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Ousted Egypt president Morsi dies after collapsing in court

Erdogan pays tribute to 'martyr' • Sheikh Tamim expresses 'deep sorrow'



CAIRO: This file photo taken on June 16, 2015 shows Egypt's ousted president Mohamed Morsi behind the bars during his trial. — AFP

CAIRO: Egypt's first democratically elected civilian president Mohamed Morsi, an Islamist who was ousted after one year of divisive rule, died after falling ill during a court hearing yesterday, the attorney general said. He was 67. Morsi had been "animated" during a hearing in the retrial of an espionage case where he was accused of collaborating with adverse foreign powers and militant groups, judicial and security sources said.

"The court granted him his request to speak for five minutes... He fell to the ground in the cage... and was transported immediately to the hospital. A medical report found... no pulse or breathing," the office of the attorney general said in a statement. "He arrived at the hospital dead at 4:50 pm exactly and there were no new, visible injuries found on the body."

One of Morsi's defense lawyers described the moment he received news of his death. "We heard the banging on the glass cage from the rest of the other inmates and them screaming loudly that Morsi had died," the

lawyer, Osama El Helw, told AFP. "I saw him from afar wheeled out on the stretcher from the courts complex" from Tora, in southern Cairo, said another one of his lawyers, Abdel-Menem Abdel-Maqsood. "They prevented us from leaving the court for about 15 minutes," he added, without being able to say which hospital the former president had been transported to. He said Morsi's health had been poor in jail. "We had put in several requests for treatment, some were accepted and others were not," Abdel-Maqsood told Reuters.

A judicial source said the former Islamist president had fainted during a break in the court session. The court officials "had just finished the session for the espionage case and they informed the judge that he had fainted and needed to be transported to a hospital where he later died," he told AFP. Security sources said the interior ministry had declared a state of alert yesterday, notably in Morsi's home province of Sharqiya in the Nile Delta, where the body was expected to be taken for burial.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a strong ally of the Islamist president during his brief tenure as Egypt's leader, paid tribute to Morsi and called him a "martyr". "May Allah rest our brother Morsi, our martyr's soul, in peace," said Erdogan, who had forged close ties with Morsi. Relations between Turkey and Egypt have been virtually non-existent since the Egyptian military, then led by Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, in 2013 ousted Islamist president Morsi. Sisi has since become president. Erdogan has strongly denounced Morsi's ouster and called for the release of Muslim Brotherhood prisoners in Egypt.

Speaking in Istanbul, Erdogan again took aim at Sisi, calling him a "tyrant" who took power in a "coup" and who has trampled on democracy. "The West has remained silent," Erdogan said. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said: "The coup moved him (Morsi) away from the power but his memory will not be erased."

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News in brief

20,000 iqamas cancelled

KUWAIT: State Minister for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel said 20,000 expat residency permits were cancelled during the past three years due to linking workers' residency permits, education level and work permits. Aqeel also said the Public Authority for Manpower recovered KD 123,573 for employers who submitted complaints at the domestic help department against domestic help supply offices and companies. She added 194 female inmates out of 500 at the expat shelter have been deported. Aqeel said solutions are being sought to resolve the issue of absconding laborers by granting them a three-month grace period to amend their status, besides increasing absconding fines, in addition to punishing those who employ absconders. — Al-Rai

'No deal without Palestinian state'

CAIRO: The head of the Arab League warned yesterday that attempts to solve the Israel-Palestinian conflict will be in vain without the establishment of a Palestinian state on all territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war. Ahmed Aboul Gheit's comments appeared directed at a still unpublished peace plan that US President Donald Trump has dubbed the "deal of the century". "Whatever is rejected by the Palestinian or the Arab side is unacceptable," Aboul Gheit said during an event at the Arab League. "What is acceptable from our side as Arabs as a solution is the establishment of a Palestinian state on the June 4, 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital," he added. — Reuters

Iran to breach nuclear deal uranium limit

TEHRAN: Iran said yesterday it will surpass from June 27 a uranium stockpile limit set under the nuclear deal with world powers that the US abandoned last year, worrying EU powers who urged Tehran against ultimatums. French President Emmanuel Macron encouraged Iran to be "patient and responsible" at a time of growing tension as Washington blames Tehran for attacks on tankers in the Gulf of Oman.

"Today the countdown to pass the 300 kilograms reserve of enriched uranium has started and in 10 days' time... we will pass this limit," Iran's atomic energy organization spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi told a news conference broadcast live on state television. The move "will be reversed once other parties live up to their commitments," he added, speaking from the Arak nuclear plant southwest of Tehran.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on the international community to immediately hit Iran with "snapback sanctions" should it violate the deal by surpassing the uranium stockpile limit set in the deal. On May 8, President Hassan Rouhani said Iran would stop observing restrictions on its stocks of enriched uranium and heavy water agreed under the 2015 nuclear deal. Rouhani said the move was in retaliation

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Moves to resume oil production at neutral zone

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Head of the National Assembly's budgets committee MP Adnan Abdulsamad yesterday quoted Oil Minister Khaled Al-Fadhel as saying there are initiatives to resume production in the neutral zone between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait after more than four years of stoppage. Abdulsamad made the remarks following a meeting by the committee attended by the oil minister to discuss

various issues related to the oil sector.

During the meeting, the minister informed the committee of "initiatives to resume production in the divided zone based on various meetings and discussions between the Kuwaiti and Saudi sides in the wake of prevailing regional developments", Abdulsamad said. Production at the Khafji offshore oilfield was halted by the Saudi side in Oct 2014 for environmental considerations and output at the second oilfield at Wafra was stopped a few months later.

Abdulsamad said direct losses for Kuwait from the stoppage amounted to KD 3.8 billion until the end of July 2017, adding that there are some indirect losses including delays in some strategic projects. This would mean that Kuwaiti losses from the closure of the two oilfields - which pumped some 500,000 barrels per day - will be almost double that figure. The lawmaker also said that

PAWS animal shelter hit by 'arson' attack

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: At least 23 cats were killed after a blaze gutted an animal shelter in Abdaly yesterday. Roula Ahmed, team leader of the Protecting Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) shelter, said most of the cats died of suffocation in the fire, which she blamed on an arson attack. "We set all the animals free during the fire because we wanted them to be safe. I think it was a deliberate attack and could be in retaliation by our neighbors, who have told us to leave the area," Ahmed

told Kuwait Times. "Our neighbors in Abdaly have been complaining against the presence of the PAWS shelter. They don't like the shelter and don't want dogs and cats here," she said.

