuses China of unfair practices and subsidies. —AFP



This combination of file pictures shows a Facebook logo and the logo of Chinese electronics firm Huawei. —AFP

## Video games battle for the cloud as industry girds for change

**SAN FRANCISCO:** The knock-down, drag-out battle in the video game world heads to the cloud as the premier industry event looks to adapt to a consumer shift to streaming services.

New blockbuster titles will be on center stage as usual at the annual Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) opening in Los Angeles on Tuesday, but the big question for the sector will be how consumers play. The E3 opens with gamers gradually moving away from traditional console play and Google seeking to capitalize on that trend with a new Netflix-style service allowing people to play cloud-powered games on any connected device.

Adapting to the new trends will be critical for players in the massive video game industry which last year generated more than \$135 billion globally, and \$43.4 billion in the United States. According to the Entertainment Software Association, which runs E3, more than 164 million adults in the United States play video games, and three out of four US households have at least one video game player.

### 'Access wherever, whenever'

Xbox maker Microsoft will hold a keenly anticipated press event today where it is likely to say more about its Project xCloud, a streaming video game service it recently began letting employees test outside the office. "Microsoft will play a major role at this E3 as it lays out its vision for a hybrid future of getting people access to content wherever, whenever," NPD video game analyst Mat Piscatella told AFP.

Major games expected to be shown off at E3 included new installments of Call of Duty, Apex Legends, FIFA, Pokemon, and Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon.

At least some of those titles will be available on Google Stadia later this year, which has inked a deal with French-based video game giant Ubisoft. "Streaming is going to be what we think about at E3," said Yves Guillemot, co-founder and chief executive of Ubisoft.

"It is really fantastic. It is a way to reach more players." Streaming games from the cloud could make console-quality play possible on all kinds of internet-linked devices, and let the massive power of data centers be used to ramp-up features, graphics, effects and the



number of simultaneous players, Guillemot noted.

### Playing together

Microsoft and Sony last month announced an alliance to improve their platforms for streaming entertainment from the internet cloud. Sony, whose PlayStation consoles are a key force in the industry, won't be holding an E3 event this year, but Microsoft may provide more insight into its collaboration with its Japan-based console rival.

Microsoft's Azure cloud computing platform will be used by the companies to support game and digital content streaming services, according to the two firms.

Google on Thursday released new details about Stadia, which will be available in 14 countries starting in November.

For the launch, Google will sell its "founders edition bundle" hardware pack for \$129, with a monthly subscription price of \$9.99. In Europe, the price will be 129 euros and 9.99 euros per month.

The Stadia tech platform aims to connect people for interactive play on PCs, tablets, smartphones and other devices. The new gaming platform disrupts the gaming

industry by allowing users to avoid consoles and game software on disc or download.

Subscribers will have access to free games and will be able to purchase some blockbuster titles as well. The first free title will be the shooter game Destiny 2 from developer Bungie.

Stadia will launch in the United States, Britain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden.

### Time of transition

NPD analyst Piscatella expected a few surprises at Xbox and Ubisoft press events being held before E3 opens its show floor as the industry gears up for the cloud and new-generation consoles. "We'll get peeks at products and concepts that won't really potentially impact the market meaningfully until perhaps mid-2020 or later," Piscatella said. Wedbush Securities analyst Michael Pachter told AFP the new games will remain the stars of the E3 show this year. "This is a software and streaming show, not much on the hardware front," he said. —AFP

## Weak US jobs report raises red flag on economy

**WASHINGTON:** US job growth slowed sharply in May and wages rose less than expected, raising fears that a loss of momentum in economic activity could be spreading to the labor market, which could put pressure on the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates this year.

The broad cool-off in hiring reported by the Labor Department on Friday was before a recent escalation in trade tensions between the United States and two of its major trading partners, China and Mexico. Analysts have warned the trade fights could undermine the economy, which will celebrate 10 years of expansion next month, the longest on record. Adding a sting to the closely watched employment report, far fewer jobs were created in March and April than previously reported, indicating that hiring had shifted into a lower gear. The labor market thus far has been largely resilient to the trade war with China. "Today's report makes a cut more likely, and supports our view that the trade tensions will ultimately slow growth enough for the Fed to respond in September and December with cuts," said Joseph Song, an economist at Bank of America Merrill Lynch in New York.

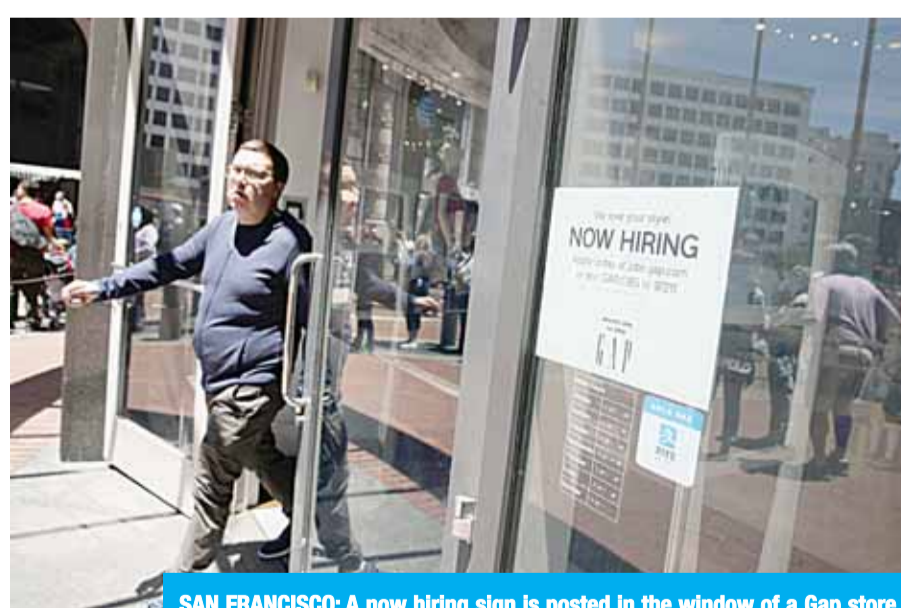
Nonfarm payrolls increased by 75,000 jobs last month, the government said. It was the second time this year that job gains dropped below 100,000. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast payrolls rising by 185,000 jobs last month. Job growth in

March and April was revised down by 75,000. President Donald Trump in early May slapped additional tariffs of up to 25% on \$200 billion of Chinese goods, which prompted retaliation by Beijing. Last week, Trump said he would impose a tariff on all goods from Mexico to force authorities in that country to stop immigrants from Central America from crossing the border into the United States.

Talks to prevent the duties from kicking in at 5 percent on June 10 continue. Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said on Tuesday the US central bank was closely monitoring the implications of the trade tensions on the economy and would "act as appropriate to sustain the expansion."

Trump, who has routinely tweeted about the strong labor market, made no comment about May's weak hiring, but defended duties on Chinese goods. White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett told Fox Business Network that bad weather in the Midwest was to blame and described the meager job gains as "a little bit of a blip down." Economists, however, said there was nothing to suggest the weather was the culprit. "The weakness in job growth was broadly experienced across industry groups and not obviously driven by distortions such as weather or strikes," said Michael Feroli, an economist at JPMorgan in New York.

US House of Representative Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, said the employment report was "a disturbing sign that the administration's disastrous special interest agenda is hollowing out our economy." Following the report financial markets priced in a rate cut as early as July and two more later this year. Economists, however, believe the Fed will probably wait for more signs of



SAN FRANCISCO: A now hiring sign is posted in the window of a Gap store on Friday. —AFP

labor market weakness and clarity on the trade issues before easing monetary policy. Fed officials are due to meet on June 18-19.

"Fed officials are likely to remain cautious at the June meeting and keep all their options open," said Michael Hanson, head of global macro strategy at TD Securities in New York. The dollar fell to a 2-1/2-month low against a basket of currencies, while US Treasury prices rose. Stocks on Wall Street were trading higher.

### Worker shortages

Last month's slowdown in job gains, however, probably understates the labor market's health as layoffs remain low. Employment gains over the last three months have averaged 151,000, above the

roughly 100,000 needed per month to keep up with growth in the working-age population. In the four months since the first hiccup in hiring appeared in February, however, monthly payrolls gains have averaged just 127,000, the slowest pace over a comparable stretch in nearly seven years.

Some of the weakness in hiring could be because of worker shortages, especially in the construction, transportation and manufacturing sectors. But the worker shortage argument is somewhat undercut by moderate wage growth. Average hourly earnings grew just 3.1 percent year-over-year, the slowest annual increase since September. Just three months earlier, wages had been rising at their fastest rate in a decade but gains have moderated since. —Reuters

## Banning Huawei would cost EU telecoms up to 55bn euros

**PARIS:** Banning Huawei and fellow Chinese equipment maker ZTE from Europe's roll-out of 5G telecom networks would cost EU mobile operators up to 55 billion euros (\$62 billion), according to an industry body's internal assessment seen by AFP Friday.

The operators would also face delays of up to 18 months in getting next-generation 5G out to their customers, according to the impact assessment drawn up by the GSM Association, which represents mobile network operators around the world.

The evaluation feeds into a debate triggered by US demands that companies in Europe and other allied nations shun Huawei as a 5G equipment supplier because of Washington's fears it could compromise intelligence services. The GSMA assessment notes that Huawei and ZTE account for around 40 percent of the EU market supplying mobile equipment, and Huawei "is currently a pioneer in 5G technology".

European rivals Ericsson of Sweden and Nokia of Finland, as well as South Korea's Samsung, do not have the capacity to handle all of the shift from 3G and 4G networks to 5G in Europe while honouring contracts already signed in North America and Asia, it said.

That implies significant costs and delays should operators not be able to use Huawei and ZTE. GSMA said, though it noted the situation from one EU country to the next differed markedly.

"A ban on Chinese vendors would severely lessen competition in the mobile equipment market, increasing prices and driving additional 5G rollout costs," the assessment said. It would also "result in slower rollout of 5G networks in Europe and reduced take-up, which would further increase the productivity gap between the EU and the US," the document said.

The US government in May prohibited American companies from selling Huawei US-made components it needs for its equipment. A 90-day reprieve was later granted to allow for the ban to be phased in. That measure could threaten the survival of Huawei, one of China's corporate champions, according to experts who underline its reliance on American electronic parts. —AFP

## Trump expected to name Philipson as top economic adviser: Politico

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump is expected to name Tomas Philipson, a former University of Chicago professor and health economics expert, as the next chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers to replace outgoing Kevin Hassett, Politico reported on Friday.

Philipson already serves as a member of the three-person council and would replace Hassett as the chairman of the panel. His nomination would have to be confirmed by the US Senate.

Trump said on Sunday that Hassett would be leaving the White House "shortly." Hassett later told CNBC that his departure from the post had been in the works for some time and was not linked to Trump's recent threat to impose tariffs on Mexico. If approved for the position, Philipson would take over at a critical time for the economy. Trump is threatening to impose tariffs on Mexico unless it takes action to curb migrant flows to the southern US border, and he is engaged in a trade dispute with China that threatens US economic growth.

New US jobs figures on Friday showed job growth slowed sharply in May and wages rose less than expected, raising concerns that the loss of momentum in economic activity could be spreading to the labor markets. That could put pressure on the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates this year. —Reuters



## Business

# KFH pioneer of Islamic banking, driving that movement forward: Al-Nahedh

## Bank achieves remarkable progress in digital transformation strategy

**KUWAIT:** Group CEO of Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Mazin Saad Al-Nahedh said that KFH operates in different jurisdictions, including Kuwait, Turkey, Germany, Malaysia, Bahrain, and KSA. Throughout those locations, the growth trajectory for each economy is different.

Al-Nahedh added during an interview with The Business Year Magazine (TBY), that in Kuwait KFH focuses specifically on infrastructure projects, primarily in the oil and gas sector in addition to financing trade-related business. He said: "We provide most of the corporates with the necessary financing requirements when they import goods. In addition, we focus on the large corporate sector that has not been banked by KFH in the past. We take market share from other banking participants, which helps the general growth of KFH on the corporate and SME sides."

Al-Nahedh continued: "On the retail side, KFH enjoys likely the largest customer base in terms of numbers: we are the second-largest bank in Kuwait and the largest Islamic Bank. Our strength lies in our retail portfolio and the diversity of our deposit base. This is primarily driven by KFH being the only Islamic bank upon its establishment in 1977 up to 2003." He said that KFH has been in the

*In an interview with The Business Year Magazine, KFH Group CEO Mazin Al-Nahedh says the bank is looking to finance the solar farm project built by KPC*



Mazin Al-Nahedh

market for much longer than the rest and has extensive experience and know-how in Islamic banking, as it has been one of the pioneers driving that movement forward. KFH is the only Islamic bank that offers -as part of its sustainable development goals and financial inclusion pillar- female-only branches to cater the needs of an important part of the population.

With regards to KFH digital transformation strategy, Al-Nahedh said: "The digitalization strategy started about four years ago. Each of our eight KFH business lines had its own

system managing the same customer base; the same customer would reside in multiple databases without any links. We therefore changed our system into a relationship-based approach rather than a product-based one and segmented our customers based on their business activity.

The objective is to better manage our customers' wealth and facilitate their transactions. This also ensures the quality of service we provide. On another level, we implemented robotics to reduce the process time for time-consuming applications such as onboarding. With our new systems, we reduced processing time by a third. That frees up time for our employees, who can be more productive and serve customers better. We also made significant improvements to our mobile banking app that cover almost 90% of the services a branch can provide. We just launched a concept called KFH Go, our new vision for

what future branches should look like on a self-service basis. Those branches' footprints are about one-fifth of the existing branches' footprints, which drastically diminishes rental costs and overheads. This is a full-fledged electronic branch that does roughly 90 percent of what one could do in a branch. Currently, KFH has two KFH Go branches. We will have 10 electronic branches that will be installed in 2019 and 2020 so that we can have 24/7 banking available to all our customers in key locations."

He added: "We are looking to finance the solar farm project built by KPC. Finally, there are plans for new cities in the north and south that will be developed through the PPP structure. We see those projects coming to completion rather than just being tendered: once complete, the infrastructure would be ready, the city will start flourishing, and activities will begin. In the oil sector, there are hundreds of billions of dollars of projects over the next five years that involve LNG and the improvement of upstream and downstream processes through the fourth refinery, which is one of the key projects that will be introduced. Another main factor will be the urgency of completing the national plan, and as long as oil prices go above USD60, there is less urgency."

## The ET recognizes Malabar Gold & Diamonds as one of the best brands 2019

**KUWAIT:** Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the largest jewelry retailers globally with a strong retail network of 250 outlets spread across the globe has been recognized as the Best Brand by The Economic Times. ET Edge Senior Director Rishi Kapoor felicitated MP Ahmed, Chairman of Malabar Group in the presence of Asher. O, Managing Director - India Operations of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

The Economic Times had conducted a detailed sur-



vey across 15 industries in 12 tier-1 & tier-2 cities amongst the demographics from the age of 21-50 years and had selected best 25 brands across various categories including BFSI, Education, Healthcare, FMCG, Technology, Lifestyle, Luxury and much more. On basis of the extensive survey, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has been recognized as one of 'The Economic Times Best Brands 2019'.

Over the 25 years of operation, the company has developed a strong retail presence in India, Middle East, Far East & USA with a network of 250 outlets across ten countries. With an annual turnover of \$4.51 billion, the company today ranks among the top jewelry retailers globally. Malabar Gold & Diamonds has always kept customer-first as the principal attitude in all its steps taken and takes efforts at satisfying the discerning needs of its multinational and multicultural customers by incorporating the diverse tastes in the splendid jewelry designs that they showcase.



## Uber chief tightens grip with top execs' departures

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Uber chief Dara Khosrowshahi put out word Friday that he is tightening his grip on the ride-share firm in the wake of a bumpy stock market debut. The company's chief operating officer and head of marketing will leave in a leadership shake-up that will result in Uber's shared rides and food delivery platforms reporting directly to Khosrowshahi, according to a copy of an internal email provided to AFP. Khosrowshahi credited the maturing of operations at the San Francisco-based company and the completion of its initial public offering last month with enabling him to make the management moves.

"I now have the ability to be even more involved in the day-to-day operations of our biggest businesses, the core platform of Rides and Eats, and have decided they should report directly to me," Khosrowshahi said in his message to employees. "This will allow me to be more hands on and help our leaders problem-solve in real time, while also ensuring that we make our platform vision a reality."

He cited a need for a clear and consistent "narrative" at Uber when it comes to how the company is seen by consumers, partners, policymakers and the press as a factor in his decision to consolidate the marketing, communications and policy teams. "There's never really a right time to announce departures or changes like this, but with the IPO behind us, I felt this was a good moment to simplify our (organization) and set us up for the future," Khosrowshahi said. — AFP

## Mimecast research finds sharp rise in attacks from cybercriminals

**KUWAIT:** Mimecast, a leading email and data security company, yesterday unveiled its third-annual State of Email Security report. The report includes insights from 1,025 global IT decision makers. As cybercriminals continue to use email as a primary vehicle to steal data and deliver advanced threats, the results of this research provide valuable insights and trends around what's affecting organizations the most and how they can improve their overall security posture.

Social engineering attacks are a rising concern for organizations because they're often one of the most difficult to control. Most notably, the report found that impersonation attacks increased almost 70 percent (67 percent) in comparison to the results in last year's report - with 73 percent of those organizations impacted by impersonation attacks having experienced a direct loss, specifically loss of customers (28 percent), financial loss (29 percent) and data loss (40 percent). Phishing attacks were the most prominent type of cyberattack, with 94 percent of respondents having experienced phishing and spear phishing attacks in the previous 12 months, and 55 percent cited seeing an increase in phishing attacks over the same time period.

Not only are email-based attacks on the rise, but they're affecting how confident people are in their organization's cybersecurity defenses - and ultimately the ability to do their jobs. According to the report, 61 percent believe it is likely or inevitable their organization will suffer a negative business impact from an email-borne attack this year. The report also found that business-disrupting ransomware attacks are up 26 percent in comparison to last year. Forty-nine percent of respondents noted having downtime for two to three days, whereas 31 percent expe-

## Chinese vendors, Mexican clients pity Trump tariffs at trade expo

**MEXICO CITY:** Huang Chao came to Mexico looking for business, not friends, but the Chinese sales manager says he found unexpected common ground with his prospective clients on one thing: Donald Trump "is crazy."

Chao, 31, was in Mexico City this week representing his textile company at a trade fair called Expo China HomeLife, whose goal is to connect Chinese suppliers with merchants in different countries around the world.

Mexico was set to be just another stop for the enormous expo-until the US president threatened last week to impose five-percent tariffs on all Mexican imports. The tariffs are due to start tomorrow and rise in monthly increments to 25 percent by October, unless Mexico slows the US-bound flow of undocumented migrants to Trump's satisfaction.

That effectively made Mexico the second major front after China in Trump's spiraling trade wars. It also gave vendors and customers in Mexico City a new topic to discuss in stilted English as they brokered deals for mass quantities of home articles, plastic accessories, cheap decorations, cloth and other myriad products the Asian powerhouse exports to the world.