Kuwait Times asked Ahmed if PAWS has proof the shelter was deliberately set on fire. "I am not sure - it could also be from faulty electrical wiring because of the heat. But judging from prior events, I am almost certain that it could be arson. Since we moved here on June 12, 2019 (only a few days back), many of them (neighbors) have expressed disgust about our presence here. We were not welcomed with open arms. They don't want an animal shelter in their neighborhood," Ahmed said, adding the fire department is still investigating the cause of the blaze.

PAWS houses more than 900 animals, mostly dogs and cats, at the shelter, she said.

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KUWAIT: The Abdaly PAWS animal shelter is seen after it was ravaged by a fire.

'Sand mafias' threaten coast of Morocco

MOHAMMEDIA, Morocco: Beneath an apartment block that looms over Monica beach in the western coastal city of Mohammedia, a sole sand dune has escaped the clutches of Morocco's insatiable construction contractors. Here, like elsewhere across the North African tourist magnet, sand has been stolen to help feed an industry that is growing at full tilt. A report last month by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) on the global over-exploitation of this resource accuses "sand mafias" of destroying Morocco's beaches and over-urbanizing its coastline.

"The dunes have disappeared along the entire city's coastline," lamented environmental activist Jawad, referring to Mohammedia, on the Atlantic between Rabat and Casablanca. The 33-year-old environmental activist leads Anpel, a

local NGO dedicated to coastal protection. "At this rate, we'll soon only have rocks" left, chipped in Adnane, a member of the same group.

More than half the sand consumed each year by Morocco's construction industry - some 10 million cu m - is extracted illegally, according to UNEP. "The looters come in the middle of the night, mainly in the low season," said a local resident in front of his grand home on the Monica seafront. "But they do it less often now because the area is full of people. In any case, there is nothing more to take," added the affable forty-something. Sand accounts for four fifths of the makeup of concrete and - after water - is the world's second most consumed resource. Beaches and rivers are heavily exploited across the planet, legally and illegally, according to UNEP.

In Morocco, "sand is often removed from beaches to build hotels, roads and other tourism-related infrastructure", according to UNEP. Beaches are therefore shrinking, resulting in coastal erosion. "Continued construction is likely to lead to... destruction of the main natural

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MOHAMMEDIA, Morocco: A Moroccan man fishes on a beach on May 22, 2019. — AFP

Local

Amir receives newly appointed Municipal Council Secretary General



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister Fahad Al-Shula, head of the Municipal Council Osama Al-Otaibi and Secretary General of the Municipal Council Bader Al-Refaei. —KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister Fahad Al-Shula, head of the Municipal Council Osama Al-Otaibi and Secretary General of the Municipal Council Bader Al-Refaei.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Minister of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs as well as Minister of State for

Municipal Affairs Fahad Al-Shula in addition to head of the Municipal Council Osama Al-Otaibi, who introduced to His Highness the newly appointed Secretary General of the

Municipal Council Bader Al-Refaei. Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah attended the meeting. Later yesterday, Shula and Otaibi introduced Refaei to His

Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Australia hopes to develop dialogue with Kuwait on Indo-Pacific

KUWAIT: Today, the Indo-Pacific is undergoing a profound transition as the world's economic and strategic weight shifts towards the region. This will continue to bring economic opportunity, but also challenges. As the movement of goods, money, ideas and people between the Indo-Pacific and the Middle East continues to grow, the two regions are becoming increasingly interdependent. As a significant nation, with considerable influence and relevant perspectives, Kuwait has an important role to play in promoting a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

Australia has a vision for a prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific, and we will continue to work hard to achieve that goal. A major priority of Australia's Indo-Pacific agenda is economic integration to boost growth in ways that reduce the risks of strategic rivalry. Our overarching commitment is to an open and inclusive economic architecture, for the world and for our respective regions.

"I am delighted two high profile Australians, Richard McGregor, Senior Fellow of the Lowy Institute and Mark

Thirlwell, Chief Economist of the Australian Institute of Company Directors accepted the Australian Embassy's invitation to deliver a series of presentations to the Kuwait Investment Authority and other Kuwaiti stakeholders on Indo-Pacific strategic and economic developments," said Ambassador Gilbert.

"Through our combined efforts, we can continue to build a relationship and region that is strategically secure, economically stable and where the sovereign rights of all states are respected. In that, I believe, we genuinely have a shared vision and an important agenda for working together," Ambassador Gilbert added. "The Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) is an important partner for Australia and increasingly is investing in the Indo-Pacific. Australia stands ready to share its knowledge and experiences in the region with the KIA and the Kuwaiti government more broadly. I hope to develop an ongoing dialogue between our two countries on the Indo-Pacific - a mutually important agenda for working together," he noted.



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

Kuwaiti cabinet strongly deploras Abha, ship attacks

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Cabinet sharply condemned terrorist attacks by Houthi militias on Abha International Airport in Saudi Arabia, which left scores of civilians injured. The Cabinet said, in a statement following its weekly meeting yesterday headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, that this terrorist crime runs counter to Islamic and

human values and international law, and targets facilities and populated areas. It also voiced Kuwait's solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in all measures it is taking to protect its security and stability. The Cabinet, further, strongly denounced a recent attack on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman as a terrorist act that breaches all international charters and laws, and as a direct threat to maritime freedom and global energy supplies.