Trump's tariffs "aren't just hurting China, they're hurting the whole world," Huang said. "He is hurting both countries' feelings," said businesswoman Louisa Chin, 30, referring to Mexico and China. "He knows how to rile up his voters," said Alejandro Becerril, a Mexican builder, after an animated conversation with a group of Chinese business executives. "He's trying to get Mexico to toughen up its migration policies-and it's working."

### My enemy's enemy...

The United States is already deep into a trade and technological battle with China. Last month Washington raised tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese goods to 25 percent. Beijing hit back with retaliatory tariffs of five to 25 percent on \$60 billion in US goods.

Trump is threatening to expand the tariffs to essentially all Chinese imports, and has also moved to blacklist a Chinese tech giant, Huawei, over



US President Donald Trump's trade wars with China and Mexico gave vendors and customers at the Expo China HomeLife trade show in Mexico City a new topic to discuss. — AFP

national security concerns. The spat had been beneficial for Mexico, which has replaced China as the top US trading partner so far this year.

But now Mexico is getting a taste of what Beijing calls Trump's "economic terrorism"-pushing the US neighbor closer to China. "In the current global context, there are many things China and Mexico can do together," Lo Tu, deputy mayor of the Chinese city of Shantou, said in Mexico City. "Mexico and China are friends and partners. Mexico can be stronger with China, and China can be stronger with Mexico," Mexico's Undersecretary for Foreign Trade Luz Maria de la Mora said during a visit to China this week.

This is not the first time Mexico-long used to living in the shadow of its giant northern neighbor-has eyed closer ties with China when its trade relationship with the US frays. There was a similar effect when Trump threatened to rescind the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the US, Mexico and Canada.

Mexico sends nearly 80 percent of its exports to the US, and the countries do more than \$600 billion a year in bilateral trade, according to Washington. The world's second-largest economy is an obvious place for Mexico to turn to try to diversify its trade portfolio.

In 2017, Mexico and China did \$80.9 billion in two-way trade, according to Mexico's central bank. But the bulk of it was Chinese exports to Mexico: \$74.1 billion. Mexican officials will have to do more to cultivate ties with Beijing if they truly want to deepen the relationship, said China expert Enrique Dussel of Mexico's largest university, UNAM.

"Mexican officials always seem to be saying, 'China will help us out of the ditch,'" said Dussel. "But we have to be more serious about the relationship," he added. — AFP



rienced downtime for four to five days. "Email security systems are the frontline defense for most of attacks. Yet, just having and providing data on these attacks is not what creates value for most respondents," said Josh Douglas, vice president of threat intelligence at Mimecast. "Survey results indicate that vendors need to be able to provide actionable intelligence out of the mass of data they collect, and not just focus on indicators of compromise which

would only address past problems. The Mimecast Threat Analysis Center was also able to identify the top 5 industries being impacted by impersonation attacks which closely aligned with the findings in the report. Financial, Manufacturing, Professional Services, Science/Technology as well as Transportation Industries are top targets. Understanding these key pain points helps organizations build a more comprehensive cyber resilience plan."

## Stocks rally, dollar fall; data fans rate cut talk

**NEW YORK:** Major world stock indexes jumped and US Treasury yields tumbled on Friday after a slowdown in US job growth fueled hopes of a US interest rate cut, while Washington's move to delay tariffs on Chinese goods added to equity market optimism. The US dollar index also dropped and gold prices rallied to their highest levels since April 2018 following the US Labor Department's monthly report, which also showed wages rose less than expected in May. Yields on 10-year Treasury notes hit their lowest since September 2017.

The jobs data suggested the loss of momentum in economic activity was spreading to the labor market, which could put pressure on the Federal Reserve to cut rates this year. On Wall Street, the benchmark S&P 500 index was more than 1 percent higher in afternoon trading and on track for its biggest weekly percentage gain since November 2018. "This is the type of read the doves will really take to, as it supports the argument for cutting rates beyond politics or trade issues, which were never part of the Fed's mandate to begin with," said Mike Loewengart, vice-president of investment strategy at E\*Trade Financial in New York.

Hopes that the Fed would turn more accommodative to blunt the impact of escalating trade tensions have helped support stocks in recent days. The US government on Friday said it was granting Chinese exporters two more weeks to get their products into the United States before increasing tariffs on those items. Also, US President Donald Trump said there was a "good chance" the United States would make a trade deal with Mexico.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 290.73 points, or 1.13 percent, to 26,011.39. The S&P 500 gained 34.65 points, or 1.22 percent, to 2,878.14 and the Nasdaq Composite added 135.72 points, or 1.78 percent, to 7,751.27. The pan-European STOXX 600 index rose 0.93 percent and MSCI's gauge of stocks across the globe gained 1.10 percent.

In US Treasuries, benchmark 10-year notes last rose 12/32 in price to yield 2.0827 percent. The yield touched 2.053 percent shortly after the May payrolls report, which was its lowest since September 2017. With trade tensions between the United States and its trading partners still brewing, investors have been assessing how global central banks will respond to signs of a downturn.

Traders now are betting on multiple rate cuts by the Fed over the next 12 months. But a cut is not guaranteed. And the potential for central banks to disappoint markets was highlighted on Thursday, when the European Central Bank declined to hint it would cut rates soon.

The dollar index fell 0.51 percent, with the euro up 0.56 percent to \$1.1337. In the oil market, crude prices gained amid signs that OPEC and other producers could extend their output reduction deal.

Gold prices jumped to their highest levels since April 2018 as the jobs report sent the dollar lower. Spot gold was 0.6 percent higher to \$1,343.07 per ounce, having earlier hit its intra-day high of \$1,348.08. US crude rose 1.81 percent to \$53.54 per barrel. — Reuters



What's On



# NBK concludes its annual Ramadan Social programs

National Bank of Kuwait concluded its Ramadan social activities program "Do Good Deeds in Ramadan" which it carried out for over 25 consecutive years, including the distribution of Iftar meals, visiting various institutions and social groups in addition to participating in numerous charitable and social events throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

The program included the distribution of over 50,000 Iftar meals and fast breaking meals to fasting people at NBK Iftar Tent, Naif Palace, hospitals, public facilities areas and mosques. The program achieved a milestone this year, which was translated in its developmental objectives, reaching beyond achieving its groundbreaking initiatives to investing in social services & efforts to ensure extending a helping hand to needy families.

"NBK is proud to be a leading pioneer in social development through its CSR programs," NBK's PR Manager Abdul Mohsen Al-Rasheed said. "This program aims to maintaining deeper relationships with the communities we operate in, through the introduction of dozens of initiatives and projects that aim to nurture individuals and families and provide the necessary support to their goals of decent living, education and health care, the most important pillars to social development and progress," Al-Rasheed added.

Al-Rasheed highlighted that besides NBK Iftar tent at Ras Al-Salmiya, NBK continued to sponsor the Iftar program at Naif Palace for the fourth consecutive year. He pointed out that this year's program was very special qualitative leap in charitable work and investment in social initiatives, taking unprecedented steps at the social level.

Al-Rasheed pointed out that NBK has also maintained various visits throughout the holy month to densely populated areas such as Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Al-Salibiya and Al-Jahra. Moreover, NBK cooperated with the Central Blood Bank, the bank has provided refrigerators in the blood bank Al-Jabriya branch to stock the fridges with daily fast breaking meals.

#### Ramadan Iftar tent

At NBK Iftar tent, located at Ras Al-Salmiya on the Gulf Road, a group of NBK dedicated volunteers supervised the reception of the fasting people and distributed about 10,000 daily meals, in addition to providing other service as needed.

#### Site visits and tours

As for the site visits and tours, NBK extended its



reach by distributing more than 3,000 Iftar meals at Shuwaikh, Khaitan, Mahboula, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and mosques, as well as arranging visits to several public institutions and hospitals to share Iftar meals and grayish events throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

The public relations team visited a number of public institutions and participated in Iftar banquets during the holy month, including Khairan Coast Guard Center in appreciation to their dedication and continued efforts to serve the country around the clock. The Department also visited the university student residence as part of its social responsibility commitments.

#### Naif Palace

For the fourth consecutive year, NBK participated in providing Iftar meals to fasting people at Naif Palace, where it distributed about 5,000 meals to fasting guests attending that ancient heritage moment of firing the Iftar cannon. This initiative is part of NBK sponsorship of the "Iftar Cannon" program aired on Kuwait TV which included Girgian celebration event to share the occasion with the children.

#### Blood bank fridges

NBK, in cooperation with the Central Blood Bank, distributed fridges at the blood bank's Al-Jabriya location, including 32,000 fast breaking meals. NBK volunteers ensured that the fridges were fully packed throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

#### Sponsorship of 30 families in need

NBK supported 30 children from needy families through Eid Al-Fitr campaign in cooperation with LOY-AC Foundation by providing them with Eid clothes and



accessories to share with them the celebration of Eid Al-Fitr holiday.

#### Awareness campaign with Omnia

NBK, in cooperation with Omnia Projects Management held an awareness campaign to raise awareness about the importance of getting involved in recycling plastic and cardboard waste materials at NBK Iftar tent.

#### Iftar Distribution Centre in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh

For the third consecutive year, NBK continued to distribute meals at the Iftar banquets held at the Kuwait Fire Department at Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh which was rehabilitated to accommodate serving Iftar banquets to the fasting people in the area.

#### Traffic Awareness Campaign

NBK distributed fast breaking meals to drivers at traffic lights in strategic locations. This initiative is aimed at reducing traffic accidents during the holy month of Ramadan, especially around Iftar time as drivers attempt to reach their destinations before Iftar time, resulting in speeding and traffic violations.

#### Girgian Celebration

NBK organized a visit to NBK Children Hospital, Souk Al-Mubarakiya and Naif Palace to distribute Girgian gifts and presents to the children.

#### NBK Cooperation with Kuwait Airways

NBK organized a special event in cooperation with Kuwait Airways at NBK Iftar Tent located at Ras Al-Salmiya, which included the distribution of free airline

tickets. This collaborative effort is part of "Do Good Deeds in Ramadan" program and in line with the strategic partnership between NBK and Kuwait Airways. A draw was held for guests to win 10 airline tickets to lucky guests at the Iftar tent. This initiative reflects the social and charitable commitment of both organizations, especially in the holy month of Ramadan, where fasting people will be given the opportunity to travel to see their loved ones. NBK also presented gifts to travelers at its location at Terminal 4 (T4) in Kuwait International Airport.

#### Volunteers

As they do every year, dozens of NBK employees participated in "Do good Deeds in Ramadan" program by receiving fasting guests at NBK Iftar tent, and conducting visits to various areas, institutions, public facilities, mosques and hospitals, throughout Ramadan and during the last ten days of the holy month. This comes in light of the NBK's keenness to promote volunteerism at work among its employees by strengthening their association and participation with the various humanitarian and social activities organized by the bank.

#### Social Media

Social media provided a comprehensive coverage of "Do Good Deeds in Ramadan" program, in addition to hosting different contests during the holy month. NBK carried out its humanitarian initiatives and support for social welfare programs, which stem from the deep belief in performing its vital role of corporate social responsibility and its effective impact on serving the society and its nationals, and reflects the pioneering role played by NBK in this field for decades.

## Indian Embassy observes World Environment Day

By Sajeev K Peter

The Indian Embassy, in coordination with Arms4U, a well-known Indian association, observed World Environment Day on Friday at the embassy auditorium, underlining the importance of protecting the environment and promoting public interest in plant conservation.

Dr Majda Suleiman, an expert on environmental studies from Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) as chief guest of the event, delivered a talk with the support of a PowerPoint presentation on desert ecosystem focusing on restoration and remediation measures to tackle environmental degradation.

In her presentation, she gave an overview of KISR's initiative in protecting the environment and outlined the various programs it has launched to preserve the ecosystem. The programs consist of desert agriculture, aquaculture, coastal management, biotechnology, crisis decision support, environmental pollution control and climate program among others. KISR is implementing these programs in collaboration with JPL-NASA and the Global Bridge Initiative. It also has commitments with international organizations such as UNEP, WHO, UNDP, UNESCO etc.

While talking about Kuwait's cooperation with India in the area of environment, she said, Kuwait has signed memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with India's Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Ministry of Earth Science (MOES) and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). KISR also has a working program for scientific and technical



cooperation with CSIR as well as Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), she pointed out.

Talking specifically about Kuwait she said, the country receives erratic rainfall of 20mm to 250mm annually. Its temperature ranges from 10 degree Celsius to 50 degree Celsius. The country has 246 hectares of agricultural land while it has 375 plant species, 24 million sheep and goats and one million camels. Regarding Kuwait's flora, she said perennial vegetation cover is usually less than 10 percent. She

said, land degradation is largely caused by overgrazing, gravel quarrying, military activities, camping and recreational activities. Pre-war and post-war disturbances have caused massive damage to Kuwait's environment and its native vegetation. She said it is vitally important to build and empower ecological restoration capacity for industry and community across Kuwait.

Indian Ambassador Jeeva Sagar presented a sapling to Dr Suleiman on the occasion. Plant saplings compatible with Kuwait's climatic conditions were presented to various institutions in order to contribute towards strengthening the ecosystem in the country. The embassy has marked the World Environment Day also as part of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary celebrations.

World Environment Day -June 5 was established in 1974 by the United Nations with a view to providing an opportunity to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals.

The year 2019 theme is 'Air Pollution,' urging governments, industries, communities and individuals to come together to explore renewable energy and green technologies and improve air quality in cities and regions across the world.

## Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah to host first regional conference for YPO

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah will host the first regional conference in Kuwait For Young Presidents Organization (YPO). There are 250 top CEOs from YPO MENA and international companies expected to attend this event.



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah received Qutub Dadabai (MENA) Regional Chair for Young Presidents Organization (YPO) yesterday at the White Palace. On the occasion of this visit, HE Sheikh Mubarak who is a YPO member, said "I was pleased today to meet and host the YPO Chair for the MENA region, who had accepted our invitation to come to Kuwait, an opportunity to explore means of increasing cooperation with Kuwait business community and share ideas and experiences". On his part, Qutub Dadabai, quoted "It was a pleasure to meet HE Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, and I thank him for his gracious hospitality, it was an occasion for YPO to engage and learn about the Kuwait young entrepreneurs and business leaders to build trusting networks".

YPO is the premier leadership organization of chief executives in the world, providing global platform for them to engage, learn and grow. YPO members harness the knowledge, influence and trust of the world's most influential and innovative business leaders to inspire business, personal, family and community impact. YPO member-run companies, diversified among industries and types of businesses, employ more than 22 million people globally and generate USD9 trillion in annual revenues. YPO MENA is delighted to work with Sheikh Mubarak for sponsoring the first regional YPO event to be held in Kuwait, an opportunity to bring together YPO worldwide members.

## KCST ready to receive scholarship registration applications

Kuwait College of Science and Technology (KCST) has announced the start of its registration period for Fall 2019. KCST is now accepting scholarship applications for those wishing to obtain an internal scholarship provided by the Private University Council (PUC) starting today, June 9 till Thursday June 20. PUC regulations state that students must uphold the percentage of 80% and above in order to enroll in the Bachelor in

Computer Engineering and Bachelor in Electronic & Communications Engineering. Regarding the Bachelor in Computer Science major, requires a 75% and above all in science major.

KCST advises those who wish to obtain an internal scholarship to visit the university campus, and submit the required applications and documents for registration, taken into consideration of the PUC deadline. Documents require: copy of civil

ID, copy of passport, 3 personal pictures, and original high school transcript. KCST is specialized in engineering and technology. Currently the university is offering: Bachelor in Computer Engineering (CE), Bachelor in Electronic & Communications (ECE), and Bachelor in Computer Science (CS). KCST requires upcoming students to take a standardized entrance exam, testing English, Math, and Physics.



# WHO alarmed at STD spread in the era of mobile dating apps

GENEVA: The World Health Organization expressed alarm Thursday at the lack of progress on curbing sexually transmitted diseases, while one of its experts warned of complacency as dating apps are spurring sexual activity. The UN health agency said in a fresh report that every day globally there were more than one million new cases of treatable sexually transmitted diseases (STD) or infections (STI).

WHO found that there were more than 376 million new cases of chlamydia, gonorrhoea, trichomoniasis and syphilis registered around the world in 2016 — the latest year for which data is available. That is basically the same number as WHO reported in its previous study, based on data from 2012. A WHO expert on sexually transmitted infections, Teodora Wi, separately told journalists there were concerns that condom use may be declining as people have lost their fear of contracting HIV in step with the emergence of available and effective antiviral treatments.

People are "more complacent about protection," she said, adding that this was dangerous at a time when "sex is becoming more accessible (through things like) dating

apps". Peter Salama, WHO's executive director of Universal Health Coverage, said in a statement that "we're seeing a concerning lack of progress in stopping the spread of sexually transmitted infections worldwide". He called it "a wake-up call" for authorities to ensure that everybody had access to services to prevent and treat STIs.

WHO's new report shows that in 2016, some 127 million people between the ages of 15 and 49 were infected with chlamydia globally, while 87 million contracted gonorrhoea, and 6.3 million contracted syphilis. In addition, some 156 million were infected with trichomoniasis — a parasitic disease commonly known as "trich".

### 'Hidden epidemic'

"On average, approximately one in 25 people globally have at least one of these STIs," the UN health agency said. But since they seldom display symptoms early on, people often do not know they have been infected and need treatment, allowing the diseases to continue to spread. "We consider this a hidden epidemic, a silent epidemic, a dangerous epidemic," Melanie Taylor, another WHO expert on

sexually transmitted infections and author of the report, told a journalists in a conference call.

If left untreated, STIs can lead to serious and chronic conditions, including neurological and cardiovascular disease, infertility, stillbirths and increased risk of contracting HIV. Syphilis alone caused some 200,000 stillbirths and newborn deaths in 2016, making one of the leading cause of baby loss globally, second only to malaria, Taylor said. STIs spread mainly through unprotected sexual contact, but some like chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis can also be transmitted during pregnancy and childbirth.

Given the hidden nature of the epidemic, WHO said it was important for people who are sexually active to get screened for STIs, and especially recommended that pregnant women be systematically screened for syphilis, as well as HIV. Correct condom use was one of the most effective methods for protecting against STI transmission. WHO also stressed the importance of comprehensive sexual education and easy access to STI screening as well as treatment. — AFP

## Air pollution kills 100k Indian kids every year

NEW DELHI: The noxious air hanging over India's towns and cities kills more than 100,000 children under five every year, a damning study published Wednesday for World Environment Day found. India has repeatedly failed to address environmental concerns. Last year a UN report found 14 of the world's 15 most polluted cities were Indian.

And despite calls to action against pollution around the globe, Indian politicians mostly sidestepped the issue in the last election. The State of India's Environment (SoE) Report found air pollution is responsible for 12.5 percent of all deaths in the country — painting a bleak picture of the environmental record of recent Indian governments. Carried out by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), the report also found 86 percent of Indian water bodies were "critically polluted". It added the country's progress in renewable energy was "dismal". As of last month India had

280,000 electric vehicles, a fraction of the target of 15-16 million by 2020. India's Greenhouse gas emissions rose more than 20 percent between 2010 and 2014, while its natural gas and hydroelectric plants were in a "shambles", it continued. The report found gas-based power plants are running at 24 percent of their capacity, and hydropower projects are running at just 19 percent.

"The country's progress in renewable energy in 2018-19 has also been dismal," the CSE said. "In wind, the country met only 6.3 per cent of the target this year. In solar, it met 5.86 per cent." India also recorded a 56 percent rise in the number of industries creating hazardous waste between 2009 and 2016-17, while the number of grossly polluting industries soared 136 percent between 2011 and 2018.

India is projected to add 416 million town and city dwellers to the world's urban population by 2050. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently re-elected in a campaign in which climate change was barely mentioned, instead tweeted appealing to people to "live in harmony with nature" on World Environment Day. "We have been brought up in a tradition, where nature is equal to God. — AFP

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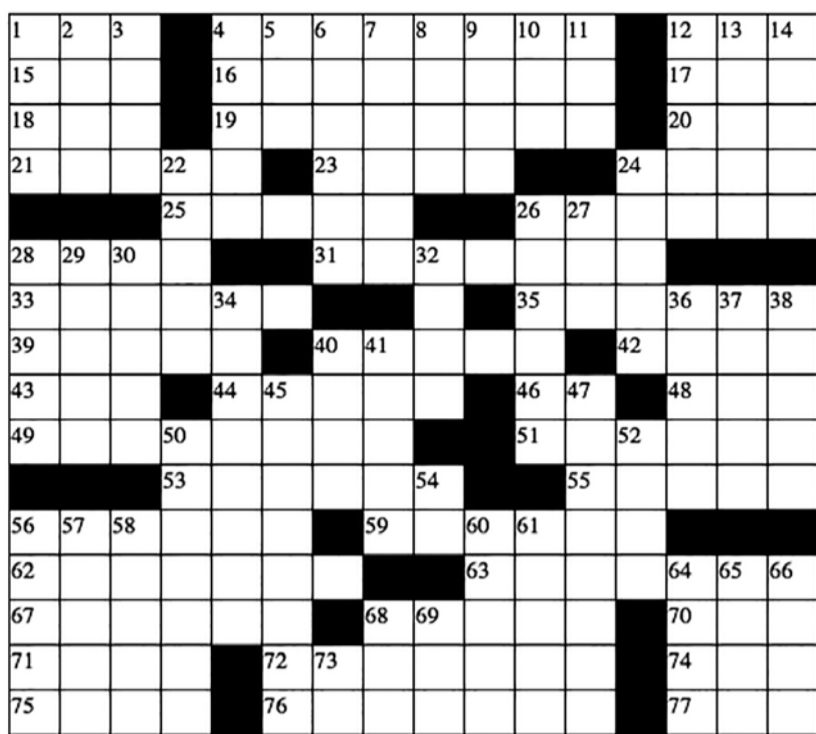
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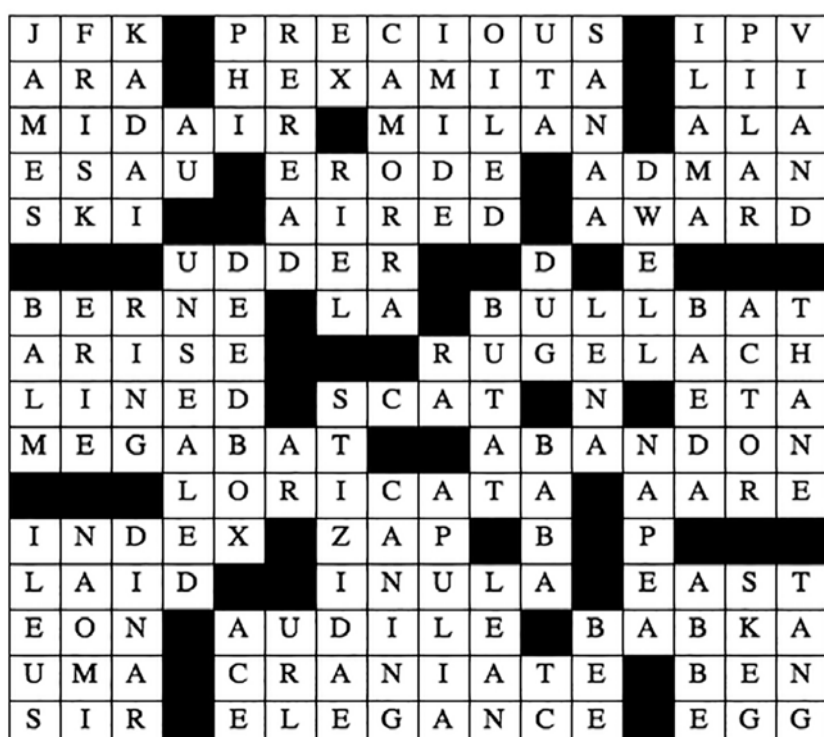
ACROSS

1. A dark-skinned member of a race of people living in Australia when Europeans arrived.
2. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
3. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
4. Occurring at or dependent on a particular season.
4. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
12. United States musician (born in Japan) who married John Lennon and collaborated with him on recordings (born in 1933).
5. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
15. An accidental happening.
6. Used improperly or excessively especially drugs.
16. Branch out like trees.
7. Of or relating to the African republic of Somalia or its people or their language and culture.
17. A healthy capacity for vigorous activity.
8. Goddess of criminal rashness and its punishment.
19. A naval spectacle.
8. Using speech rather than writing.
20. A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
10. The residue that remains when something is burned.
21. An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
11. A field covered with grass or herbage and suitable for grazing by livestock.
23. The general activity of selling.
12. Trade name for an oral contraceptive containing estradiol and norgestrel.
25. Czech dramatist and statesman whose plays opposed totalitarianism and who served as president of Czechoslovakia from 1989 to 1992 and president of the Czech Republic since 1993 (born in 1936).
13. A name under which Ninkhursag was worshipped.
28. Avatar of Vishnu.
14. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
31. A drawing intended to explain how something works.
22. Green algae common in freshwater lakes of limestone districts.
33. Traveling on horseback.
24. Of or relating to or measured in ohms.
35. In a correct manner.
26. An industrial city in southern Poland on the Vistula.
39. (Old Testament) The fourth son of Jacob who was forebear of one of the tribes of Israel.
27. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
42. A human female who does housework.
29. (Zoroastrianism) Title for benevolent deities.
43. A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
30. (from a combination of Modulate and DEModulate) Electronic equipment consisting of a device used to connect computers by a telephone line.
44. Not the same one or ones already mentioned or implied.
32. The sixth month of the civil year.
46. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
34. A lace used for fastening shoes.
48. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
36. A republic in West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea.
49. Shaped or worked with a hammer and often showing hammer marks.
37. A compound in which the hydrogen atoms of a hydrocarbon have been replaced by bromine and other halogen atoms.
51. Become or cause to become undone by separating the fibers or threads of.
38. Repeated too often.
53. Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
40. (biology) Shed at an early stage of development.
55. A feudal lord or baron in Scotland.
41. An award for winning a championship or commemorating some other event.
56. Evergreen Indian shrub with vivid yellow flowers whose bark is used in tanning.
45. A fast sailboat with 3 parallel hulls.
59. Xerophytic evergreen shrubs.
47. With strained or eager attention.
62. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
50. Of or relating to the state of marriage.
63. Dyed with henna.
52. An inn in some Eastern countries with a large courtyard that provides accommodation for caravans.
67. An obnoxious and foolish and loquacious talker.
54. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
70. A group of African language in the Niger-Congo group spoken from the Ivory Coast east to Nigeria.
57. French writer who is considered the father of science fiction (1828-1905).
71. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
58. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
72. All the weapons and equipment that a country has.
60. United States parapsychologist (1895-1980).
74. God of the earth.
61. Of or relating to the kidneys.
75. (archaic or Scottish) Faithful and true.
64. A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
76. In a naive manner.
65. An open vessel with a handle and a spout for pouring.
77. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
66. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
68. A unit of pressure.
69. Rate of revolution of a motor.
73. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
70. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.

DOWN

1. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).

Tuesday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Today finds you sympathetic and understanding of the feeling of those close to you. You seem to have thrown your more judgmental attitude out of the window. You have learned you thrive when you surround yourself with those who are positive and uplifting. You are becoming the friend to others that you wish them to be for you. This is a great step in the right direction. Your life and all things in it seem to be full of happiness. You are on a very positive path. Hard work and dedication will lead you to great reward.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find you tendency to be indecisive may cause conflict with someone you care about. Consider all the options diplomatically, then make a choice. Recognize that ignoring this situation is not the right choice. Consider consequences, then choose, and act. Someone may find your actions offensive. Pay no attention to anyone who doesn't seem supportive. They will get over it.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Today may find you a bit unsatisfied with your surroundings. It may be someone or the physical place you are in that is just not sitting right with you. You may feel as if someone or something is holding you back or may just feel frustrated by your life in general. This may be a great time for an evening out and about. Change your surroundings. Clear your head but choose your company wisely to avoid any conflict as this is a time you need to have fun. You have to find a comfortable balance between work life, family, and social life. Gemini, remember it is good for you to get out and enjoy yourself from time to time.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The company you keep says a lot about you. Make time for your loved ones. Don't wait for a holiday or a special event. What is a little thing to you can make a big difference in the life of someone you care about. You are creative enough to turn a small act into a big memory. Take the time. Make the effort. The reward will be great.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You have a tendency to be indecisive at times. This could cause conflict with someone special to you. Consider all the options and put much thought into your decisions today. Make a choice. This is not the time to procrastinate. Someone may be offended by or not agree with the choice you make. Remember, Leo, you can not please everyone all of the time. Do what is best for you and yours.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You can stop looking for perfect relationships. Since every person is flawed, a relationship between two of those persons can't be perfect. You just have to decide how much imperfection you can tolerate. Limit your relationships to the people who don't have the flaws you can't live with. Surround yourself with people who are aware of your imperfections and love you anyway. Peace is conceived when love and tolerance are united.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Why do today what you can put off until tomorrow? This seems to be your attitude today and you may be creating a stressful situation that can be avoided. Get in gear. Snap out of your dreamy state and take care of business. You may find others becoming frustrated with your lack of ambition today. Take a walk and a few deep breaths. Refresh and restart. There is no time like the present to get your focus back and get things done. Great reward will come from your hard work today.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is your time to shine. You are full of pride and proud of your accomplishments. You are being noticed in the workplace and have been excelling at your job. You are very observant of the feelings of those around you and are able to make them feel good about themselves. You feel much support from your peers and family. Everything in your world is beginning to feel healthy and come natural. You begin to feel as if something doesn't come from the heart it is irrelevant in your world. You surround yourself with people you feel are real and true friends. This is a great time for you and others begin to admire you not only for your accomplishments that the way you make them feel about themselves.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

The whole, big picture of life becomes clear when you stop focusing on the smaller parts; this is a time of planning, repairing and healing for forward motion. Seeing everything, and not just the parts, equips you to deal with issues and bumps in the road on a grander scale. Legal matters could cause you to wonder, but this is taken care of after some work; this could involve a mortgage, lease or will. Family matters are prominent and could cause changes in plans or decisions. When you make up your mind, there's no turning back which is fine with you; someone else may not be satisfied with this. You move further away from toxic people, places and things without even looking back.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself getting mixed signals from someone close to you. You feel as if you don't know up from down. The harder you try to please this person, the more you seem to do wrong. You could find yourself in the company of someone whose values are opposite of yours. You do not like what they represent. You have a strong sense of values and morals and are very picky about the company you keep. It is important to remain kind and try to be understanding. This is why they make chocolate and vanilla, not everyone has the same taste.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a time you feel more inward. You may be in the mood to only spend time with those closest to you. A nice evening at home will bring the most peace into your world today. This is a great time to do some soul searching. You have questions about what all happened in your world the led you to the place you are in today. You may be able to appreciate the hardships you have experienced and the lessons they taught you. This is a point you start to appreciate the wisdom you have gained through your life. You have learned to look for the positive in all life brings your way. This alone will make you a better person who others want in their lives.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your relationships have taken priority in your life. You value the love you have for others and the love you feel from them. Your emotional needs are being deeply satisfied. There is a vast difference between independence and loneliness. At this time, you seem to be becoming more of a homebody. You find more at ease staying in surrounded only by your loved ones or close friends. This is where you belong as your feelings are finding you more reflective rather than expressive. You crave new beginnings, perhaps this would be a great time for a new experience or a new hobby. Pisces, take the time to reflect and learn from your past and make plans for your future.

Wordsearch Puzzle

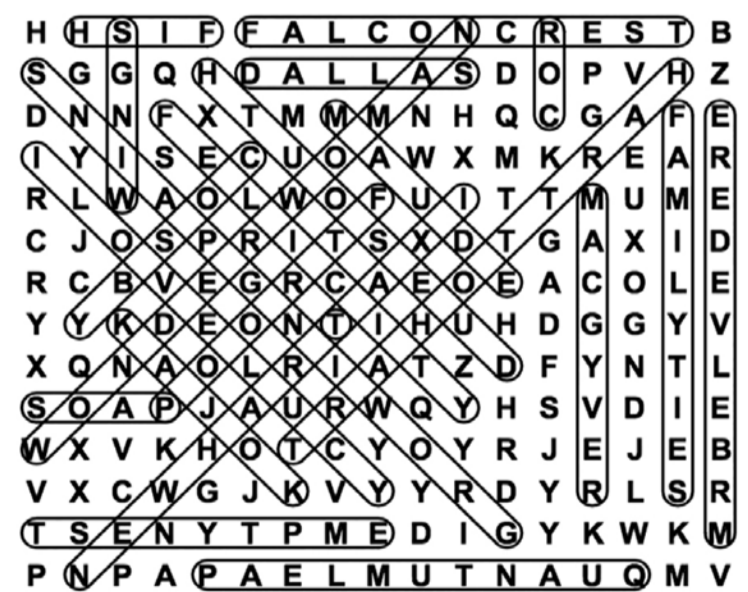
Old TV Shows 6 - Word Search



- BARNEY MILLER
- BAYWATCH
- BEN CASEY
- CANNON
- CHEERS
- FAME
- FAMILY GIDGET
- GOOD TIMES
- HUNTER
- IRONSIDE
- KNOTS LANDING
- LASSIE
- MC CLOUD
- MEDICAL CENTER
- MOONLIGHTING
- NASH BRIDGES
- QUINCY
- SEA HUNT
- SEINFELD
- SWAT
- T J HOOKER
- THE SAINT

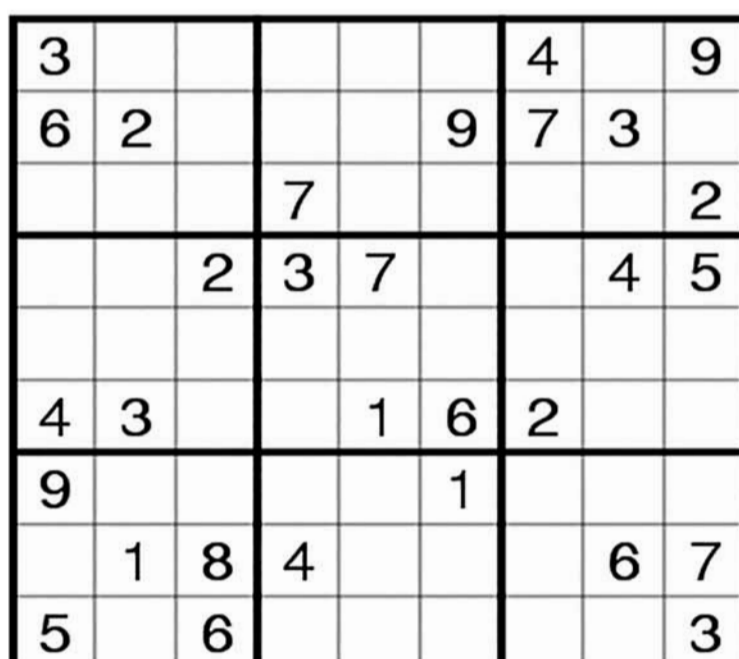
Tuesday's Solution

Old TV Shows 5 - Solution

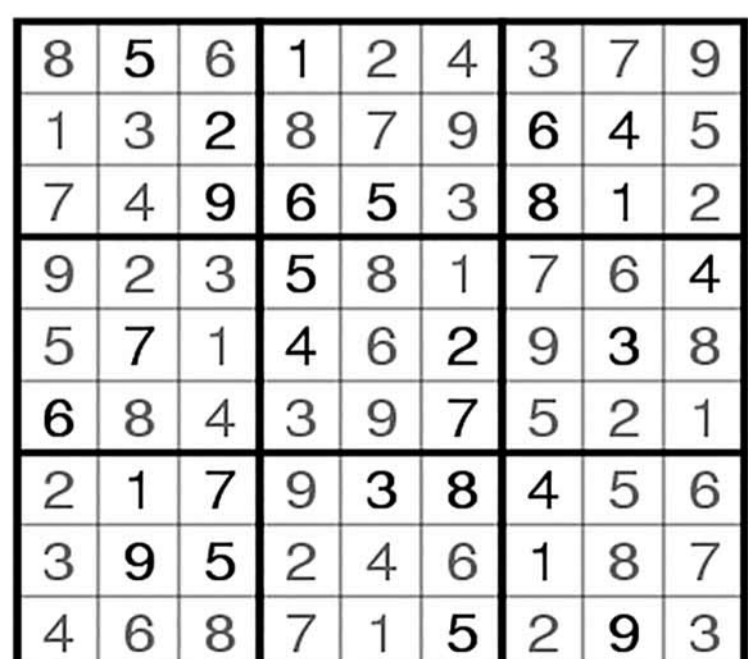


- COSBY
- DALLAS
- DUE SOUTH
- EMPTY NEST
- F TROOP
- FALCON CREST
- FAMILY TIES
- FELICITY
- FISH
- GROWING PAINS
- HART TO HART
- I LOVE LUCY
- KOJAK
- MACGYVER
- MAUDE
- MR BELVEDERE
- NEWHART
- QUANTUM LEAP
- ROC
- SOAP
- TAXI
- WINGS
- WONDER WOMAN

Daily Sudoku



Tuesday's Solution





# Lifestyle

SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2019



This long-exposure photograph shows the Milky Way in the sky above Mandalay, central Myanmar. — AFP

## NEW MYANMAR FILMMAKERS SHOOT TO REKINDLE GOLDEN YEARS



This photo shows director Maung Su, center, looking at a screen during filming for his movie in Yangon.



This photo shows director Christina Kyi, center, explaining a scene to an actor during filming for her movie on the outskirts of Yangon.

A deadly race to find hidden treasure, car chases and slick fight scenes drive the breakneck narrative of one of Myanmar's latest blockbusters, as a new generation of directors aim to revive the country's golden era of film. The Southeast Asian nation used to be a regional cinematic hub before the 1962-installed military junta suppressed creativity, imposed censorship and cut the country off from outside influences.