In this context, it called on the international community to take immediate and decisive measures to protect international maritime navigation lines and stand against anyone who could attempt to jeopardize the world trade system and global economy, and to safeguard international security and

peace in this vital region. In addition, the Cabinet voiced heartfelt condolences to China over the victims of floods and heavy rains in south China, which left scores of people dead or injured. At the onset of the weekly meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah briefed his colleagues on the outcomes of his recent visit to New York, where he chaired United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sessions as part of Kuwait's rotating UNSC presidency. Locally, the Cabinet congratulated Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf on renewed confidence at parliament during a grilling session held on June 11, and hailed his performance while refuting arguments. — KUNA

Kuwait, US FM's discuss regional developments

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah discussed on Sunday with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo developments in the region, the foreign ministry said in a statement. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and Pompeo exchanged views over the phone over regional and international developments, as well as bilateral relations, the ministry added. The two men discussed issues of mutual interest and means of boosting strategic relationships, it noted.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also discussed the developments in the region with Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Al-Hakim, the foreign ministry said in a statement, adding that Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and Hakim exchanged views in a phone call over regional and international developments, as well as bilateral relations. The two officials discussed issues of mutual interest and means of boosting bilateral relationships, it added. In other news, Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met with US Ambassador to Kuwait



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence R Silverman. — KUNA

Lawrence R Silverman yesterday. During the meeting, they tackled Kuwaiti-US relations and the latest regional and international developments. Assistant Foreign Minister for the

Deputy Foreign Minister's Office Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar and Assistant Foreign Minister for Americas Minister Plenipotentiary Reem Al-Khaled. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The officials in a group picture after the meeting.

KJA, EMU coordinate on e-media staff memberships

KUWAIT: Secretary General of Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) Adnan Al-Rashed yesterday stressed the significant role e-media plays in developing and modernizing Kuwait's media in general. Speaking after a meeting with the Electronic Media Union's (EMU) Chairman Faisal Al-Sawwagh, Rashed stressed that KJA coordinates with EMU with regards to granting KJA membership to e-media staff.

Meanwhile, Sawwagh stressed that KJA has been showing endless openness towards

e-media, adding that this is for the best interest of Kuwait's journalism in general, including both the paper and electronic press. The meeting was also attended by KJA's board member Duhairan Aba Al-Khail, KJA e-media committee rapporteur Nasser Al-Shalhi and committee member Bedour Al-Mutairi. Notably, KJA had announced launching its e-media committee on June 9 and opening membership for e-journalists, KUNA editors and the information ministry's news and political program staff members.

Diabetes Institute launches 'PORTAL' for community engagement in research

KUWAIT: The senior leadership team at Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), headed by Dr Qais Al-Duwairi, created the Public Office for Research Translation and Liaison (PORTAL), which aims to educate and engage the public in the research performed and scientific breakthroughs achieved at DDI, which was founded by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). This is to inform the public of the importance of research and its implications on people's health and wellbeing.

Education is necessary to inform the public in a simplified and transparent way about the important work happening at DDI by various

research groups and research leaders. PORTAL aims at affirming and sculpturing the 'Research Culture' and build the needed trust and confidence between the public and the researchers. In addition, it aims at enhancing the participation of the public in research. No breakthrough in research can be achieved without the willingness of people to participate in discoveries for the benefit of all humanity.

Through PORTAL, DDI researchers will showcase the first breakthrough in understanding diabetes. To that end, researchers at DDI have discovered that diabetes causes substantial loss in muscle mass and function due to the activa-



Dr Qais Al-Duwairi

tion of an accelerated 'aging' program in muscle and other cells. This discovery has been published in a very reputable scientific journal for its clinical and scientific impact.



The Dasman Diabetes Institute.

Local

KIPCO inaugurates Late Salwa Al-Sabah Stem Cell, Umbilical Cord Center

Center to play major role in Kuwait's medical services' development

KUWAIT: Under the auspices of the Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Basel Humoud Al-Sabah, KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - inaugurated the Late Sheikh Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Stem Cell and Umbilical Cord Center. The center was built with a donation of KD 7 million made by Masharee Al-Khair Charity Organization on behalf of KIPCO Group. This is the first center in the Gulf region to be dedicated to stem cell research and the storage of umbilical cords.

The facility, located adjacent to the Maternity Hospital in the Sabah Health Zone, is built over an area of 12,000 square meters and includes testing and research laboratories, blood and cord storage banks, research and medical libraries, as well as a lecture theater. KIPCO hosted an inauguration ceremony, marking the handover of the building to the Ministry of Health. The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Health and senior executives of the KIPCO Group.

Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah spoke about the importance of stem cell research and the groundbreaking discoveries made in this area that have a direct impact on the quality of people's lives and the ability to cure previously incurable diseases. He thanked KIPCO and Masharee Al-Khair Charity Organization

for the donation, which not only reflects the private sector's interest in the well-being of the community, but is also a symbol of its commitment to actively support the 'New Kuwait' Vision 2035.

Public, private partnership

Speaking at the ceremony, Abdulaziz Al-Jassar, KIPCO Group Representative, Board Member and Treasurer of Masharee Al-Khair Charity Organization said: "This center represents one of the forms of partnership between the public and private sectors, which have come together to push forth the development of this nation. We believe that the center, the first of its kind in the region, will play a major role in the development of medical services and science in Kuwait. Our goal, through building this center, is to contribute to healthier living. We look forward to the day

when the storage of umbilical cords becomes the norm, and stem cells become the first option to overcome chronic diseases and other injuries that cannot be treated with traditional methods."

He added: "We chose to name the center after a woman who made social and charitable contributions for many years, away from the spotlight. We hope that this center will serve to remind us of the legacy of the late Sheikh Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad



KUWAIT: Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Basel Humoud Al-Sabah and other officials attend the inauguration of the Late Sheikh Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Stem Cell and Umbilical Cord Center yesterday.

Al-Sabah."

Following their speeches, Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah and Jassar unveiled the commemorative plaque, marking the official inauguration of the center.

They were joined by Dr Reem Al-Radwan, Director of the Department of Blood Transfusion Services at the Ministry of Health. The event was concluded with a VIP tour of the facilities.

No salaries for bedoon teachers with expired cards

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education (MOE) refused paying the salaries of bedoon teachers with expired security cards, said informed sources, noting that a number of them filed complaints saying that their salaries have been suspended since Sept 2018. The sources added that MOE refuses to pay the salaries until the teachers furnish valid security cards or proof that they are renewed.

New Jahra Hospital

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah said the new Jahra Hospital will be launched in phases starting by the end of July, adding that the Ministry of Health (MoH) is currently seeking an international operator to run the hospital. Speaking on the sidelines of opening the Late Sheikh Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Stem Cell and Umbilical Cord Center, Sheikh Basel said a large hospital such as the new Jahra hospital will be launched in phases according to well-studied plans and schedules. Further, Sheikh Basel said over 8,000 retiree health insurance cards (Afyah 2) have been distributed so far through 46 distribution centers.

Social aid payment

The Ministry of Social Affairs plans to electronically connect its systems with the health ministry's general medical council and the overseas treatment department with the aim of regulating the payment of social aid according to disease categories. Informed sources said the linkage will help prevent unlawful payments and protect public funds, as it will provide the Ministry of Social Affairs with medical information about Kuwaitis applying to get social aid to decide whether applicants can or cannot work, whether their diseases are curable and the date of the diagnosis.

Excellent performance bonuses

The Ministry of Electricity and Water's (MEW) personnel department manager Mohammed Al-Othaina said special teams have finished reviewing the ministry's 22,000 employees' performance reports and prepared lists with those deserving excellent performance bonuses. Othaina added 15,000 employees from the ministry's workforce will get the bonus after passing the main condition of showing up to work for at least 180 days throughout the year.

Park kiosks

The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) plans to allow mini investments in public parks in the form of renting special sale booths or kiosks to entrepreneurs, said official PAAAFR sources. The sources added that PAAAFR had accordingly contacted the municipality and the municipal council and that some approvals are still pending.

Minister promises action against delaying public cleaning works

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shula called for finishing preparations and forming committees needed at least one month before receiving new cleaning contracts. Speaking while presiding a meeting of the supreme planning and coordination committee attended by Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmad Al-Manfouhi and a number of top municipal officials, Shula stressed that he will never hesitate to refer any employees or official to the public prosecution in case of dereliction in receiving cleaning machinery and equipment or delaying cleaning companies' work as defined in the contracts signed with them.

Over 200 people arrested in Capital, Ahmadi crackdown

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: More than 200 people were arrested in a massive security campaign that covered several industrial areas in two governorates yesterday. Capital and Ahmadi Security men cordoned Ahmadi Industrial, Bnaid Al-Qar and Sharq Industrial before inspecting the identities of around 900 people, the Interior Ministry said in a statement. Police arrested 232 people including those with expired residency visas who were sent for deportation, fugitives wanted on criminal charges and absconding cases who were taken to the proper authorities for further action, among others.

School fire

A school in Qaser was on fire, so Jahra fire station men responded. Power to the school was cut and the fire was put out successfully. No injuries were reported in the incident. Investigations are underway to determine the cause of the blaze.

Awareness campaign

Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) launched its awareness campaign 'Nabeek Salem' (We Want You to be Safe) in cooperation with EQUATE petrochemicals company. The campaign was launched at The Avenues mall in the presence of Director of Public Relations and Information Brig Khalil Al-Ameer. The campaign included an exhibition by several sectors and departments in order to educate people about fire dangers, reasons and prevention. The Little Fireman magazine will also be distributed to educate children.

Municipal Council member Humoud Al-Enezi hailed the meeting, noting that it discussed the measures to be followed on receiving cleaning machinery and equipment needed for the new cleaning contracts, which confirm the minister's keenness on avoiding all previous shortcomings. Enezi also hailed the minister's statements concerning strict accountability. He also suggested mounting surveillance cameras on garbage trucks for security, performance and quality control reasons.

Separately, Chairman of the Capital Committee at the Municipal Council Hassan Kamal said that the committee approved a Public Authority for Industry (PAI) request to add the activity of health clubs and spas in Shuwaikh industrial area, another request by the foreign ministry to remove a Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) gas station from the diplomatic area in Daiya, a request by the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to allocate a parking area opposite the Kuwait National Guard headquarters and a request by the Public Authority of Applied Education and Training (PAAET) to build a vocational training building in Jaber Al-Ahmad.



KUWAIT: Several photos taken from yesterday's crackdowns. — Interior Ministry photos



CRIMES

Traffic police most questioned in 2018

KUWAIT: Kuwait's commissioned and non-commissioned officers at the traffic department ranked top among officers of other ministry departments for being questioned at the department of inspection and supervision in 2018, as complaints against them were received related to arbitrary issuance of traffic citations against citizens and expats. Informed sources said more than 100 officers and non-commissioned officers at the traffic department were summoned and questioned. They said investigations of the complaints and making the two sides face each other revealed that a number of complaints were malicious, while some officers faced punishments for misuse of authority, as investigations proved they overstepped the law. The sources said traffic officers are more interactive with the public and are more monitored on the street due to the nature of their job in the field, so for them to rank first in being investigated does not undermine the efficiency of workers in the sector.

Newborn near Salwa house

Hawally detectives are investigating the case of a newborn who was abandoned in front of a Salwa house inside a bag to identify the culprit. A Kuwaiti man heard the cries of the infant near the house and found the baby in the bag, so he called police, who arrived along with paramedics, who rushed the baby to Mubarak Hospital.

Cables thief at large

Detectives along with forensic experts are looking for a thief who stole cables from a newly constructed building in West Mishref, which belongs to the interior ministry. A police source said the building is for police force affairs. Employees were surprised by the disappearance of the expensive cables and the damage of others as they were moved away from their designated place. The contractor had brought them just one day before their theft.

Search for hacker

A Kuwaiti woman sought the help of electronic department detectives to identify a hacker who broke into her online account and defamed her by posting online video clips that damaged her reputation. The victim said that the suspect posted her phone number online too. The woman, who could not access her account, received calls from her friends who were shocked by the clips on her account, and when she told them the account was hacked, they attempted to call the hacker, who started to blackmail them. The woman filed a complaint and investigations began.

Fugitive in custody

A wanted Kuwaiti was arrested by criminal detectives in Mahboula. He had forged documents with him including a Saudi ID, car titles and license plates, and led detectives to two stolen cars and an amount of shabu. A police source said that a person complained to Mubarak Al-Kabeer police about a theft. Detectives were able to identify the suspect, who is wanted on criminal and civil cases. The suspect was located in Mahboula, where he was arrested, and was found under the influence of drugs. He was sent to the public prosecution for further legal action.