Myanmar's opening up since 2011 has so far done little to propel its movie industry—which is preparing to mark its century next year—onto the international stage. "The film industry is like the country—after 100 years, it's not in good shape," says Grace Swe Zin Htaik, 66, who has worked in the business for decades as an actress and consultant. Foreign distributors remain unmoved by its movies, often churned out to hackneyed formulae with low production costs and over-acting that many find toe-curling.

A handful of young directors, however, are seeking to raise the bar—using skills and know-how picked up overseas. Director Arkar Win, 29, learned the trade in Singapore before coming back to Myanmar. His box office 2018 smash hit "The Mystery of Burma" set the protagonist on an action-packed quest to find an ancient ruby buried in a hidden temple, a plot with clear nods to Steven Spielberg's Indiana Jones and Jon Turteltaub's National Treasure. "We're trying to catch up," he tells AFP in Yangon. "Indonesian and Cambodian films are selling internationally... but the quality isn't here yet."

### New vs old generation

Arkar is proud that his movie's stunts, set against cinematography that sweeps across Myanmar's dramatic landscapes, have enticed "new audiences" to the cinemas. But a duopoly of distributors controlling all of Myanmar's 154 commercial movie theatres means there is little negotiating power for directors or space for new talent. A frenetic filming schedule is the norm in the industry, meaning proper castings and pre-production planning often fall by the wayside, while scripts are commonly written on the set of low-budget films. Around half of the movies made in 2018 ended up going straight to DVD.

"Until last year I had no hope," said director Christina Kyi, who recently broke into Myanmar's movie-making scene after returning from a New York film school 10 years ago. "Most actors here can do up to 20 films a year. With me they know they will have to work for six months," she says. In Myanmar, superhero and zombie movies reign supreme. For directors like Arkar and Kyi—who both missed out at this year's Myanmar Academy Awards, stoking mass controversy-gaining acceptance from the mainstream movie industry presents a serious challenge.

Kyi's widely-acclaimed "Mudras Calling" sees the US-raised Burmese lead role, played by her real-life husband, returning to discover his Myanmar roots—and fall in love. Tipped for top prizes in the country's version of the Oscars, she came away with nothing. Outraged fans organized a boycott on social media of the winning director's movie,

pouring scorn on what they viewed as the elitist awards. Industry veteran Grace calls for more investment, better technology—and more cooperation from both sides. "I want the old generation to welcome new directors and the new generation to respect their seniors too."

### Soft power

With an arthouse flick at this year's Cannes Festival, Midi Z is perhaps Myanmar's highest-profile director internationally—but he has lived for years in Taiwan. Plans are afoot for a movie studio in capital Naypyidaw. But the industry might not see as smooth a transition away from political interference as many would like. Civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi opened the contentious Academy Awards with a speech urging the film industry to use "soft power" towards a "peaceful, united and developed country".



This photo shows director Arkar Win, center, explaining a scene to an actor during filming for his movie on the outskirts of Yangon. — AFP photos

The military is only too aware of the power of the silver screen in a country riven with ethnic armed conflicts. A high-budget film is released each year to mark Armed Forces Day, championing the sacrifices made by patriotic soldiers fighting battles against villainous rebels. Work has been underway for years to produce a biopic of Suu Kyi's father and independence hero General Aung San. The movie even has its own committee under the Ministry for Religious Affairs and Culture. Foreign filmmakers are eyeing up Myanmar as a shooting location.

An array of exploding cars and daring stunts recently beguiled Yangon residents for the filming of Hong Kong movie "Line Walker 2" and there are rumors Nicolas Cage will soon visit to shoot his upcoming sci-fi flick "Jiu Jitsu". These movies are guaranteed to do well in action-mad Myanmar. Arkar says it is down to Myanmar filmmakers to produce the goods in a country with limited nightlife and entertainment. "The audience is there. We just need to do good work."—AFP



## Lifestyle | Features



A visitor takes a picture at a wreckage of a bus in the ghost city of Pripyat during a tour in the Chernobyl exclusion zone.



People pass through radiation measuring device during a tour in the Chernobyl exclusion zone. — AFP photos



Visitors wait in line to buy snacks and souvenirs at a souvenir shop next to the Dytyatky checkpoint.

## CHERNOBYL TV SERIES REAPS PRAISE, CRITICISM IN RUSSIA

A US-made television series on the Chernobyl nuclear disaster was well-received by Russian audiences, even if some critics accused the makers of distorting the facts to show the Soviet-era authorities in a particularly bad light. Entitled simply "Chernobyl", the hard-hitting five-part HBO and Sky series received the thumbs-up from critics when it was broadcast in the United States and Britain starting from last month for its graphic recreation of the 1986 nuclear disaster in Soviet-era Ukraine.

It was not shown on terrestrial TV in Russia, but was legally available via the Amediateka streaming site, which gained the exclusive Russian rights to popular series such as "Game of Thrones". Russian audiences praised the series for what they said was its eerie accuracy. "The degree of realism in Chernobyl is higher than in most Russian films about that era," wrote pro-Kremlin daily Izvestia. "I think this is a very high-quality product in terms of television series, there's nothing to find fault with." Susanna Alperina, film and television critic for Rossiiskaya Gazeta daily, told AFP.

## Propaganda

But some Russian media described the series as "propaganda" that exaggerated the callousness of the authorities at the time, their slowness in reacting and the long time they took to officially acknowledge the accident and evacuate the area. Starring British actor Jared Harris as deputy head of the USSR's main nuclear research centre and directed by Sweden's Johan Renck, "Chernobyl" delivers a hard-hitting account of the accident at the fourth reactor of the nuclear station that sent radioactive fallout over much of Europe.

The world's worst nuclear accident happened on April 26, 1986. Thirty people were killed in the explosion or died soon after from radiation exposure and thousands have since died of related illnesses, though the exact figure remains disputed. Authorities say it will only be safe for humans to live in Chernobyl again in 24,000 years. Filmed both in Ukraine and at a decommissioned nuclear power station in ex-Soviet Lithuania that resembles the doomed plant, the TV series was, for many of its Russian viewers, an emotional experience.

It reawakened childhood memories and focused on the heroism of ordinary citizens, while top officials—including the then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev—were depicted as indecisive and mendacious. The show was made "with such respect and sympathy for people, our Soviet people... And with such contempt for the authorities who despised their citizens", Ksenia Larina, a presenter on Echo of Moscow popular radio station, wrote on Facebook.

## Excellent film lie

However, others slammed not only what they felt was unjustified criticism of the Soviet regime, but also a sly dig at present-day authorities. The series shows "careerists from the Politburo saving their skins at the price of the lives of abject and enslaved people", wrote Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid, referring to the Soviet Communist Party's ruling organ. It also aimed to foment protests against Russia's current projects to build power plants abroad, the newspaper claimed.

The show is an "excellently filmed lie," wrote Argumenty i Fakty newspaper, complaining it depicts the

Soviet people as "bloody executioners or helpless victims." But Rossiiskaya Gazeta's TV critic, Alperina, dismissed such accusations. "I don't think there are elements of propaganda in the series," she said. "Sometimes, an outsider's view is truer." The show has prompted soul-searching over why Russia has never made any comparable series of its own, although several shows and films have touched on the nuclear disaster.

"We don't have anything that is equal to 'Chernobyl'," Alperina said. This may be partly because the budgets of Russian television shows are "nothing compared to Western ones," she said. "Maybe people are afraid to do such a project, fearing that the viewers won't like it. In fact, our viewers are waiting for such a series." In 2014, youth channel TNT aired a teen drama series called "Chernobyl. The Exclusion Zone," set in the disaster zone and including elements of horror. Russian actor and director Danila Kozlovsky in March announced plans to make a film about Chernobyl that he will star in.—AFP



In this file photo Best Actress winner for 'The Favorite' Olivia Colman poses in the press room with her Oscar during the 91st Annual Academy Awards at the Dolby Theater in Hollywood. — AFP

## Queen honors 'The Crown' actress Olivia Colman

Oscar-winning actress Olivia Colman, who will play Queen Elizabeth II in "The Crown", was honored by the monarch yesterday for her services to British drama. Colman, 45, was awarded the CBE by the sovereign to mark her 93rd birthday, which is officially celebrated in Britain on the second Saturday in June. Colman headed a list of stars and everyday heroes-made commanders (CBE), officers (OBE) or regular members (MBE) of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, the main order of chivalry.

"I'm totally thrilled, delighted and humbled to be in the company of these incredible people, most of whom have been nowhere near as visible as I have, but should be—and hopefully now will be," she said. Colman won this year's best actress Academy Award for her role as Queen Anne in "The Favorite" and will next portray Queen Elizabeth in season three of "The Crown". Of playing the two, she said: "I find the harder is Queen Elizabeth because everyone knows what she looks like, everyone knows what she sounds like," she said. "I am loving trying to play her."

## Gong for Grylls

TV adventurer Bear Grylls, who also leads the Scouts in Britain, was made an OBE for his services to young people. Author Lee Child, whose action hero Jack Reacher has been played on screen by Tom Cruise, received the CBE, as did fellow novelist Joanna Trollope. Sarah Waters, famed for her raunchy novels featuring lesbian protagonists, including "Tipping the Velvet", was made an OBE. In the world of music, singers Elvis Costello and Feargal Sharkey were both given the OBE, accepting establishment endorsements far from their punk roots.

Songwriter Mitch Murray received the CBE. He penned UK number one hits including "How Do You Do It?", "I Like It" and "The Ballad of Bonnie and Clyde", along with US number ones "I'm Telling You Now" and "The Night Chicago Died". In sport, there were CBEs for former Manchester United chief executive David Gill and Philip Brook, the outgoing chairman of the All England Club which hosts the Wimbledon tennis championships. Tony Alcock, the 17-times world bowls champion, received the OBE. Scotland cricket captain Kyle Coetzer, former marathon world record holder Steve Jones, and the reigning Women's British Open golf champion Georgia Hall were given the MBE.

## Snack supremo knighted

Boyd Tunnock, 86, who in 1956 invented Scotland's cherished Tunnock's Teacake chocolate-coated marshmallow and biscuit snack, was knighted. "I'll just have to make sure I live long enough to get used to it," the new Sir Boyd said. Carolyn Fairbairn, director general of the Confederation of British Industry main business lobby group, was made a dame—the female equivalent of a knighthood. Comedian and presenter Griff Rhys Jones received an OBE. The British honors system rewards individuals' bravery, service or achievement in their field.—AFP

## Rihanna declared world's richest female musician

Singer, makeup entrepreneur, lingerie designer and now the first black woman to head a top luxury fashion house—Rihanna has racked up a \$600 million fortune to become the world's richest female musician, Forbes said Tuesday. The 31-year-old-born Robyn Rihanna Fenty in Barbados—has amassed wealth exceeding that of Madonna (\$570 million), Celine Dion (\$450 million) and Beyonce (\$400 million), whose husband Jay-Z was just named the world's first billionaire rap star.

Rihanna's ranking puts into fresh perspective one of her signature lyrics—"work, work, work, work," which opened her 2016 dancehall smash "Work." Since bursting onto the scene in 2003, she has spun her triumphs in music into entrepreneurial gold, launching her makeup brand Fenty Beauty—co-owned by French luxury giant LVMH—in September 2017 online and with Sephora. The line found success not least thanks to Rihanna's fame both on and offline, with some \$570 million in revenue last year after just 15 months of business.

She makes the majority of her money from touring and musical releases, according to Forbes, but also co-owns her Savage X Fenty lingerie line. In May, Rihanna launched a groundbreaking partnership with LVMH to launch a luxury fashion brand based in Paris that will make ready-to-wear clothes, shoes and accessories. A new large-scale luxury label—especially one led by a black woman—is a huge development in the fashion world, with Rihanna's line Fenty sitting alongside legacy brands like Dior, Louis Vuitton, Fendi and Givenchy at the conglomerate headed by Bernard Arnault.

"I just want to see things from my perspective. I'm a young black woman who loves and embraces all of the young people's ideas and energies—I'm so about that," she said in Paris recently. "It is about turning all of that into something luxurious for this fashion house." The singer's explosive rise to music mega-star and global fashion icon did not come without tribulations, including her father's bids to profit off her name and a highly publicized domestic violence case that saw her then-boyfriend Chris Brown charged in 2009 with assaulting her.

In addition to her venture into luxury fashion, Rihanna has hinted at dropping a new reggae album this year. "I never thought I'd make this much money, so a number is not going to stop me from working," she told The New York Times' T Magazine in May. "Money is happening along the way, but I'm working out of what I love to do, what I'm passionate about."—AFP



US actor Denzel Washington speaks on stage during the 47th American Film Institute (AFI) Life Achievement Award Gala at the Dolby theatre in Hollywood. — AFP

## 'Giant' Denzel Washington celebrated by Hollywood

Actor Denzel Washington was honored by Hollywood Thursday for a pioneering career spanning five decades and two Oscars that opened the door for a generation of black movie stars. Director and frequent collaborator Spike Lee presented the 64-year-old with the American Film Institute (AFI) Life Achievement award—billed as "the highest honor for a career in film"—at a gala event at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Hollywood's small elite of A-list black leading men paid tribute to Washington's trailblazing career—fellow Oscar winners Morgan Freeman, Jamie Foxx and Mahershala Ali took to the stage, as did "Black Panther" stars Chadwick Boseman and Michael B. Jordan. "You paved the way. You showed us the path. But what's truly monumental is that your influence, your reach, transcends race without ever denying it," said Ali. He added: "We are here because we stand on the shoulders of a giant."

"There is no 'Black Panther' without Denzel Washington," said Boseman, referring to Marvel Studios' first film to focus on a black superhero. Predominantly white Hollywood has been heavily criticized for its diversity problem, notably in the #OscarsSoWhite campaign surrounding the 2016 Academy Awards. Washington is one of only four black stars to win a best actor Oscar. He won a best supporting actor Oscar for American Civil War epic "Glory" (1989) and a best actor statuette for his bad cop character in Antoine Fuqua's crime thriller "Training Day" (2001).

One of cinema's most versatile actors, Washington has received acclaim for both cerebral, nuanced roles and action parts in movies such as "Man on Fire," "American Gangster" and "Remember the Titans." He portrayed the American Muslim minister and civil rights campaigner Malcolm X in Lee's 1992 biopic. Other recent recipients of the annual AFI lifetime achievement award include George Clooney, Al Pacino and Meryl Streep. Freeman and Sidney Poitier have also been honored. The gala, which also featured a surprise appearance by Beyonce, will be broadcast by TNT on June 20.—AFP

## Legendary New Orleans blues pianist Dr. John dies at 77

Dr. John, the American jazz musician who delighted fans for decades with his legendary piano riffs and unmistakable hoarse voice, died Thursday, his family said. The New Orleans blues pianist, whose real name Malcolm John Rebennack was shortened to "Mac" by his friends, suffered a heart attack "towards the break of day", according to a statement on his official Twitter account. The jiving talking "psychedelic godfather"—who inspired Dr. Teeth, the band leader in "The Muppets"—was 77.

A musical monument in the mould of fellow New

Orleans greats Fats Domino and Allen Toussaint, he played with everyone from the Rolling Stones to Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, Phil Spector, Sonny & Cher and Van Morrison. Former Beatle Ringo Starr was among the first major stars to react to his death, tweeting, "God bless Dr. John peace and love to all his family I love the doctor." Dr. John's talents defied genre, as he played everything from blues and pop to jazz, boogie woogie and rock-and-roll.—AFP

## Seminal feminist punk band Bikini Kill stages comeback

A 90s-era radical feminist punk band whose scream-along sound became a girl-power call to arms, Bikini Kill was a beacon for a generation of activists striving for a world more hospitable to women. Now, as an American political battle over reproductive rights rages more fiercely than it has in years, the group known for their catchphrase "Revolution Girl Style, Now!" is back, reuniting to spread their message of empowerment and equality, protesting violence against women and normalizing female anger.

The group—including frontwoman Kathleen Hanna, Tobi Vail, Kathi Wilcox and newcomer Erica Dawn Lyle—broke up in 1997 but recently delivered a thunderous series of performances in New York after playing shows in Los Angeles, and will rock London on Monday. "The world needs them again. I feel like they're like Captain Marvel, and we've flashed the Bikini Kill sign to bring them back to earth, because it's just messed up here," said Evelyn McDonnell, a pop culture writer whose bibliography includes the book "Women Who Rock."

"They just expressed this new energy of feminism in such a wonderfully direct, emotional fashion," she said. "That was what was amazing about seeing them live again—this crowd full of thousands of fans, predominantly women, and of multiple generations, people who had seen them the first time around and people who weren't born the first time around," she said, calling it a release of "all this pent-up energy."

## Girls to the front

First formed in Washington state in 1990, Bikini Kill pioneered the provocative "riot grrrl" movement that became a dynamic force across the then male-dominated American punk scene, blossoming in the underground before quickly garnering national attention. The subculture fueled by abrasive rock became a haven for girls and women who formed bands and reading groups nationwide as a form of cultural resistance, taking on themes of sexual violence and misogyny.

Beyond concerts much of the movement was founded on a culture of zines—small-circulation, self-created publications that saw subscribers to the ethos espouse their grievances and goals. Sarah Marcus, the author of a riot grrrl history entitled "Girls To the Front"—another Hanna motto, encouraging women to occupy the front of concert venues during shows—began attending meetings of the Washington, DC chapter in 1993.

"Everybody was a feminist. And not just a feminist—I had a feminist club at my high school, but nobody was as mad as I was," Marcus, who grew up in suburban Maryland, told AFP. "At riot grrrl, everybody was as mad."—AFP



In this file photo Kathleen Hanna and Kathi Wilcox attend 'Loitering With Intent' New York Screening at SVA Theater. — AFP



Lifestyle | Features

# DAYS ARE NUMBERED FOR NORWAY'S FUR FARMS

**B**aby minks, their skin still smooth and furless, snuggle up against one another under a pile of hay, letting out the occasional squeal: this sight will soon be a thing of the past at Norway's fur farms. The Norwegian parliament is due this month to adopt new legislation immediately banning any new fur farms and requiring existing ones to be dismantled by February 1, 2025. Hailed by animal rights' activists, the ban has been slammed by Norway's 200 or so fur farmers: it is often a side business for them but a very lucrative one.

"It represents about 70 percent of my income," says Kristian Aasen, as he inspects his 6,000 minks on the highlands of Brumunddal in south-eastern Norway. "I can't make a living off my farm without the fur," laments the 39-year-old, whose

**'Profitable, unsubsidized sector'**  
With the new ban, Norway, which accounts for one percent of world production of mink and fox furs, joins a growing list of countries that already includes Britain and the Netherlands. "It's a big victory for animal welfare in Norway. It's a realization that the consideration for animals can actually weigh heavier than just money and business interests," says Siri Martinsen, head of the organization Noah that has been lobbying for a ban for almost three decades.

"It's totally unnatural and against these animals' needs to keep them in very tiny metal cages." But the Norwegian fur farmers' association says the ban is "unjustified, illegal and undemocratic." "It's a profitable and unsubsidized sec-



An aerial view shows a Mink fur farm in Brumunddal, Norway.



Owner Kristian Aasen holds a Mink at his fur farm.