Underage girl found

Police arrested a Kuwaiti man and a minor Syrian woman who was reported missing. The two were found together in a Salmiya apartment. After a Syrian informed police his 16-year-old daughter was missing, detectives located her in Salmiya. The girl was arrested and she said she spent time with a citizen with her consent and gave them his details. He was arrested.

— Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Qabas and Al-Rai



KUWAIT: Construction and roadside workers continue to be seen around Kuwait during official work ban hours when temperatures can exceed 50 C degrees. A Kuwait Times tour yesterday detected several outdoor workers violating the ban at various sites around Kuwait. The Public Authority for Manpower had issued its annual decision banning laborers from working in the open from 11:00 am till 5:00 pm. —Photos by Ben Garcia



Local



KUWAIT: A general view of Kuwait City. — KUNA photo

Kuwaiti-Italian alliance from the 'Heart of Culture'

VENICE, Italy: The 'Heart of Culture' exhibition and art gallery, held in Venice by Kuwait's Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center (ASCC), is seen as a launch pad for alliance with Italy, said ASCC's Naghma Al-Othman yesterday. This innovative initiative comes in translation to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh



Naghma Al-Othman

Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's support of Kuwaiti artists, as well as turning ASCC into a global cultural beacon, Othman said. Her remarks came on the occasion of launching the Kuwaiti art gallery, themed 'I have a dream that I am in Kuwait,' which will span across the time of Venice Biennale until November to allow the largest possible number of visitors, including academics, critics, media people and intellectuals from different parts of the world. The first phase of the exhibition, which runs until August, includes the artworks of Zahra Marwan, Amani Al-Thuwaini and Mahmoud Shaker, while the second, held between September and November, will be allocated to Ahmad Moqim, Khaled Al-Najdi and Nasser Behbehani. — KUNA



Amani Al-Thuwaini



Zahra Marwan



Mahmoud Shaker

ICRC hails 'promising talks' with Kuwait

GENEVA: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) recent talks with Kuwait yielded 'promising results', its president Peter Maurer said yesterday. "We exchanged views on humanitarian issues concerning the region and examined plans for more cooperation with Kuwait," Maurer said after the latest round of talks. He said ICRC representatives listened intently as Kuwaiti officials explained the country's strategy to deal with humanitarian crises gripping the region, citing a recent Kuwaiti-proposed draft UN resolution over the matter of missing persons at times of armed conflict.

Kuwait's relationship with the ICRC dates back more than three decades, said the head of the Gulf state's delegation to the talks Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah, who serves as the assistant foreign minister for the affairs of the deputy prime minister and foreign minister's office. Kuwait continues to cooperate with the ICRC over a myriad of issues including protecting civilians at times of armed conflict and tracking the whereabouts of missing persons, the diplomat added. Echoing

the ICRC president's remarks, Kuwait's permanent delegate to the UN Jamal Al-Ghunaim pinned hopes on the talks, saying a roadmap has been set on how to address humanitarian issues. The primary goal for these talks is to come up with new solutions to humanitarian crises around the world, with much emphasis placed on the conflicts in Syria and Yemen, besides other countries, he explained. — KUNA



GENEVA: ICRC President Peter Maurer with Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Kuwaiti movie vies for top award of Meknes film festival

RABAT: Assistant Secretary-General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) said Sunday that Kuwait's 'Sirb Al-Hamam' (flock of doves) is vying against nine Arab movies for the top award of the first Meknes International Arab Film Festival (FIFAM). "The distinguished movie, directed by Ramadan Khosroh and starring, inter alia, Dawood Hussein and Jamal Al-Rahdan, was chosen to represent the Kuwaiti art of cinema at this festival," Dr Essa Al-Ansari said. The festival, organized by Meknes-Azzaytoun Alkobra Association in collaboration with the City Council of Meknes, the Fez-Meknes region and the Moroccan Ministry of Culture, opened Saturday and lasts until Friday, June 21, he noted. "Through participation in the event, the Kuwaiti filmmakers seek to share experience with their peers from the Arab countries in the field of cinematographic creativity," Dr Ansari pointed out. Besides 'Sirb Al-Hamam,' the festival gathered 'Nathira' and 'Tafh El-Kil' (Morocco), 'Wilada' (the UAE), 'Lil Khargi' (Egypt), 'Tourn' (Iraq), 'Shaitan Al-Qaila'



Dr Essa Al-Ansari

(Tunisia), 'Amina' (Syria), 'Youm Bi-Beirut' (Lebanon) and 'Dam Al-Thi'ab' (Algeria). The FIFAM will culminate in the awarding of several prizes, notably the Grand Prix, the projection, the screenplay, the best actress and the best actor awards. — KUNA

Kuwait seeks globally accredited labs to push homegrown goods

DUBAI: Laboratory accreditation as per the globally accepted standard is crucial to give local products much needed exposure, said an official yesterday. As he signed a deal with Emirates International Accreditation Centre (EIAC), the director general of Kuwait's Public Authority

for Industry (PAI) Abdulkarim Taki said that the initiative is part of efforts to bestow global accreditation upon Kuwaiti labs, paving the way for Kuwaiti products to enter foreign markets.

On the deal with the Emirati center, he said PAI stands to gain from the UAE's 'industry expertise,' highlighting the need to have an accredited center in Kuwait to help create a 'foreign market entry strategy' for Kuwaiti products. Heaping praise on the deal with EIAC, Kuwait's Consul General in Dubai Theyab Al-Rashidi said the endeavor encapsulates the vibrant economic relationship shared between the two Gulf states. The deal is only the latest in a spate of future joint projects between both sides, the Kuwaiti diplomat explained. — KUNA



DUBAI: A group photo of the officials after the signing. — KUNA

Gold price at its highest since start of year

KUWAIT: Gold price made its highest revenue since the beginning of the year, hitting \$1,358 per ounce in last week's trading in fear-driven global markets and a weak US Dollar, according to Sabaek Al-Kuwait Company. It added in its report yesterday that the yellow metal is climbing up in the coming period, backed by US 'negative'

data on jobs, Consumer Price Index (CPI) and retail for last May. The upward trend would go parallel with outcomes of tomorrow's Federal Reserve meeting. Gold's price ended last week's trading at \$15 per ounce. Other precious metals' prices were: platinum at \$820 per ounce and palladium at \$1,465 per ounce. — KUNA

Local

Kuwaiti Minister urges bigger private sector role in development plan

Kuwait could become green funding regional force: British expert

LONDON: Kuwaiti Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf said yesterday it is significant to allow the private sector to play a leading role in Kuwait's 2035 development vision. Addressing an economic conference held in London on the private sector's role in the future of the Kuwaiti economy, the minister said the Kuwaiti economy is so strong and firm that it could greatly promote the private sector's role. "Kuwaiti creative young people represent the genuine future wealth for promoting the national economy," he said, echoing the State's commitment to creating the congenial atmosphere for developing economic and infrastructure projects, including financial infrastructure that helps in drawing investments and diversifying national income sources.

Hajraf stressed the significant and pivotal role played by the Kuwaiti private sector throughout history in bolstering the national economy, voicing unwavering belief in the private sector's ability to lead the economic system to put Kuwait's fresh development drive in place. The Kuwaiti minister welcomed economic partnerships between Kuwaiti and British companies, which undoubtedly reflect the nature of distinguished economic relations between both countries. In this context, Hajraf said this year's conference coincides with both sides marking 120 years since historical relations were forged.

Advantages and potentials

Meanwhile, Director-General of Kuwait



LONDON: Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf speaks during an economic conference held in London on the private sector's role in the future of the Kuwaiti economy. — KUNA

Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah made a presentation on Kuwait's



Young people are the genuine future wealth

advantages and potentials, primarily legislative and legal atmosphere and available

investment opportunities that are meant to achieve economic diversification and promote the private sector's role. He said Kuwait boasts great potentials to be a significant destination for attracting investments in the region, pointing to progress in the field of developing and streamlining investment-bearing legislation and procedures.

Speaking on the sidelines of the conference, Sheikh Meshaal said the holding of the conference in London comes within the framework of achieving Kuwait's 2035 development plan, and of promoting Kuwait's advantages. He noted that the aim of these conferences in major capitals is to attract direct added-value investments which provide jobs to Kuwaiti young people.



Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah makes a presentation on Kuwait's advantages and potentials.

Regional force

Meanwhile, a British expert said that Kuwait has a serious chance to become a leading regional country in the field of green funding, a form of environment-friendly investment. Delivering a speech at the conference, Chair of the Green Financing Initiative and Mayor of London's financial district Sir Roger Gifford affirmed that they were ready to provide their expertise and assistance to Kuwaiti companies in the field of clean investments. London Stock Exchange had managed to amplify green bonds to reach \$22 billion, indicated Gifford, adding that such bonds and bank transaction focused on developing environment-friendly smart technologies.

Back to Green Funding, Sir Gifford affirmed that Kuwait could find itself in special position able to fully implement this kind of funding to diversify its economic resources. He added that reinforcing partnership between Kuwaiti and British companies was the natural outcome of the long history of strong ties. Commenting on improving Kuwait's credit rating, an expert from Standard and Poor's (S&P) said that Kuwait would be able to improve its AA if it depended less on the oil sector. Diversifying economic income would aid the State of Kuwait's Vision 2035, affirmed the expert, adding that this step would hugely attract foreign investments and develop the Gulf State's private sector. — KUNA

Emirates unveils 'game changer' Boeing 777 in Kuwait

KUWAIT: In the first ten days of operation, over 3,500 passengers from Kuwait have experienced the new Emirates Boeing 777-300ER 'game changer' aircraft since it launched on 1 June, representing an almost 90 percent seat load factor and reinforcing the popularity of this aircraft. Today, Emirates showcased the aircraft's interiors in Kuwait, including its highly anticipated new First Class private suites. The tours were led by Tariq Al-Mutawa, Emirates' Area Manager for Kuwait and Iraq.

With floor to ceiling sliding doors and sleek design features inspired by the Mercedes-Benz S-Class, Emirates' First Class suites take luxury and privacy to the next level. Offering up to 40 square feet of personal space each, these spacious, fully enclosed private suites are laid out in a 1-1-1 configuration. From First Class through to the Business and Economy Class cabins, all along the walkways, in the washrooms and galleys, the latest Emirates 777 aircraft boasts a multi-million dollar upgrade that includes newly designed seats and upgraded inflight entertainment systems in all cabins.

Mutawa said: "The new Boeing 777 interiors that we are showcasing today in Kuwait represent Emirates' ongoing investment to continually raise the bar and exceed our customers' expectations. Aside from our new fully enclosed private suites which are the highlight of today's tour, our Business Class cabins feature our latest fully-flat leather seats with personal minibars, and our Economy Class seats have adjustable full leather headrests. Emirates' inflight entertainment system has also been upgraded for all cabin classes. Throughout the aircraft, our customers from Kuwait will see modern and airy cabins, with meticulous attention to every detail."

He added: "We have been operating in Kuwait for over 30 years, and it is one of the busiest routes in our network with significant premium demand, so it is fitting to introduce the latest version of the Boeing 777 with industry leading products on board to offer our customers from Kuwait a superior flying experience."

Emirates First Class Private Suites

Designed with an emphasis on exceptional customer comfort and the ultimate in privacy, Emirates 'Game-Changing' Boeing 777 private suites feature floor-to-ceiling sliding doors and ultra-modern design features

against cool grey colorschemes. The new suites include seats that recline into a fully flat-bed that maneuvers into multiple positions and can be placed in a "zero-gravity" state inspired by NASA technology, for a feeling of weightlessness while flying.

Passengers can also choose from a multitude of lighting colors and adjust the temperature of their suites for a fully customizable experience. The industry's first virtual windows can be experienced by customers seated in suites located in the middle aisle. The virtual windows project a view from outside the aircraft using real time fibre-optic camera technology.

Emirates also provides binoculars, among a host of other thoughtful touches, to customers who want to explore the vistas and cities below during their journey. Customers in each suite can also seamlessly communicate with the cabin crew or request room service and in-suite dining through an innovative video call function.