Minks are pictured in their cages at a fur farm.

main business is his 20 heads of cattle. He is surrounded by dozens of metal cages housing female minks, agitated and worried about their offspring born in late April and early May.

For now, the newborns look like large worms that squeal. But by early November, they will have developed their glossy winter coats, either brown, black or grey, for which they are so keenly desired... and for which they will be gassed and skinned.

tor that has kept remote areas financially afloat for a century," says its spokeswoman Guri Wormdahl.

**Political maneuvers**  
The government has no plans to reverse its decision, however. "Fur farming in Norway is over," insists Morten Orsal Johansen, an MP who is overseeing the new legislation through parliament even though he is personally opposed to a

ban. In his cluttered office in the parliament building, the populist right-wing politician said he had agreed to take on the role of rapporteur in order to ensure the coalition would be implemented as painlessly as possible.

The new legislation came about as a compromise between the right-wing government and the Liberal party, which made it one of its conditions for joining the coalition in early 2018. For fur farmers, it is a bitter pill to swallow, given that just a year earlier, parliament gave its go-ahead for a "sustainable" development of the sector. "These are scandalous political maneuvers," blasts Aasen. "It's unbelievable that a microscopic party that is today polling around two percent could impose its views on spineless politicians." "We're going to continue importing furs, we can continue to sell them, but we can no longer make them ourselves?" he fumes.

**Convert to cannabis?**  
Now that the battle for their livelihoods is lost, the fight for financial compensation has begun. The government has earmarked 500 million kroner for the dismantling of the farms, of which 100

million is intended to help the farmers find other sources of income. The farmers argue that's not nearly enough, saying they would need 2.3 billion kroner. "Five hundred million kroner, that may seem like a lot but this is not about compensating the simple loss of a job."

"This is about the farmers' entire livelihood that is disappearing," says Wormdahl, of the fur farmers' association. And many are asking what the fur farmers can do instead. "There are not a lot of options: there is already an overproduction of meat. We produce too much lamb, pork, chicken, milk," says Wormdahl. "I'm not going to, with a wave of my magical wand, extend my farm by 40 hectares to start doing something else," adds mink farmer Aasen, who fears he'll end up crippled by debt. A Liberal MP's idea to replace fur farms with medicinal cannabis farms has yet to gain traction.—AFP

## 'Bionic' amputee stars at Crazy Horse cabaret

**'B**ionic showgirl" Viktoria Modesta says she has had to reinvent herself after being treated as an outcast over her artificial leg, as she takes to the stage at the risqué Crazy Horse cabaret in Paris. 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 colors, the 31-year-old recounted her origins, recalling her debut in a private salon with red walls and dimmed light in an ambience 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

**'Muse' no more**

Yet from 1936 onwards Maar became Picasso's most important model and muse, with some 60 works based around her. The Pompidou show, however, is at pains to avoid the "m" words. Instead it wants to "bring her profound talent to the fore... so it can prevail over the more popular vision of Dora Maar as muse and model," labels which Amao argued "limit our view of her to her relationship with Picasso". And it is the defiantly independent Dora—who was born in France and grew up in Buenos Aires—and who was already a name on the Paris art scene before she met Picasso, that emerges from the exhibition.

Maar had her own successful photographic studio working with top fashion houses like Chanel, Lanvin and Schiaparelli and was at the heart of the Surrealist movement. Along with Man Ray, she was one of only a handful of photographers to be admitted into the movement's shows, said curator Karolina Ziebinksa-Lewandowska. She was "the incarnation of the modern woman", she added, even appearing as such in some surrealist collages works alongside jazz bands and Bugatti sports cars. Her highly-polished work, "her childhood spent in Argentina and her Slavic (Croat) origins created a remarkable personality that was completed by her acute sense of style."

**Remarkable street photos**

But the glitz and glamour was only a part of her "complex creative self", said Ziebinksa-Lewandowska. As the world sank into the Great Depression, she became active in leftwing politics and began shooting the poor in the streets of Paris, London and Barcelona, creating a trove of remark-



Latvian-born English singer-songwriter, performance artist and model, Viktoria Modesta, poses during a photocall prior to the Premiere of the new show 'Bionic ShowGirl' at the Crazy Horse cabaret in Paris. — AFP

able images to match those of her friends and contemporaries Brassai and Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Such was her renown that she was the model for an enigmatic lesbian photographer who took arty erotic portraits in the classic 1947 French film, "Quai des Orfèvres". The character even wore a jumper embroidered with her name, "Dora". Yet at Picasso's urging she turned her back on photography for painting, and was hospitalized for a short period for depression during their prolonged and messy break-up.

**'She wasn't mad'**

It was the beginning of what would become her "45 years of solitude", where she gradually withdrew from the world to live in the south of France. Ziebinksa-Lewandowska said Maar never stopped working or developing as an artist, even as she retreated into Catholic mysticism and meditation, sketching even during Mass. But she admitted that she could be "rather awful" to anyone who dared disturb her.

"Even when she was young she was sometimes seen as haughty and as life went on that may have become more pronounced. She could be rather horrible but she wasn't mad," Ziebinksa-Lewandowska said. The Pompidou show is also about restoring the legacy of her later work, said her co-curator Amao. "Like many female artists of that generation she did not create her own narrative," she said, and so Dora Maar was swallowed up in the grand Picasso myth.—AFP

## Orwell's classic '1984' turns 70 amid enduring interest

**S**eventy years after its publication, George Orwell's classic dystopian novel "1984" continues to fascinate readers, in particular youngsters growing up in a social media-dominated age of increasing angst. "Some students are very shocked by it, and remain shocked by it," said Michael Callanan, an English teacher and director of the Orwell Youth Prize, which supports political expression amongst young people.

"It is part of the paradox of a book being 70-years-old," he added. "I think they were taken aback by how fresh and how true to our lives today it strangely is." Written in 1948, and published the following year, "1984" depicted a chilling future world in which a totalitarian state controls people's thoughts and actions, suppressing any dissent. This rigidly-controlled society features a so-called "ministry of truth" that distorts reality, with the ever-watchful eyes of "Big Brother" keeping tabs on citizens' behavior.

The novel introduced other terms that have endured in the lexicon, including "double-think", which means "the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them", according to Orwell. For Jean Seaton, director of the Orwell Foundation, which promotes the work of the writer who died in 1950 aged 46, and administers various awards, his masterpiece was "very prescient". She noted the book's description of "two minutes hate"—in which citizens watch a daily film inciting them to hate enemies of the state—as comparable to online hate-mobs today.

**Sales spikes**

Over the seven decades since its publication, "1984" has remained omnipresent on the social landscape, and even seen periodic spikes in sales. In 2017 it enjoyed a boom in popularity after one of US President Donald Trump's advisors used the term "alternative facts", a phrase used in the book. In Britain, sales that year increased by an eye-popping 165 percent, publisher Penguin Books told AFP. The novel also saw a marked increase in purchases in 2013, after the revelations of mass state spying by US whistleblower Edward Snowden.

Callanan, who has been teaching for 30 years, said today's teenagers are not "frightened of it in a way that maybe previous generations were". "But in the past couple of years with the rise of Trump, there is now significant minorities of students that are very concerned about the way the world is going—and of course truth is the big thing," he added.

**Thought police**

Even those who have not read "1984" can be hard pressed to avoid its influence on popular culture, from movies and music through to video games. When students open the book for the first time, Callanan said they "immediately recognize things like 'double-think' and the 'thought police'". "These kind of Orwell phrases are out there in the zeitgeist, and kids have heard of them," the teacher at a school northwest of London added.

The book appears particularly relevant amid wider public interest in dystopian fiction and drama on television and in cinemas, with television hits like "The Handmaid's Tale" and "Black Mirror" and film adaptations such as the "Hunger Games" series. Callanan tells his pupils Orwell is "the granddaddy" of these contemporary works.—AFP

## Dora Maar shakes off Picasso's shadow in new Paris show

**S**he has gone down in his history as the muse who was almost Picasso's match, but a new show in Paris tries to drag Dora Maar out from under his shadow. The huge retrospective at the Pompidou Centre—which will transfer to London's Tate Modern in November—portrays Maar as a leading surrealist who had a sparkling career in her own right before she met Picasso. Indeed, it was she who first took him as a model when she got Picasso to pose before her camera in her Paris studio in 1935.

Picasso was going through what he called "the most difficult period of (his) life" at the time, having not painted for several months. Their tumultuous nine-year affair, conducted almost entirely in Spanish, began in 1936 and helped rekindle his creative spark. From the start "they began painting each other", said Damarice Amao, one of the curators of the show, with Picasso urging her to swap her camera for a paintbrush. "Inside every photographer is a painter trying to get out," he declared dismissively.

The pair collaborated on his masterpiece "Guernica", with Dora photographing the black and white anti-war work at every stage of its development and Picasso using her images to develop the enormous canvass. "The Weeping Woman" portraits of her also came out of their work on "Guernica", but they would later come to define the way the macho Spanish artist used and abused her,





In these pictures workers harvest pearls, each containing a radio-frequency identification (RFID) chip, on a fishing raft culturing Akoya pearl oysters, in the rural Sai Kung region of Hong Kong. — AFP photos

# SCIENTIST LOOKS TO RESURRECT HONG KONG'S 'PEARL OF THE ORIENT' PAST

On a raft floating off Hong Kong's rural eastern coastline, former investment banker turned scientist Yan Wa-tat patiently scrapes barnacles off some 2,000 oysters—a tiresome but crucial part of his mission to bring back pearl farming. “The species was once abundant in Hong Kong,” the 58-year-old lamented. “We have a history of pearl fishing of over one thousand years... but because of overfishing in Hong Kong, we only have very few of them left,” he explained.

Yan is farming Akoya pearl oysters, a specimen prized for jewelry, hoping his research will show other fishermen that the industry could be viable. It's a calling that requires patience. Cultured pearls take around a year to form and every few weeks Yan has to scrape away any barnacles that might compete for food with his precious oysters. This kind of knowledge was once ubiquitous to the region. After all, the famous waterway that sustains this part of southern China—along one of the world's most densely populated regions—is called the Pearl River.

The world's biggest pearl, once owned by Catherine the Great and known as “The Sleeping Lion” because of its bizarre shape, is thought to have been plucked from southern China's waters sometime in the 1700s before Dutch traders spirited it away. And Hong Kong—dubbed the Pearl of the Orient by its former colonial overlords—remains the world's largest importer and exporter of pearls, with exports topping \$1.8 billion in 2016, according to UN trade data.

But none of them are produced locally. Overfishing and market forces have long devastated the wild pearl farming trade in the city. Cultured pearl farming is a relatively modern industry, and a few Hong Kong ventures rose to the challenge in the 1950s. But they struggled against Japanese competitors who came to dominate the trade. The city's last pearl farm was shuttered in 1981.

### Oysters and chips

Now Yan and a handful of fishermen are trying to change that—with a small cottage industry combining traditional knowledge and cutting-edge technology. Yan worked in Hong Kong's lucrative banking sector until his mid-fifties when he decided he wanted to do something “more interesting and also more productive for our society”. He embarked on a PhD at Hong Kong University's School of Biological Sciences looking at how to resurrect the city's pearl farming trade, something he didn't even know existed until he stumbled across it in early research.

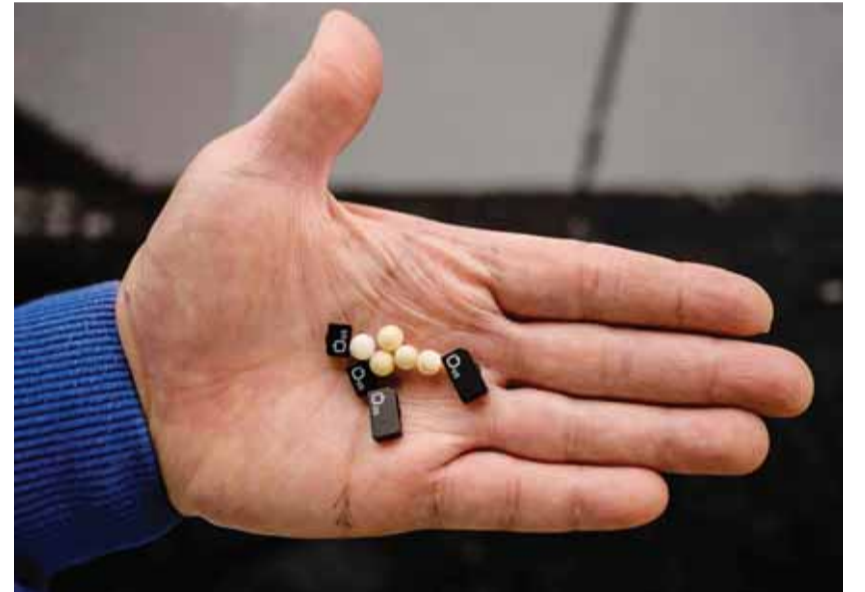
In his lab at Hong Kong University, Yan researches the best ways to insert a radio-frequency identification (RFID) chip into an oyster's nucleus, around which a pearl will then grow—although the exact mechanism is a closely guarded secret. The chips are the part of the same family of technology that allows users of mobile phones, transport cards and identity badges to scan into a building or to make a purchase with a simple swipe.

Yan holds a scanning device against one of his oysters and after a small bleep sound a set of numbers appears on an app on his smartphone. That tech has multiple benefits. Some 10-20 percent of nuclei are expelled by the oyster—meaning a cultured pearl is unable to form—but this is usually only discovered upon prizing them open at harvest time. Using a chip means farmers can simply scan the shell to check if a pearl has been produced. But serial numbers will also allow buyers to know exactly where their pearls have come from, reducing the risk of fakes or lower quality scams.

### New harvest

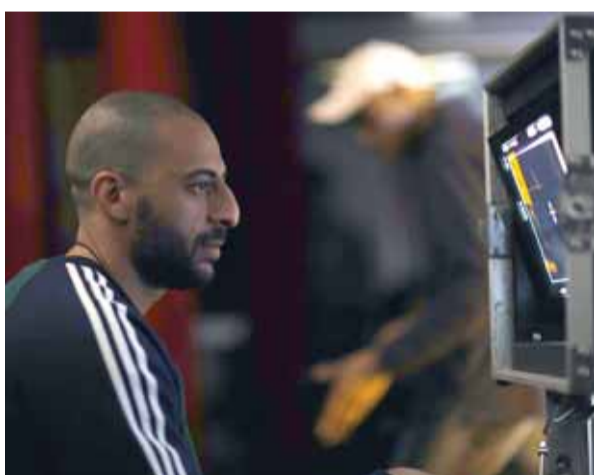
In March a group of local fishermen inspired by Yan's project carried out a harvest of Akoya pearls—the first to be done in Hong Kong in years. “I think pearl farming has a future in Hong Kong,” explained Leung Kam-ming, one of the owners of a fishing raft culturing Akoya pearl oysters in the rural Sai Kung region. “I started pearl cultivation to make some extra money.” Leung farms around 30,000 oysters, selling each cultured pearl for around HK\$100. Any pearls that do not meet jewelry standards can be sold along with the oyster shells as pearl powder for Chinese medicine and cosmetics.

Whilst culturing pearl is no longer common knowledge among the Hong Kong fishing community, Leung hopes his successful harvest will set a precedent for other fishermen to follow. And in a rare development for densely populated Hong Kong, there is plenty of space for new oyster



farms. Yan estimates some 90 percent of the 1,000 or so fishing rafts in the city's waters are unused because so few young people wish to join the fishing trade these days. “If I can show to the fishermen that they can make a living, diversify their income sources, then I think they will be interested in doing this,” predicted Yan.—AFP

Former investment banker turned scientist Yan Wa-tat, 58, holds pearls containing RFID chips.



## OOREDOO LAUNCHES NEW 5G CAMPAIGN

Ooredoo Kuwait launched the latest 5G campaign that showcased the development of technology and how it changed our lives. Ooredoo's latest TVC revolves around two brothers growing up in the early 90s, coming of age alongside the ever rapid advancements of technology and the internet. The TVC showcases how Ooredoo was there for the brothers throughout their adolescent lives till present day, being part of their lives and fulfilling their needs. It talks not only of the brothers developing relationship with each other, but their relationship to the technological world evolving around them, most importantly the unforgettable memories shared from this experience.

Worth mentioning that Ooredoo made the first trial

International 5G call in the region between Ooredoo Kuwait and Ooredoo Qatar, demonstrating the phenomenal capabilities of its 5G networks in Qatar and Kuwait. The call took place on January 22, 2019 between Sheikh Saud Bin Nasser Al-Thani, Chief Executive Officer, Ooredoo Group, and Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulla Al-Thani, Chief Executive Officer, Ooredoo Kuwait. The call was originated by Sheikh Saud from Ooredoo's headquarters in Doha, and received by Sheikh Mohammed in Ooredoo's Kuwait headquarters. It took place using 5G CPEs connected at 5G speeds of up to 1 Gbps showcasing the incredible potential of 5G.

Moreover, Ooredoo Kuwait held a special event last year

that demonstrated the power of its new 5G network. The event was attended by media and social media influencers and was held at the company's head office in the heart of Kuwait City on Soor Street. During the event, Ooredoo showcased the power of its new 5G network in comparison to the 4G network. Ooredoo demonstrated the network's ability to operate video games comparing both networks, which require fast data speed, in addition to a live feed in 4K Full HD of drone footage of the event, and a speed test corner with devices equipped to utilize the new network capacity.





# Classifieds

Sunday, June 9, 2019

**Kuwait Times**  
 Now you can browse  
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### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

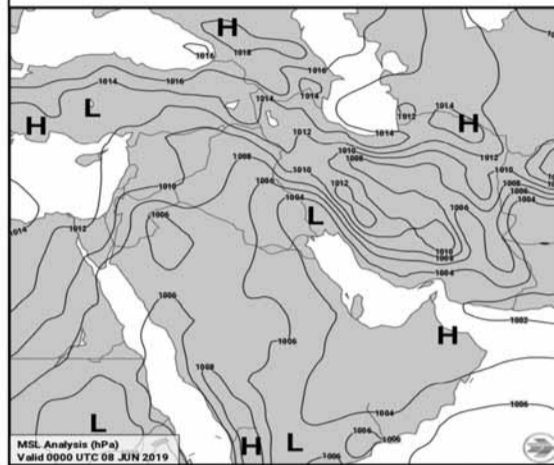
**BY DAY:** Very hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate north westerly wind to variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

**BY NIGHT:** Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind to south westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 30 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings	
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STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	46 °C	35 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	48 °C	31 °C
ABDALY	49 °C	31 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	49 °C	35 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	45 °C	30 °C
SALMIYAH	40 °C	35 °C
AHMADI	39 °C	35 °C
NUWAISIB	47 °C	31 °C
WAFRA	49 °C	28 °C
SALMY	46 °C	30 °C

SFC. CHART 08/06/2019 0000 UTC



DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	06/09	Very hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	48 °C	32 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h
Monday	06/10	Very hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	47 °C	30 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 28 km/h
Tuesday	06/11	Very hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas	49 °C	29 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 30 km/h
Wednesday	06/12	Very hot with a chance for blowing dust over open areas later on	50 °C	32 °C	NW	15 - 50 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:13
Sunrise	04:48
Zuhr	11:47
Asr	15:21
Sunset	18:46
Isha	20:18

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	48 °C
MIN. Temp.	29 °C
MAX. RH	27 %
MIN. RH	07 %
MAX. Wind	S 36 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
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, Ali Modak Imtiyaz Shoukat, holder of Indian Passport No. J4440540 wish to correct my name as (given name) Imtiyaz Shoukat Ali (sur name) Modak. Hereinafter in all my documents, my name will appear as Imtiyaz Shoukat Ali Modak. (C 5544) 09-06-2019

uments shall bear the name Adeniya Toluwalope Obafemi.