Upgrades across all cabin classes

The design and shape of Emirates' Business Class seat onboard the new 777 was also inspired by the interior of a modern sports car, with a diamond stitch pattern on the full leather cover, ergonomically designed headrest, and a sleek overall look and feel. The seat has a pitch of 72 inches and moves into a fully flat sleeping position. It also has touchscreen controls for the seat and inflight entertainment system, several personal lighting options, privacy panels between seats, a shoe storage area, footrest, and a personal mini-bar.

The Economy Class cabin now features a color palette of soft greys and blues. The ergonomically designed seats come with full leather headrests that have flexible side panels and can also be adjusted vertically for optimum support. All cabin classes will be equipped with a new generation of Emirates' award-winning ice inflight entertainment system offering improved and superior image quality. Each in-seat screen will feature ultra-wide viewing angles, a capacitive touch screen, LED backlight and full HD display.

Customers can enjoy the Boeing 777 experience to/from Kuwait on EK 855, which departs Dubai at 0745hrs, arriving in Kuwait at 0825hrs. The return flight EK 856 leaves Kuwait at 0950hrs, arriving in Dubai at 1240hrs. The service operates daily to Kuwait.

Emirates and the Boeing 777

Emirates currently operates 9 Boeing 777-300ER aircraft fitted with the new cabin product to Brussels, Geneva, Vienna, Tokyo Haneda, Frankfurt, London Stansted, Riyadh, Kuwait and Male. Emirates is the largest operator of the Boeing 777 aircraft, one of the most popular and advanced wide-bodied aircraft in commercial operation today. The airline has 159 Boeing 777s in its fleet, and 150 of the next generation Boeing 777x aircraft to be delivered starting next year.



KUWAIT: Officials pose for a group photo inside the new Emirates Boeing 777-300ER. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



The new Emirates Boeing 777-300ER.

Kuwaiti market favorite for Emirates: Area Manager

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Emirates has unveiled completely refreshed interiors for its Boeing 777-300ER aircraft, including its highly anticipated new First Class private suites. Tariq Al-Mutawa, Emirates' Area Manager for Kuwait and Iraq, told Kuwait Times that Emirates has been operating its latest Boeing 777-300ER aircraft fitted with 'game changer' First Class suites from Dubai to Riyadh and Kuwait from the beginning of June 2019, to offer a range of experiences for its customers who are traveling for business and leisure.

"Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are the first countries in the Middle East and GCC to be served by the lat-

est Emirates Boeing 777 aircraft featuring fully-enclosed private suites, where there will be nine routes reached by the new aircraft. The Kuwaiti market is the favorite for Emirates because of its high demand - we have six daily flights and will increase it to eight flights in summer," he said.

"Our market share is 13-14 percent. There has been an improvement since last year and we are looking forward to seeing the developments after the 'game changer'. Since the beginning of 2019, we have served 440,000 passengers. The percentage of occupancy in the high season is 86 to 90 percent, and in low seasons, we reach 76-80 percent," Mutawa noted.

With floor to ceiling sliding doors and sleek design features inspired by the Mercedes-Benz S-Class, Emirates' new suites take luxury and privacy to the next level. Offering up to 40 sq ft of personal space each, these spacious, fully-enclosed private suites are laid out in a 1-1-1 configuration. The new Emirates 777 First Class cabin interior uses a whole new color palette of soft greys, cream, and champagne, conveying a contemporary, open and airy feel, with quiet and timeless luxury.



The First Class suite.



Vatican to consider married priests for Amazon region

Boris Johnson gets boost in race to become UK's new PM

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ARAK: Photo shows a heavy water plant in Arak, 320 kms southwest of the Iranian capital Tehran. Iran's atomic energy organization spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi said at a press conference yesterday, the Islamic republic will surpass from June 27 its uranium stockpile limit set under the nuclear deal with world powers, turning up the pressure after the US walked away from the landmark pact last year. — AFP

'Fewer but newer' nuke in the world

Blasts cause quake near China-North Korea border

STOCKHOLM: The overall number of nuclear warheads in the world has declined in the past year but nations are modernizing their arsenals, a report published yesterday said. At the start of 2019, the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea had a total of some 13,865 nuclear weapons, according to estimates in a new report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

That represents a decrease of 600 nuclear weapons compared to the start of 2018. But at the same time all nuclear weapon-possessing countries are modernizing these arms - and China, India and Pakistan are also increasing the size of their arsenals. "The world is seeing fewer but newer weapons," Shannon Kile, director of the SIPRI Nuclear Arms Control Program and one of the report's authors said.

The drop in recent years can mainly be attributed to the US and Russia, whose combined arsenals still make up more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons. This is in part due to the countries fulfilling their obligations under the New START treaty which puts a cap on the number of deployed warheads and was signed by the US and Russia in 2010

- as well as getting rid of obsolete warheads from the Cold War era.

The START treaty is however due to expire in 2021, which Kile said was worrying since there are currently "no serious discussions underway about extending it". Next year the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) - considered the cornerstone of the world's nuclear order - turns 50. The number of nuclear arms has been drastically reduced since a peak in the mid-1980s when there were some 70,000 nuclear warheads in the world.

Changing doctrines

While Kile said progress should not be underestimated, he also noted a number of worrying trends, such as the build-up of nuclear arms on both sides of the border between India and Pakistan, and the danger of a conventional conflict escalating to a nuclear one. There is also a more general trend towards an "increased

salience" of nuclear weapons, where changing strategic doctrines, particularly in the US, are giving nuclear weapons an expanded role in both military operations and national security dialogue, Kile said.

"I think the trend is moving away from where we were five years ago, where the world's nuclear weapons were being marginalized," Kile said. Former UN chief Ban Ki-moon recently urged nuclear powers to "get serious" about disarmament and warned there was a "very real risk" that decades of work on international arms control could collapse following the US pullout of the Iran nuclear deal, which he said sent the wrong signal to North Korea.

Global disarmament efforts also suffered a blow when the United States announced in February it would withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, prompting Russia to say it would also suspend its participation.

Blasts cause quake

Meanwhile, two explosions detonated to crush rocks in northeast China caused a small earthquake near the North Korean border yesterday, local authorities said. The 1.3-magnitude quake with a zero-meter depth occurred at 19:38 pm in Hunchun city in northeastern Jilin province, according to the China Earthquake Networks Center. The explosions were set off by Jilin Longye Blasting Company due to the "manufacturing needs" of the rock-crushing facility, said the Hunchun city government through its official Twitter-like Weibo.