I, Shaloom Cedric s/o Saith Khushnood holder of Pakistani Passport No- BR4429022, would like to correct my name on civil ID# 2902070901151, from Shaloom Saith Saith Khushnood to Shaloom Cedric. (C5545)

I, Adeniya Toluwalope Fatoba - holder of Nigeria Passport Number A10488415 and Kuwait Civil ID Number 275051205279, would like to change my name to Adeniya Toluwalope Obafemi. From henceforth, all my official doc-

I, Shalom David s/o Saith Khushnood holder of Pakistani Passport No- AF7674522, would like to correct my name on civil ID# 296072900556, from Shallum Saith Khushnood to Shalom David. (C 5545) 4-6-2019

Airlines	
Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22456700
Air India EXPRESS	22438185/4
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

## DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

## Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Sunday 9/6/2019				Departure Flights on Sunday 9/6/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:10
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	JZR	713	Sohag	00:10
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	JZR	707	Luxor	00:20
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
LZB	7787	Varna	00:30	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:40
KAC	102	London	00:50	FEG	342	Sohag	01:05
AHY	119	Baku	00:55	JZR	723	Alexandria	01:05
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	JZR	409	Delhi	01:10
KAC	504	Beirut	01:00	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	LZB	7788	Madinah	01:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	677	Dubai	01:40
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	THY	773	Istanbul	01:50
PGT	840	Istanbul	01:50	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50
THY	858	Istanbul	01:50	AHY	120	Baku	01:55
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	JZR	705	Asyut	02:00
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
MEA	400	Beirut	02:00	JZR	111	Doha	02:10
JZR	262	Beirut	02:05	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:50
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	PGT	841	Istanbul	02:50
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	MEA	401	Beirut	03:00
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	THY	769	Istanbul	03:50
PGT	856	Istanbul	03:10	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	PGT	857	Istanbul	04:20
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	OHY	351	Istanbul	05:00
JZR	1738	Cairo	04:45	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:15
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	KAC	103	London	05:20
THY	1414	Trabzon	05:05	KAC	1735	Cairo	05:40
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	JZR	070	Dubai	06:00
KAC	382	Delhi	05:15	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
KAC	770	Istanbul	05:20	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	RJA	649	Amman	07:00
UAE	873	Dubai	05:40	UAE	874	Dubai	07:10
KAC	552	Cairo	05:50	JZR	121	Dubai	07:15
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	JZR	113	Doha	07:30
QTR	8511	Doha	06:05	JZR	715	Sohag	07:30
BAW	157	London	06:10	RBG	550	Alexandria	07:30
JZR	708	Luxor	06:15	BAW	156	London	08:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	KAC	165	Rome	08:00
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	JZR	211	Jeddah	08:00
KAC	204	Lahore	06:45	QTR	8512	Doha	08:05
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	IGO	1756	CNN	08:10
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
IGO	1755	CNN	07:10	KAC	177	Vienna	08:45
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	KAC	545	Cairo	08:50
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	501	Beirut	08:50
JZR	724	Alexandria	07:50	KAC	561	Amman	08:55
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	KAC	117	New York	09:05
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	QTR	1085	Doha	09:10
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	791	Madinah	09:10
JZR	706	Asyut	08:25	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	KAC	161	Geneva	09:15
MEB	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	691	Muscat	09:20
QTR	1074	Doha	09:20	JZR	601	Baku	09:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40
JZR	410	Delhi	09:50	KAC	741	Dammam	09:40
KAC	384	Delhi	09:55	JZR	731	Cairo	09:45
SAW	703	Damascus	10:00	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55
OMS	223	Muscat	10:20	JZR	301	Istanbul	09:55
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	OMA	642	Muscat	10:00
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	101	London	10:05
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	QTR	1071	Doha	10:30
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40
JZR	114	Doha	11:10	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
MAR	103	ATH	11:30	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:40
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	KAC	617	Doha	10:40
JZR	1736	Cairo	12:05	SVA	513	Riyadh	10:55
ETH	3620	Addis Ababa	12:30	SAW	704	Damascus	11:00





Indian youth fish at sunset on floating bamboo rafts along the Brahmaputra River in Guwahati in the Indian state of Assam yesterday. — AFP

## 'Central Park Five' accuse Trump of stoking public rage

LOS ANGELES: Five men wrongfully convicted for the 1989 rape of a New York jogger accused Donald Trump on Friday of putting "a bounty on our heads," as a Netflix documentary sheds renewed light on their ordeal. The "Central Park Five" case saw a group of teens, four black and one Hispanic aged 14 to 16, falsely accused of nearly killing a young white woman. It dominated headlines 30 years ago, sharply exposing fraught race relations in the US city.

President Trump, a real estate mogul at the time, amplified public outrage by paying for full-page newspaper ads calling for the death penalty. "When Donald Trump took out that full page ad in New York city newspapers calling for our execution, he placed a bounty on our heads," said one of the men, Yusef Salaam. The names, phone numbers and addresses of the accused were also published by newspapers at the time, he said. "If you could imagine the horror of that ... It was almost as if they were trying to get someone from the darkest enclaves of society to come into our homes, drag us from our beds and hang us from the trees of Central Park."

Despite dramatic holes in the case against them and no DNA match from the crime scene, all five were convicted. They spent between six and 13 years in prison

before a serial rapist confessed that he alone had attacked 28-year-old investment banker Trisha Meili. But all five had already served their jail terms. "We were just babies. The system ran over us," said Salaam, speaking Friday at an American Civil Liberties Union event in Los Angeles honoring the five men.

The story of the case is the subject of a new Netflix drama "When They See Us", directed by "Selma" filmmaker Ava DuVernay. It depicts how the five teenagers were picked up during a police sweep of the area and interrogated at length, often without the presence of an attorney or a parent. Meili, who was ambushed during a night run and left for dead in the park, gradually recovered but had no memory of the attack, leaving police and prosecutors under intense pressure to find the assailants.

The case was a crucible for tensions and fears at a time when race relations were strained, a crack cocaine epidemic ravaged poor communities, violent crime was rampant and the gulf between rich and poor gaped wide. The Netflix series has been praised by critics and has reignited debate over the case, particularly among those too young to remember the case. Actor Joshua Jackson, who portrays one of the boys' lawyers in the show, said their treatment by the police, media and public was a "scab that needs to be picked at" in the age of Trump.

"One can't call for the murder of children and ever be forgiven for that ... It's a beyond the pale egregious thing for him to have done," he said. "I don't think there's any of the details of this (case) that would be particularly - unfortunately - shocking if you heard about them happening right now."

baller, a third-generation German, whipped up a political storm when he was pictured alongside Erdogan last May. Criticism intensified after the red-faced defending champions crashed out of the first round of the World Cup in Russia. In the wake of the World Cup fiasco, Ozil announced his resignation from the national squad, saying: "I am German when we win, an immigrant when we lose".

Erdogan often attends marriages in Turkey of celebrities, whom he particularly seeks out during election campaigns. His presence at Ozil's marriage comes ahead of a mayoral election in Istanbul on June 23, required after the original voting in March was annulled following a narrow victory for the main opposition Republican People's Party. — AFP

ments, told the Times that the Trump plan was aimed at improving the quality of life for Palestinians but would fall well short of a "permanent resolution to the conflict". He said he did not believe the plan would trigger Palestinian violence. But he said the United States would coordinate closely with Arab ally Jordan, which could face unrest among its large Palestinian population over a plan perceived as overly favorable to Israel.

Publication of the plan looks set to be further delayed after the Israeli parliament called a snap general election for September, the second this year. The plan is regarded as too sensitive to release during the campaign. During campaigning for the first general election in April, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged to annex West Bank Jewish settlements, a move long supported by nearly all lawmakers in his alliance of right-wing and religious parties.

Earlier, in February, Netanyahu told lawmakers he had been discussing with Washington a plan that would effectively annex settlements. In a rare public show of disunity between the close allies, the White House then flatly denied any such discussion. Following persistent expansion of the settlements by successive Netanyahu governments, more than 600,000 Jewish settlers now live in the West Bank, including annexed east Jerusalem, among some three million Palestinians. The international community regards the settlements as illegal and the biggest obstacle to peace. — AFP



LOS ANGELES: Honorees (from left) Antron McCray, Raymond Santana, Yusef Salaam, Kevin Richardson and Corey Wise appear on stage at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California's 25th annual awards luncheon on Friday. — AFP

Jackson added. In 2014, following a long legal battle, the so-called "Central Park Five" received a \$41 million compensation settlement for their time behind bars. "We were boys when we were sent to prison

and we were men when we came out," said Salaam. "We had to struggle to break the label that the media gave us." He added: "I'm one of the Exonerated Five." — AFP

## Ozil marries with Erdogan...

Continued from Page 1

Merkel's chief of staff was part of a chorus of criticism of the invitation. Helge Braun, a CDU told the Bild newspaper then that it "makes one sad" that Ozil would make a such a move despite having already been sharply criticized by the German public over his first meeting with Erdogan.

Ozil has dated Gulse since 2017 and the couple announced their engagement in June 2018. The foot-

## US envoy: Israel has 'right' to annex...

Continued from Page 1

tantamount to "US complicity with Israeli colonial plans". The establishment of a Palestinian state in territories, including the West Bank, that Israel occupied in the Six-Day War of 1967, has been the focus of all past Middle East peace plans. No firm date has yet been set for the unveiling of the Trump administration's plan although a conference is to be held in Bahrain later this month on its economic aspects.

The public comments made by administration officials so far suggest the plan will lean heavily on substantial financial support for the Palestinian economy, much of it funded by the Gulf Arab states, in return for concessions on territory and statehood. "The absolute last thing the world needs is a failed Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan," Friedman said in the Times interview. "Maybe they won't take it, maybe it doesn't meet their minimums. We're relying upon the fact that the right plan, for the right time, will get the right reaction over time."

Friedman, a staunch supporter of the Israeli settle-

## Sudan arrests protest leaders...

Continued from Page 1

Ethiopian premier flew to Khartoum on Friday and held separate meetings with the two sides.

"The army, the people and political forces have to act with courage and responsibility by taking quick steps towards a democratic and consensual transitional period," Abiy said in a statement after the meetings. "The army has to protect the security of the country and its people and political forces have to think about the future of the country."

But three members of an opposition delegation that met the Ethiopian premier were later arrested, their aides said yesterday. Opposition politician Mohamed Esmat was detained Friday, while Ismail Jalab, a leader of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), was taken from his home overnight. "A group of armed men came in vehicles at 3:00 am (1:00 GMT) and took away Ismail Jalab... without giving any reason," one of his aides, Rashid Anwar, told AFP. He said SPLM-N spokesman Mubarak Ardol was also detained.

Esmat and Jalab are both leading members of the Alliance for Freedom and Change, an umbrella of opposition parties and some rebel groups. The Alliance was a key organizer of mass protests since December that led to Bashir's ouster. The arrests threaten to further complicate efforts to reconcile the protest movement and the generals. Following Monday's brutal crackdown, chances of a quick democratic transition appear remote as protest leaders now insist that talks with the generals can resume only under certain conditions.

"The Transitional Military Council has to admit the crime it committed," Omar Al-Digeir, a prominent protest leader told reporters on Friday after meeting Abiy. He called for all military forces to be removed from streets across the country and demanded an international probe into "the massacre and the sit-in". Digeir



OMDURMAN, Sudan: Shoppers walk yesterday through the great market of Omdurman, Khartoum's twin city. — AFP

said the military council should also restore access to the Internet and allow public and media freedoms.

Britain's ambassador to Khartoum Irfan Siddiq tweeted that "in diplomacy, dialogue is everything and pre-conditions for dialogue are generally not a good idea". But, he continued, "after what happened on 3 June, these... conditions for returning to talks seem eminently reasonable." Since the crackdown, Khartoum residents have mostly been sheltering indoors and the streets have been deserted. RSF chief and deputy head of the military council, Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, has warned he will not tolerate "any chaos".

Some barricades remained in place, witnesses said yesterday, but the protest site at military headquarters was out of bounds. Troops and RSF paramilitaries surrounded it from all sides to keep demonstrators at bay. The protest slogans that once rang across Khartoum - "freedom, peace, justice" and "civilian rule, civilian rule" - were nowhere to be heard. — AFP



## Sports

# Ruthless Crusaders thrash Rebels as Brumbies topple Waratahs

## Crusaders were untouchable with Reece and Ennor both bagging a hat-trick

WELLINGTON: A rampant Canterbury Crusaders thrashed the Melbourne Rebels 66-0 to ensure top spot in the Super Rugby standings yesterday as the Brumbies booked a home quarter-final by toppling the Waratahs.

After a shock loss in their last match against the Chiefs, the Crusaders produced an incredible display of attacking rugby to run in 10 tries against an error-ridden Rebels, who badly missed rested scrum-half Will Genia.

It was one of the Melbourne team's worst ever results and leaves them facing a must-win clash against the Chiefs at home next weekend to keep alive their hopes of qualifying for the finals. In Sydney, the ACT Brumbies were also in charge, making it five wins in a row for the first time since 2007 by battling past the NSW Waratahs 35-24.

The win, in their penultimate game of the regular season, made certain they finish top of the Australian conference, meaning a home last eight clash in Canberra. The Waratahs' playoff dreams are over, barring a miracle.

The Crusaders were untouchable with Sevu Reece and Braydon Ennor both bagging a hat-trick of tries while David Havili (2), Bryn Hall and Ryan Crotty also grabbed five-pointers. Richie Mo'unga added seven conversions.

Their exploits guaranteed the nine-time Super Rugby champions finish top of the overall table and will host the eighth-placed team in the quarter-finals at home. "It's awesome," Crusaders captain Sam

Whitelock said.

"Obviously last week the pressure came on a little bit" after the side's loss to the Chiefs, he added. Rebels skipper Dane Haylett-Petty admitted their defence was "all over the show". "The disappointing thing is we didn't play our game," he said.

"Defence was poor, we're obviously very disappointed. Our defence was a little bit all over the show today and you can't do that against a quality attacking outfit." They were trailing 26-0 at half-time after letting in four unanswered tries as the Crusaders ran amok, and despite a big lead the defending champions continued to attack after the break to reinforce their credentials as title favourites.

### STRONG FORWARD PACK

The Brumbies are also in red-hot form and have now won their last four matches against the Waratahs in Sydney. "Pleased to get the result tonight and top of the conference is nice," said skipper Christian Lealiifano.

"I felt like we took our opportunities in the first half and our forward pack was really strong. Things were working really well, and we will go back and have a look at things that didn't work as well in the second-half."

Bernard Foley gave the home team an early edge with a penalty kick but that was as good as it got in the first half with the Brumbies running in four tries, all converted by Lealiifano. Rory Arnold got the ball rolling in the 14th minute with the big Wallabies lock



Canterbury Crusaders and Melbourne Rebels players vie for the ball.

driving over from a ruck. They consolidated their lead with their powerful forwards again involved, helping push Andy Muirhead over the line. Minutes later Tevita Kuridrani offloaded to Irae Simone who raced in for their third and another drive from a maul set up Folau Fainga'a to get the next. Nick Phipps pulled a try back for the home team early in the second half after a clever dummy as the Waratahs finally woke up.

Adam Ashley-Cooper picked up a Foley chip to get another and give his side a glimmer of hope, but it was extinguished when Tom Cusack dotted down for the Brumbies' fifth. It proved a disappointing end for Sekope Kepu, Phipps and Curtis Rona, who all played their last game at home for the Tahs before moving to newly-promoted London Irish in the English Premiership. — AFP

## Russia again in spotlight as IAAF wrestles with Semenya case

MONACO: Doping-tainted Russia will learn today whether it has met the criteria set by athletics governing body the IAAF to be reintegrated in world track and field. Banned in November 2015 because of evidence of mass state-sponsored doping, Russia has failed to have its ban overturned 10 times.

Dozens of Russian athletes cleared by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), however, have competed as neutrals. While US-based long jumper Darya Klshina was the sole Russian athlete cleared to participate at the 2016 Rio Olympics, 74 Russian athletes competed as neutrals last year and 68 have been cleared since the start of 2019.

The IAAF, led by two-time Olympic 1500m gold medalist Sebastian Coe, has been the stand-out sporting body to put its foot down in the wake of the doping scandal, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) having both reintegrated Russia.

Rumour has it that Russia, a giant in the track and field world, is now closer than ever to getting the green light from the IAAF for its reintegration. The body's Task Force, charged with investigating the scandal, wants 2.8 million euros repaid by the Russians for its work as well as access to the Moscow laboratory at the heart of the doping scandal between 2011-15.

The two are close to being resolved. On April 30, WADA announced that analysis of data taken from the Moscow lab in January was "almost finished" before being sent to the Athletics Integrity unit (AIU), a watchdog founded by the IAAF to combat doping in the sport. And Russian athletics federation chief Dmitry Shlyakhtin said on June 2 that the Task Force costs had been met.

"We should be heading towards accepting them back in," said Frenchman Bernard Amsalem, a member of the 27-strong IAAF council that will vote today.



Semenya

"We've come to the end of the procedure. Things must now return to normal."

Things, however, were complicated by a Sunday Times story on June 2 alleging that Russian athletics federation (RUSAF) officials fabricated documents to show that Danil Lysenko, the 2017 world silver high jump medalist was too ill to provide his whereabouts after failing to make himself available for out-of-competition drug testing.

Russia authorities came out blazing, saying they were victims of an "information war" and questioning the timing of the story ahead of the IAAF Council meeting in Monaco. Lysenko was provisionally suspended last August on the eve of the European Championships in Berlin, after making himself unavailable for testing.

According to the Sunday Times, RUSAF officials used documents from fake doctors working at a bogus clinic in Moscow to cover for Lysenko.

Russian hopes of reintegration aside, the IAAF

Council meeting will also take place in the shadow of double Olympic champion Caster Semenya's stance against the body's rules obliging female athletes to lower their testosterone levels in order to compete in certain events.

Switzerland's highest court on Monday temporarily suspended the IAAF rules following an appeal by Semenya, the South African who won the women's 800 metres at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics.

The athlete was contesting a decision by the Court of Arbitration for Sport which previously found that the rules were "discriminatory" but "necessary" to ensure fairness in women's athletics.

"The IAAF will continue to fight for equal rights and opportunities for all women and girls in our sport today and in the future," the IAAF said in the wake of the Swiss court ruling, adding that it was committed to the "full participation of women" in athletics. It said it would "seek a swift reversion of the super-provisional order moving forwards". — AFP

## Leclerc on top as Ferrari rebound after Hamilton puncture

MONTREAL: Lewis Hamilton said he felt like a naughty schoolboy after hitting the wall in second free practice for today's Canadian Grand Prix as Charles Leclerc led a revived Ferrari back to the top of the times on Friday.

The defending five-time world champion slid out of the chicane through turns eight and nine, his rear right wheel slamming hard into the barriers. "It was my mistake," he said. "And I damaged the car. The boys tried really hard to fix it, but there wasn't enough time."

As a result of the crash, Hamilton nursed his car back to the pits with a puncture and a damaged floor. "I don't remember the last time I missed a whole session," he added. "It's definitely not great to watch from the garage-it feels like sitting in the headmaster's office, wishing to be back in class."

Leclerc topped the times ahead of Sebastian Vettel as Ferrari took full advantage to lead the way in an eventful second practice that raised Italian hopes of ending Mercedes record run of six consecutive season-opening wins.

The Monegasque driver, bitterly disappointed by a team error in his home Monaco event two weeks ago, clocked a

best lap in 1min 12.177sec to outpace the four-time champion by 0.074 seconds and leave Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes third, adrift by one-tenth. Hamilton wound up down in sixth place behind Carlos Sainz of McLaren and Kevin Magnussen of Haas.

The championship leader completed only eight laps and missed more than an hour of the session, a possibly vital absence in terms of collecting data, notably on tyre degradation, at the challenging Circuit Gilles Villeneuve.

"It was an innocent mistake," he added. "I was doing multiple laps on the medium tyre and was really trying to find the limit. Obviously I went slightly over! I had a big snap out of Turn Nine and was drifting for a long time, hoping I wouldn't hit the wall."

"But these things happen. You just have to put it behind you and get back on the horse." "The boys will do a great job fixing the car tonight and we'll come back ready for a better day." Despite his team's success, Vettel said Ferrari were not the quickest.

"We're not the fastest," he said. "I know that in terms of results, if you look at the one-lap performance it looks



MONTREAL: Charles Leclerc of Monaco and Ferrari looks on in the garage during final practice for the F1 Grand Prix of Canada at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve yesterday in Montreal, Canada. — AFP

maybe like that this afternoon but I think there's still quite a reasonable gap to Mercedes."

He added: "It's been an interesting session - obviously quite slippery and dirty to start with, but I think the track will improve so the key will be to go with the track. It wasn't a great day in terms of tyres."

Sergio Perez was seventh for the Canadian-owned Racing Point team ahead of Daniel Ricciardo and his Renault team-mate Nico Hulkenberg and local hopeful Lance Stroll in the second Racing Point car. Max Verstappen was 13th behind his Red Bull team-mate Pierre Gasly after he had also had an untimely brush with the walls. — AFP

## Froome targets record fourth Criterium

PARIS: Chris Froome embarks today on the mountainous eight-day stage race of the Criterium du Dauphine, the race traditionally seen as a litmus test for July's Tour de France.

The four-time 'Grande Boucle' winner Froome can test his prowess against most of the Tour's pretenders in Adam Yates, Richie Porte, Tom Dumoulin and Romain Bardet in a highly competitive field attracted by a tough route.

"It's difficult to say exactly where I am with my form because I haven't raced recently," Froome said this week. "But I'd like to be fighting for the win here. It's a good, balanced route," he said of the course considered averagely mountainous, but tightly packed with challenges.

The race has two summit finishes on the final two days, it traverses relentlessly through rolling terrain and features what promises to be a hotly-contested 26km time-trial on Wednesday.

"There are a few lumpy days, a time trial and then some big mountain days. We'll definitely get a good gauge of where we are after doing this Dauphine as there's a bit of everything there," Froome added.

Should Froome actually emerge as the winner at the Swiss ski resort of Champéry next Sunday he will claim the record as the only man to have won the title four times. He will have to do so without the help of reigning Tour de France champion Geraint Thomas, who is set to race the Tour de Suisse, starting next weekend.

Froome will also need to show some real form for the first time this season. "I went a bit too far in Colombia in the early season and I should have been more patient."

Dutch 2017 Giro d'Italia champion Dumoulin will be trying out the knee he hurt in a fall early on at this year's race but will also try out his new slim-line frame on the summits. Ireland's Dan Martin also expects to be in the mix.

"Racing on the French roads against a high-level competition is the perfect preparation for the Tour de France," Martin said this week. "I've performed well in the last few years at the race, so I am just aiming to enjoy the race and hope the legs are there to be aggressive at some point in the week," said the UAE Team Emirates captain. — AFP

## Holloway breaks 13-second barrier in 110m hurdles

LOS ANGELES: American Grant Holloway ran the fastest 110 metres hurdles race in 11 months, breaking the 13 second barrier for the first time in his career at the 2019 US national collegiate championships on Friday. The 21-year-old Holloway flashed across the line in 12.98 seconds to edge out runner-up Daniel Roberts, who clocked 13 seconds flat at the Mike A. Myers Stadium in Austin, Texas.

Holloway, who attends school in Florida, became the first American college athlete to run a sub-13 race. He also broke Renaldo Nehemiah's 40-year old college record of 13.00. Former world champion Sergey Shubenkov, of Russia, was the last athlete to break the 13 second barrier when he ran 12.92 in July 2018. Holloway also competes in the long jump. — AFP



## Sports

# Chirinos delivers as Astros earn walk off win over Orioles in 11th innings

## Giants top Dodgers, end Kershaw's win streak

**HOUSTON:** Robinson Chirinos delivered a walk-off double with two outs in the 11th inning, as the Houston Astros rallied for a 4-3 victory over the Baltimore Orioles in the opener of this three-game series Friday at Minute Maid Park. Chirinos drilled a 3-2 fastball from Brandon Kline (1-3) into the left field corner, scoring Yuli Gurriel from first base to complete the comeback from an early three-run deficit. Josh Reddick and Tony Kemp socked home runs in the fifth inning for the Astros, with Kemp's two-run shot tying the game at 3-3. Left-hander Cionel Perez (1-0), recalled from Triple-A Round Rock earlier Friday, worked three perfect innings of relief for Houston. Starter Gerrit Cole, who leads the majors with 130 strikeouts, recorded a season-high 14 in throwing 113 pitches. Orioles right-hander Gabriel Ynoa allowed three runs on three hits and three walks with two strikeouts in his third start of the season. Catcher Chance Sisco hit his first home run of the season for Baltimore.

### RAYS 5, RED SOX 1

Yonny Chirinos threw a career-high eight shutout innings, while Kevin Kiermaier homered and had four RBIs as Tampa Bay beat host Boston. Chirinos (7-2) was perfect through the first five innings before escaping a bases-loaded jam in the sixth on his way to the win. He gave up two hits, walked two, struck out six and threw 101 pitches, another career high. Ji-Man Choi drove in the other Rays run on a solo homer as Tampa Bay won its third straight while ending Boston's winning streak at four games.

### INDIANS 5, YANKEES 2

Carlos Santana belted a two-run homer in the sixth inning, and Zach Plesac recorded his first major league win as host Cleveland beat New York. Tyler Naquin launched a solo homer, and Jason Kipnis answered an 0-for-20 skid with an RBI single among his two hits and a sacrifice fly in the eighth inning for the Indians. New York's Domingo German (9-2), who was denied in his bid to become the majors' first 10-game winner, allowed four runs on six hits in six innings. Aaron Hicks homered for the second time in as many days for the Yankees, who welcomed the return of Didi Gregorius following Tommy John surgery in October.

### ROCKIES 5, METS 1

Antonio Senzatela tossed six solid innings, and Daniel Murphy continued tormenting his former team by homering during an eventful eighth inning of Colorado's win over host New York. The Rockies have won two straight and 10 of 12. The Mets, who began on Friday a stretch of 28 consecutive games against teams that currently possess winning records, had their two-game winning streak snapped and have lost seven of 11. Murphy homered deep into the upper deck in right in the eighth inning. Murphy, who played with the Mets

from 2008 through 2015, finished 2-for-4 and is now batting .386 with 12 homers and 44 RBIs in 47 games against the Mets.

### PADRES 5, NATIONALS 4

Light-hitting Austin Hedges singled home Josh Naylor with two out in the bottom of the ninth to give host San Diego a win over Washington. Washington had taken a 4-3 lead in the top of the ninth when Brian Dozier doubled and scored on a wild pitch by Padres reliever Adam Warren. Eric Hosmer tripled off Washington closer Sean Doolittle with one out in the bottom of the ninth and scored on a two-out single by the left-handed-hitting Naylor off the left-handed Doolittle. Naylor then stole his first base in the majors and raced home on the first walk-off hit of Hedges' career. Naylor slid home on a head-first slide as the throw from left fielder Juan Soto was up the first-base line.

### GIANTS 2, DODGERS 1

Kevin Pillar and Brandon Crawford drove in runs, and left-hander Drew Pomeranz delivered five scoreless innings as San Francisco beat visiting Los Angeles to become the first team to hand Clayton Kershaw a loss in nearly 11 months. In what might have been one last chance to remain in the starting rotation, Pomeranz gave up just three hits with seven strikeouts and just one walk as he lowered his ERA to 7.16 for the season. Kershaw (5-1) gave up two runs on six hits over seven innings in taking the loss for the first time since July 21 of last season. The Dodgers lost consecutive games for the first time since April 23-24 at Chicago against the Cubs. The Giants have defeated the Dodgers three times in their last four meetings.

### CUBS 3, CARDINALS 1

Cole Hamels allowed three hits over eight shutout innings, and Javier Baez hit a two-run homer to lead Chicago over visiting St. Louis. Hamels (5-2) walked one and struck out 10, including the side in the eighth, to end a stretch of three winless starts. He has allowed only an unearned run and five hits over 15 innings in back-to-back starts against St. Louis while striking out 14. Victor Caratini went 2-for-2 with a walk and an RBI double, and Jason Heyward doubled and scored for Chicago, which won for the fourth time in five games.

### BREWERS 10, PIRATES 4

Ryan Braun hit a three-run homer, Brandon Woodruff won his seventh straight decision and Milwaukee beat visiting Pittsburgh. Braun hit his first homer since May 14 for his 10th homer of the season, making this the 12th season in which he has reached double-digits in homers-breaking a tie with Hall of Famer of Robin Yount for the most in team history. Woodruff (8-1) allowed three runs on four hits in six innings. He matched a career high with 10 strikeouts to improve to 7-0 in his last 10 starts. The Brewers beat



**HOUSTON:** Chance Sisco #15 of the Baltimore Orioles holds up the ball as home plate umpire John Tumpane calls Yuli Gurriel #10 of the Houston Astros safe in the eleventh inning for the win at Minute Maid Park in Houston, Texas. — AFP

the Pirates for the fourth time in five meetings this season and scored at least 10 runs for the third time in those five games.

### TWINS 6, TIGERS 3

Nelson Cruz hit the go-ahead homer, Mitch Garver homered and drove in three runs, and Minnesota topped host Detroit. Cruz has 18 career homers against the Tigers. Garver hit his 10th homer, and C.J. Cron blasted his 14th this season for the Twins. Marwin Gonzalez added four hits and an RBI and Jorge Polanco extended his on-base streak to 22 games with two hits. Detroit starter Matthew Boyd gave up three runs on nine hits in seven innings and struck out eight with no walks. Miguel Cabrera had three hits and scored a run, while Ronny Rodriguez contributed two hits and an RBI.

### A'S 5, RANGERS 3

Marcus Semien hit a two-run homer in the ninth inning, his second of the game, to lift Oakland over Texas in the opener of a four-game series in Arlington, Texas. Semien also matched his career high with four hits. He drove in four runs and scored three. Oakland left-hander Brett Anderson allowed three runs and eight hits in 6 1/3 innings, striking out five and walking one. Rangers right-hander Lance Lynn limited the A's to two runs and six hits over six innings, striking out eight and walking one. Delino DeShields had three hits,

Elvis Andrus and Nomar Mazara had two hits apiece and Hunter Pence hit a solo home run for Texas.

### PHILLIES 4, REDS 2

Jay Bruce homered and had two RBIs, J.T. Realmuto added two hits and host Philadelphia opened a three-game series with a win over Cincinnati. Phillies starter Zach Eflin threw 6 1/3 innings and gave up four hits and two runs, one earned. Eflin (6-5) struck out six and walked four after missing his previous start with back tightness. Hector Neris tossed a scoreless ninth for his 13th save in 13 opportunities as the Phillies have won three in a row. Joey Votto contributed a home run and had two hits for the Reds, who have dropped two straight.

### BRAVES 7, MARLINS 1

Mike Soroka pitched scoreless ball until the ninth inning, as Freddie Freeman and Ronald Acuna Jr. each homered to lead Atlanta over host Miami. Soroka (7-1), a Rookie of the Year frontrunner, won his seventh straight decision and is 2-0 against the Marlins this year. Freeman has hit a homer in four of the six games Atlanta has played this month. Jose Urena (4-7) took the loss, allowing a season-high 11 hits to go with one walk and six runs in three-plus innings. That snapped streaks of three straight wins and five straight quality starts and continued another trend: Urena is 2-8 in his career against the Braves. — Reuters

## India v Australia: Three key World Cup battles

**LONDON:** India and Australia clash in the standout game of the World Cup so far today, with Virat Kohli's men desperate to lay down a marker against the five-time champions.

In the past five editions of the tournament, India are the only team to have denied the Australians the trophy, on home soil in 2011. AFP Sport takes a look at three key battles ahead of the match at The Oval.

### KOHLI V STARC

Virat Kohli is the world's top-ranked batsman in one-day internationals and Tests while Mitchell Starc is Australia's left-arm pace spearhead. Kohli was out for just 18 in India's opening game in Southampton but averages more than 53 against Australia in ODIs. Starc, who took five wickets in Australia's win over the West Indies, will be handed the responsibility of taking early wickets, with Kohli the prized scalp. "When he's got his rhythm and his form is good, he's definitely the best around—I think that is without question," said former Australia captain Allan Border, who led the team to their 1987 World Cup triumph.

### WARNER V BUMRAH

Swashbuckling Australian opener David Warner has returned from his ball-tampering ban in style. After topping the run charts in the Indian Premier League, Warner smashed an unbeaten 89 in Australia's opening World Cup win over Afghanistan. But the left-handed batsman will be up against an Indian paceman who tops the ODI bowling rankings, with 87 wickets in 50 matches. Bumrah set the tone



**LONDON:** India's Mahendra Singh Dhoni bats in the nets as he takes part in a training session at The Oval in London, ahead of their match of the 2019 Cricket World Cup against Australia. — AFP

for India's win against South Africa on Wednesday with his two early strikes. South African opener Hashim Amla called him "one hell of a bowler" after the 25-year-old quick sent the veteran batsman packing for six on a cloudy Southampton morning.

### ZAMPA V CHAHAL

Adam Zampa is no Shane Warne but is expected to be Australia's key spin hope against India. Fifteen of the leg-spinner's 64 ODI wickets have come

lay flat on the practice pitch as his visibly concerned team-mates stopped their session. The Australian physio attended to the bowler, identified as Jaykishan Plaha, who was taken off on a stretcher to a medical room at the ground.

One of Plaha's fellow net bowlers told AFP the injured player was conscious and the session subsequently resumed. International Cricket Council venue manager Michael Gibson told reporters: "The net bowler has been taken to hospital as a precautionary measure because it was a head injury."

"He was conscious and smiling as he was taken off." The Aaron Finch-led team, who have won both of their games at the World Cup, are looking to defend their crown. Finch said Warner was "shaken up" by the incident.

against India since his debut in 2016 and variations including the googly and the straight ball make up for his lack of prodigious turn. His Indian counterpart, Yuzvendra Chahal, is seen as Kohli's go-to spinner along with spin partner Kuldeep Yadav. Chahal returned figures of 4-51 against South Africa and the former chess player will be looking to plot Australia's downfall. "Chess has taught me patience and planning," he said. "When you play chess you normally plan 15 to 16 moves in advance." —AFP

"Dave is obviously pretty shaken up. The young guy (Plaha) is in pretty good spirits at the moment. He has obviously been taken to the hospital to be assessed that everything is OK," said Finch.

"It was a pretty decent hit, so hopefully everything goes well for the youngster and he is up and running shortly." On the issue of more protection on grounds around the world for net bowlers, Finch said, "It's quite rare that somebody gets hit, it's really unfortunate. Our own medical staff and the paramedics on the ground did a great job."

Australian cricket was plunged into mourning in 2014 when Test batsman Phillip Hughes died after being hit on the base of the skull during a domestic match. Warner was playing in that match, between New South Wales and South Australia. — AFP

## Net bowler hit on head by Warner in World Cup practice

**LONDON:** Australia halted their practice session at the Oval yesterday after opening batsman David Warner hit a net bowler on the head with a powerful drive. Warner was midding the ball in the nets ahead of the World Cup match against India today and one of his drives felled the paceman.

The batsman rushed to the aid of the bowler, who

## Lloyd tells West Indies to play 'smart' after WCup frustration

**LONDON:** Clive Lloyd has warned the West Indies to play "smart cricket" if they want to make an impact at the World Cup. Lloyd, who captained the West Indies to victory at the 1975 and 1979 tournaments, saw the side impress with a rout of Pakistan in their opening match, but then let Australia off the hook as the holders beat them by 15 runs.

The Windies had Australia in trouble, but some wayward bowling allowed Nathan Coulter-Nile to score 92 from 60 balls before Mitchell Starc's five-wicket haul clinched the win at Trent Bridge.

Lloyd believes the West Indies have the weapons to make a strong run at the tournament, but the 74-year-old called on them to show more cunning at key moments. "The West Indies must start to play smart cricket because they have two real big games coming up against South Africa and England. Therefore they have to be on top of their game as I'm sure they'd want to qualify," he said.

"They should have players who are able to win games, especially when the pitch was quite placid and devoid of bounce and movement during that stage of the (Australia) game." "I think on another day, with a better analysis of the situation they could have won that game and this would have given them the impetus to realise that they were serious contenders to qualify for the latter stages of this competition."

Lloyd was especially frustrated that the West Indies batting folded when they were apparently on course for victory. Accusing them on playing too carelessly, Lloyd said: "There is no reason why they should be almost bowled out on a pitch like that at Trent Bridge, but they tried to hit the aerial shots and started throwing wickets away."

"The players have to realise that this is not Twenty20. The batsmen need to turn those scores of 30 and 40 into bigger scores and they must be aware that all these teams have world-class bowlers at their disposal."

Lloyd's former side can get back on track tomorrow when they face South Africa, who are in turmoil after losing all three of their matches. "South Africa are up next and while they haven't performed to their ability, Windies have to be aware of the job at hand as South Africa is in danger of missing out on the top four if they lose," Lloyd said.

"They now have to re-group, look at the mistakes they made and rectify them so that they can return to their winning ways. I'm still feeling positive about the West Indies overall." — AFP



Sports

# Lionel Messi scores twice as Argentina routs Nicaragua 5-1

## Brazil missing injured Neymar for the showpiece event

LOS ANGELES: Lionel Messi scored a first-half double as Argentina warmed up for the Copa America with a comprehensive 5-1 win over Nicaragua on Friday in San Juan. The Central Americans, who will participate in this month's Gold Cup tournament while Argentina battle it out in Brazil, frustrated the home side initially.

But it was left to captain Messi to spark his side into action in their only warm-up match ahead of the tournament, expertly opening the scoring on 37 minutes before grabbing another just 96 seconds later.

Lautaro Martinez, the Inter Milan forward, also scored twice, coming off the substitutes bench at half-time to give coach Lionel Scaloni food for thought ahead of the opening match with Colombia on June 15.

Scaloni, brought in after Jorge Sampaoli was sacked following a disastrous showing at the World Cup last summer, is aiming to build a younger team and end Argentina's 26-year wait for a trophy. Indeed, in Scaloni's Copa America squad only Messi, Sergio Aguero and Angel Di Maria remain from the one that was beaten by Germany in the World Cup final in Rio five years ago.

An on-song Messi, however, is needed for the South Americans to prosper over the next few weeks. Messi has lost three Copa finals — 2007, 2015 and 2016 — and the last time Argentina won an international title was in the same competition back in 1993, when the diminutive forward was just six years old. They have reached four of the last five finals.

With Brazil missing the injured Neymar for the showpiece event, which starts on June 14, Argentina are one of the favourites. Early on in Friday's first meeting between

Argentina and Nicaragua, Scaloni's team failed to inspire in front of a sell-out crowd of 25,000 at San Juan del Bicentenario stadium in San Juan, Argentina.

Aguero looked dangerous in the opening stages and Messi really should have done better on 12 minutes when he uncharacteristically shot wide from close range. Nicaragua, however, were defending well while regularly asserting their physicality—Messi was twice hauled down in the opening half hour-to frustrate Argentina and their supporters.

River Plate's Matias Suarez had a shot pushed out the post by visiting keeper Justo Lorente on 26 minutes but the two time World Champions were being made to work hard for openings. Nicaragua, ranked 129th in the world and competing in their second successive Gold Cup, will prove a stern test for Costa Rica, Haiti and Bermuda despite this thrashing. They have yet to win a game in two appearances at the tournament—lost six with just one goal scored—but won't go down without a fight.

Messi, however, is a danger for any team and his brilliant run and finish saw the Barcelona star beat three defenders before clinically finishing past Lorente. He grabbed his second soon after when Aguero's shot was parried.

Scaloni withdrew key men Messi and Aguero at half-time, which allowed Martinez, 21, to impress with a well taken efforts on 63 and 72 minutes. Watford's Roberto Pereyra made it five with nine minutes remaining while Nicaragua's deserved consolation came through Juan Barrera's late penalty. Argentina play Colombia in Salvador before taking on Paraguay and Asian champions Qatar in Group B. — AFP



SAN JUAN: Argentina's Lionel Messi (C) is marked by Nicaragua's Josue Quijano (L) and Luis Fernando Copete during their international friendly football match at the San Juan del Bicentenario stadium in San Juan, Argentina. — AFP

## Spain crush Faroes, Ukraine thump Serbia in Euro qualifiers

PARIS: Three-time former champions Spain strolled past the Faroe Islands 4-1 and Ukraine hammered struggling Serbia 5-0 in Friday's Euro 2020 qualifying fixtures. Republic of Ireland's James McClean said pre-match criticism of his team-mates by Denmark players served as motivation as they claimed a 1-1 draw in Copenhagen.

"Their players weren't complimentary towards us in the build-up to the game. We wanted to prove a point," McClean said. Spain captain Sergio Ramos opened the scoring after six minutes before Jesus Navas doubled the lead just before the 20-minute mark.

Klaemint Olsen headed in from a corner after half an hour but the 102nd ranked side in the world's hopes of a surprise comeback were diminished four minutes later by a Teitur Gestsson own goal. The Spaniards made sure of the three points and remained unbeaten at the top of Group F with defender Jose Gaya's first international goal with 14 minutes to play.

Sweden beat Malta 3-0 to retain second spot. In Group D, Ireland's McClean criticised the Danish players' criticism of his team's playing style after a draw which left the visitors in pole position.

"It's not nice when professionals criticise you. Fair enough they beat us 5-1 but we've drawn the other four games we've played recently," he said. "They're not that much better than us ourselves, are they?"



TORSHAVN: Spain's defender Jesus Navas (R) challenges Faroe Islands' defender Viljormur Davidsen during the UEFA Euro 2020 group F qualifying match between Faroe Islands and Spain at the Trosvollur stadium in Torshavn. — AFP

he added. Christian Eriksen orchestrated Denmark's play in his first match since his club Tottenham were beaten in the Champions League final by Liverpool last weekend.

Elsewhere Ukraine humiliated Serbia in Lviv to leave the visitors, who qualified for the 2018 World Cup in Russia, rooted to the bottom of the group without a

win in their opening three matches. Schalke's Evgen Konoplyanka scored twice as the Ukrainians stayed top of Group B and five points ahead of reigning European champions Portugal who have played a game fewer. Poland also continued their unbeaten start as they squeezed past North Macedonia 1-0 thanks to Krzysztof Piatek's second-half effort. — AFP

## Portugal rely on Ronaldo to get better of Van Dijk

PORTO: Portugal's meeting with the Netherlands to decide the first ever winners of the Nations League today sees the unstoppable force of Cristiano Ronaldo face the immovable object in Virgil van Dijk.

Ronaldo sat out the early stages of UEFA's new competition to save his 34-year-old legs for his first season at Juventus, but returned in time to ride to the host nation's rescue once more in Wednesday's semi-final against Switzerland.

The Swiss enjoyed the better of the game in Porto, but the five-time world player of the year was lethal in scoring his 53rd career hat-trick with three exquisite finishes. "It's the preparation - my work ethic. I still feel good despite being 34 years of age," Ronaldo told UEFA.com.

"The most important thing is your head, to feel motivated and happy, and to follow my path as a player, because I think I still have a lot to give." Portugal's run to the last four without their all-time record top goalscorer showed why hopes are high the European champions will remain a force even when Ronaldo does eventually depart the international scene.

The talent of Bernardo Silva, Joao Felix, Ruben Neves and Bruno Fernandes among others promises much, but Ronaldo remains Portugal's X-factor. "We know sometimes it is impossible to have good defending against Cristiano Ronaldo," said the Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman.

"I think the best that we can do is keeping the ball, to have good ball possession because when we have the ball he can do nothing in attack."

However, Koeman is blessed with the man most capable of keeping Ronaldo quiet in world football at the moment in Van Dijk. The world's most expensive defender has more than justified his £75 million (\$95 million) price tag since swapping Southampton for Liverpool 18 months ago.

His transformative effect has brought back the glory days at Anfield, capped by winning the Champions League last weekend. And now Van Dijk is also leading his country back to where they belong as a European powerhouse after failing to even qualify for the last two major tournaments.

Koeman boasted about having the best central defensive partnership in Europe even before the tournament with Ajax captain Matthijs de Ligt lining up alongside Van Dijk. Yet, while the 19-year-old may well succeed his skipper as the world's most expensive defender in the coming weeks, Holland's 3-1 semi-final victory over England showed why he is not yet the finished article.

De Ligt's error in conceding a first half penalty could have cost his side a place in the final.

Van Dijk was first to console his young teammate and that assurance helped De Ligt to atone in perfect fashion as he scored the Dutch's equaliser before easing past an error-strwn England in extra-time.

Ronaldo may be keen for revenge against De Ligt as he also scored the winner when Ajax shocked Juventus in the Champions League quarter-finals this season. Despite the Italian champions' elimination, Ronaldo scored his side's two goals in that tie.

But he is yet to net when faced with the more imposing and composed figure of Van Dijk. In their only two previous meetings, Real Madrid beat Liverpool in last season's Champions League final thanks to two calamitous goalkeeping errors from Loris Karius and a wonder goal from Gareth Bale in what proved to be Ronaldo's last ever game for the Spanish giants. — AFP

## Germany's youngsters face Euro qualifiers without coach Loew

BERLIN: Germany coach Joachim Loew will be watching on television as his fresh-faced young team take on Belarus in the first of two upcoming Euro 2020 qualifiers. Loew was in hospital last week after suffering an accident in the gym, and will be absent when Germany face Belarus in Borisov on Tuesday and Estonia in Mainz next Tuesday.

He is set to be replaced in the dugout by assistant Marcus Sorg, who takes charge of a young squad which he knows well from his time as Germany under-19 coach. With six players in the squad under the age of 24 and only one, captain Manuel Neuer, with more than 50 caps to his name, Germany's rejuvenation process is now in full swing following last year's World Cup disaster.

Of the 23-man squad set to face Belarus and Estonia, goalkeeper Neuer is the only survivor from Germany's World Cup winning class of 2014. "I've noticed that I am now the old dog, and I want to help the team develop," Neuer said on Tuesday.

"The team still needs to find itself with the young players, and we are doing a lot off the field to help us gel a bit more as a group." Ten of the squad have less than ten caps, and in goalkeeper Sven Ulreich and defender Niklas Stark, there are two players hoping to make their international debuts.

While the likes of Ilkay Gundogan and Marco Reus have experience at the highest level in club football, they still have fewer caps than younger players such as Julian Draxler and Joshua Kimmich. — AFP

## Brazil's Marta goes in search of a crown in twilight of career

RIO DE JANEIRO: Nicknamed "Pele in a skirt" by the football great, the Brazilian star better known to her fans as "Queen" Marta will play in what could be her last women's World Cup in France.

But the chances of winning the world crown that has eluded the 33-year-old veteran and her compatriots are slim, with Brazil not tipped to lift the trophy. Widely considered to be the best female player of all time, Marta has come close to international glory with the Selecao, making it to the World Cup final in 2007 and picking up silver medals in the 2004 and 2008 Olympics.

But the Brazilian captain freely admits that this year's World Cup will be challenging, at the very least, for the national team. "It's hard to think about the title," Marta told a Swedish newspaper recently.

"At the moment the situation of the Selecao is far from ideal, it's the worst since I've been there." The Brazilian women's side—a mixture of young hopefuls and old-hands such as Marta, Cristiane and Formiga—have had a tough run-up to the World Cup, losing nine times in as many friendly games.

Adding to their woes, Marta suffered a hamstring injury during the build-up to the tournament and she is not a certainty for Brazil's opening match against Jamaica today.

If Marta is not held in quite the same esteem as three-time World Cup champion Pele, she stands out for the number of individual awards to her name—more than any other player, male or female. She was elected FIFA world player of the year for the sixth time in September, topping Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, who have won the men's award five times each.

Marta has much in common with Argentina's Messi—both are small in size, have mesmerising ball skills and



Marta Vieira Da Silva

are both still seeking their first World Cup. "(You say) Messi did not enter the history of football? It is not because we don't win that we don't remain in history," Marta told reporters in January.

But Marta's biggest achievement was to escape the misery of a difficult childhood in Dois Riachos in Brazil's arid northeast state of Alagoas. A UN ambassador for gender equality, she is an inspiration for many Brazilian women who love to play football but are often stigmatised in the macho country.

Marta Vieira Da Silva has been chasing her dreams all her life, starting off by trying to keep up with her brothers as they played. Home life was difficult—her parents split before she was a year old and her mother was left to fend for herself and four children.

Marta played in school leagues until the day when one coach refused to let his team compete unless she withdrew. At that stage, a local scout brought her to Rio for try-outs with nascent women's outfits.

Aged 14 by that stage, Marta had never left her home state. She impressed in a trial and signed for the Vasco da Gama youth team. Sissi, considered Marta's predecessor as Brazil's top female starlet, was then in the club's senior side.

Sissi remembers the first time she set eyes on Marta. "Her technical ability and explosive pace were incomparable. Everyone is born with a gift and this is hers," Sissi told AFP. By 2003, Marta was in Brazil's World Cup squad and scoring the first of her 117 goals with the national team. — AFP



**25** Russia again in spotlight as IAAF wrestles with Semenya case



**26** Chirinos delivers as Astros earn walk off win over Orioles in 11th innings



**27** Brazil's Marta goes in search of a crown in twilight of career



PARIS: Second-placed Czech Republic's Marketa Vondrousova (L) and winner Australia's Ashleigh Barty (C) pose with their trophies and with former tennis player Chris Evert (R) of the US at the end of the women's singles final match on day fourteen of The Roland Garros 2019 French Open tennis tournament in Paris yesterday. — AFP

## Australia's Barty wins French Open

### Thiem ends Djokovic history bid, faces Nadal for Roland Garros title

PARIS: Ashleigh Barty, the Australian who ditched tennis to play professional cricket for a year, smashed Marketa Vondrousova for six yesterday to lift the French Open crown at Roland Garros.

Boasting a bewildering array of shots and spins, the eighth seed crushed her Czech teenage opponent 6-1 6-3 to win her first Grand Slam title, and Australia's first French women's singles crown in more than four decades.

"It's unbelievable... I played the perfect match today. I am so proud of myself and my whole team... it has been a crazy two weeks," said Barty, the ninth different female champion in the last 10 grand slams.

"This is a special place for Australian players... it has been a magical two weeks."

Not since Margaret Court's triumph in Paris in 1973 has an Australian won the Coupe Suzanne Lenglen but this victory was in very little doubt from the moment the final began.

In a match-up where guile and artistry always trumped power, Barty was simply smarter throughout.

Producing angles so sharp they might have come with a health warning, the 23-year-old carved apart

Vondrousova in the opening set, clinching it in half an hour. While the match was no classic, those fans who had taken a break after the conclusion of the Dominic Thiem-Novak Djokovic men's semi-final which had caused the women's final to run more than an hour late, missed some of the more thoughtful tennis played on the Roland Garros clay this past fortnight.

Vondrousova, who herself has bamboozled a succession of opponents here, repeatedly found herself outfoxed by Barty, whose doubles excellence was always on display with her net-play and cleverly angled serving.

Barty, who returned to tennis in 2016 after a successful stint with the Brisbane Heat in Australian cricket's Women's Big Bash League, took nary a backward step, breaking instantly in the second set to deprive her 19-year-old opponent any foothold. Cracking a stiff-armed, two-handed backhand, in the manner of Jim Courier, Barty was able to counter Vondrousova's attempts to pull her wide with her loopy left-handed backhand, and the Czech rapidly ran out of ideas.

Vondrousova turned to ever riskier strategies-her drop shots became finer, her drives more firmly struck-and she earned a little breathing space, holding serve

three times after that early break.

But the irrevocable damage had been done and when Barty slammed a short smash high into the stands it was all over and she raised her arms in triumph.

The victory lacked drama but lifts Barty to number two in the world-a feat last accomplished by an Australian woman in 1976 by Evonne Goolagong.

Earlier, Novak Djokovic's dream of becoming just the second man in history to hold all Grand Slam titles at the same time twice was crushed by Dominic Thiem at Roland Garros yesterday. Thiem downed the world number one 6-2, 3-6, 7-5, 5-7, 7-5 to set up a repeat of last year's final against 11-time winner and defending champion Rafael Nadal.

Djokovic, who was second best to Thiem when it came to mastering the gloom, wind and damp of Paris, was bidding to join Rod Laver in the Grand Slam history books. However, it's 25-year-old Austrian fourth seed Thiem who goes on to face Nadal where he will be buoyed by having defeated the 17-time major winner four times on clay in his career.

He will also attempt to become just Austria's second Grand Slam men's champion after Thomas Muster won in

Paris in 1995. Thiem did it the hard way, squandering a 4-1 final set lead and two match points before he sealed his place in the final.

"It was an amazing match. It was my first five-set match at Roland Garros so it was a good one to have," said Thiem after the four hour 13-minute match which was played over two days.

"To be in the semi-finals with the three best players of all time (Nadal beat Roger Federer in the other semi on Friday) is really amazing." On the challenge of facing Nadal, who has had a day more to recover, he added: "It seems that anyone who gets to the final here plays Rafa."

"He will be the favourite but I hope to just leave it all out on the court again and we will see." The semi-final had been controversially suspended overnight Friday with Djokovic complaining about the 'extreme wind' in the stadium.

When play was halted, with the top seed trailing 1-3 in the third set, there was still around two hours of daylight remaining.

However, tournament organisers defended the decision after winds of up to 80km/h were forecast throughout the evening in Paris. — Agencies

## Leonard, Raptors win Game 4, put Warriors on brink

OAKLAND: The veteran big man with a history of overpowering opponents in the NBA postseason returned to the forefront Friday night. But while Golden State Warriors fans had hoped that might be their own Kevin Durant in Game 4 of the NBA Finals, in fact it turned out to be the opponent's Serge Ibaka.

Ibaka relived his glory days with 20 points off the bench to complement teammate Kawhi Leonard's usual

brilliance in a 105-92 victory that lifted the Toronto Raptors within one win of their first championship.

Leonard scored 17 of his game-high 36 points in a decisive third quarter, and a scrambling Toronto defense harassed Warriors star Stephen Curry into 2-for-9 shooting on 3-pointers, delivering the two-time defending champions a loss that puts them in a 3-1 hole in the best-of-seven series.

The Raptors will go for Canada's first NBA title at home in Game 5 on Monday night. Only once in 34 tries has a team overcome a 3-1 deficit to win the Finals-when Cleveland did so to top Golden State in 2016.

"I don't think it's daunting at all," Warriors coach Steve Kerr insisted of his club's second 3-1 postseason deficit in their five-year run of making the Finals. Golden State overcame the first by winning three straight against Oklahoma City in the 2016 Western finals.

"We go to Toronto," Kerr continued, "and this is what we do for a living: We play basketball. So we look forward to playing another basketball game in an exciting atmosphere, and the ultimate test, the NBA Finals. We look at it as a challenge. We'll be ready to go."

In winning for a third straight time in Oakland this season, including once in the regular season, Toronto rallied from an 11-point, first-quarter hole by outscoring the Warriors 93-69 over the game's final 37 minutes. The Raptors' biggest push came in the third period, when they finally got their offense on track and added 37 points to their 42-point halftime total while taking the lead for good.

"We had a big problem with the third quarter in Game 2, so we had to make some adjustments there to try to combat the way they come out of the half," Raptors coach Nick Nurse noted. "They have been historically really good at that."

It took just 46 seconds for Leonard to hit back-to-back 3-pointers, erasing all the good the Warriors had done in the first half and giving the Raptors their first lead of the night. "Kawhi's two big threes to start the half really I thought changed the whole feel of everybody," Nurse said. "I just thought everybody was like, 'OK, man, we know we are here, let's go,' and we just kind of kept going."

The Raptors' pull-away began with an Ibaka 3-pointer that broke a 61-all tie with four minutes remaining in the third quarter. Toronto finished the period on an 18-6 run, with Leonard (11) and Ibaka (seven) producing all the points, propelling the Eastern Conference champs into a 79-67 advantage.

"Once he gets into the series, which he did in Game 3, with the blocked shots and the rebounding and stuff, he seems to stay in the series," Nurse said of Ibaka. "He was great tonight, man." — Reuters