There were no casualties after the blasts and no buildings were damaged, they said, adding that the details of the situation are "currently being verified." Earthquakes at the border can raise alarm due to nuclear tests in North Korea that have caused tremors in China in the past. Yesterday's earthquake was reported less than an hour after news broke about Chinese President Xi Jinping's upcoming trip to Pyongyang. In September 2017, a test conducted at North Korea's nuclear site at Punggye-ri triggered a 6.3-magnitude earthquake that was felt across China's northern border. — Agencies



Nations are modernizing their arsenals

30 killed in triple suicide bombing in North Nigeria

KANO: Thirty people were killed late Sunday in a triple suicide bombing in northeast Nigeria, emergency services reported, in an attack bearing the hallmarks of the Boko Haram jihadist group. Three bombers detonated their explosives outside a hall in Konduga, 38 kilometers from the Borno state capital Maiduguri, where football fans were watching a match on TV. "The death toll from the attack has so far increased to 30.

"We have over 40 people injured," Usman Kachalla, head of operations at the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), said yesterday. An earlier toll from the blasts, the bloodiest in months, gave 17 dead and 17 wounded. The attack happened around 9:00 pm, Ali Hassan, the leader of a self-defense group in the town, said. The owner of hall prevented one of the bombers from entering the packed venue. "There was a heated argument between the operator and the bomber who blew himself up," Hassan said by phone.

Two other bombers who had mingled among the crowd at a tea stall nearby also detonated their suicide vests. Hassan said most of the victims were from outside the soccer viewing centre. "Nine people died on the spot, including the operator, and 48 were injured," Hassan said. Kachalla said the high number of fatalities was because emergency responders had been unable to reach the site of the blast quickly. Nor were they equipped to deal with large numbers of wounded.

"Lack of an appropriate health facility to handle such huge emergency situation and the delay in obtaining security clearance to enable us deploy from Maiduguri in good time led to the high death toll," he said. Witnesses also said inadequate facilities



KONDUGA: A victim of a triple suicide bombing is attended by a health official in Konduga, 38 kilometers from the Borno state capital Maiduguri, northeast Nigeria yesterday. — AFP

ties and lack of drugs contributed to the high death toll. "The people that are currently dying is because of lack of hospital: because some have passed the night bleeding.... even the doctors are complaining that there is no drug," said witness Garba Abdullahi.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but the attack bore the imprint of Boko Haram, which has led a decade-long campaign to establish a hardline Islamic state in northeast Nigeria. The last suicide attack was in April this year when two female suicide bombers blew themselves up outside the garrison town of Monguno, killing a soldier and a vigilante and injuring another soldier.

Konduga has been repeatedly targeted by suicide bombers from a Boko Haram faction loyal to longtime leader Abubakar Shekau. The faction typically carries out suicide attacks against soft civilian targets such as mosques, markets and bus stations,

often using young women and girls as bombers.

The jihadists are believed to sneak into the town from the group's haven in nearby Sambisa forest. Eight worshippers were killed when a suicide bomber attacked a mosque in the town last July.

Bloody jihad

Boko Haram insurgency has claimed 27,000 lives and forced some two million to flee their homes. The violence has spilled into neighboring Niger, Chad and Cameroon, prompting the formation of a regional military coalition to battle the insurgents. Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, who was re-elected in February, is facing mounting demands to boost security. The nation of 200 million, the most populous in Africa, is grappling with violence between herder and farmer communities in its fertile central region in addition to the jihadists' revolt. — AFP

Iraq looking at options in case oil route is cut

BAGHDAD: Iraq is looking at contingency plans in case spiraling US-Iran tensions cut off its oil exports through the Gulf, a ministry spokesman said yesterday, as observers warned a rupture would be "disastrous". The US has accused Iran of attacking two oil tankers last week in the Gulf of Oman, sparking concerns that global shipments through the key waterway could be threatened.

Iraq, the second-largest oil producer among the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), is drawing up an action plan in case of further escalation, according to oil ministry spokesman Assem Jihad. "There is no replacement for the southern port and our other alternatives are limited. It's a source of anxiety for the global oil market," Jihad said yesterday.

Lawmakers have also called for an emergency session with Iraq's ministers of oil, trade, planning and transport to "prepare to confront the possible dangers". A third of the world's seaborne oil supply passes through the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow channel bordered to the north by Iran that links the Gulf with the Gulf of Oman. Iran has repeatedly threatened to block the passage in the event of a conflict with the US, but Secretary of State Mike Pompeo vowed Sunday that Washington would guarantee continued shipments through it.

The channel is vital for Iraq. In May, federal authorities used the southern Basra terminal to export 3.4 million bpd compared to just 100,000 bpd from the northern Ceyhan terminal through Turkey, according to the Iraq Oil Report. "A vast majority of our oil is exported through this crossing. If there are clashes between boats or (over) oil, we'll be hurt," said Mudher Saleh, financial adviser to Iraqi premier Adel Abdel Mahdi. "It would be a disaster for Iraq." — AFP

International

Algeria conservatives weigh in against pressure for Western-style democracy

Religious conservatives oppose protests, back army chief

HAIZER: While tens of thousands of Algerians have been gathering for four months in the capital to demand sweeping political reforms, former fighters who led the last confrontation with the establishment have been warning people not to rock the boat. In the 1990s, they drove an uprising against the military after it cancelled a landmark multi-party election that Islamists were poised to win. This time they say protests could bring a repeat of the chaos and bloodshed their actions unleashed.

"I deeply regret what happened in the 1990s," once such fighter, Sheikh Yahya, said at his home in Haizer, a village in the Kabyle mountains 120 km east of the capital Algiers where he now works as a butcher. "This is why I will never participate in any action that might end up violent."

Some 200,000 people died in Algeria's decade-long civil war, leaving many Algerians fearful of radical change now that longtime President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has given into the pressure from the streets and stepped down. Following Bouteflika's departure in April, the protesters have been pressing for the exit of the entire elite in control since the North African country's independence from France in 1962 - the same cause the jihadists took up arms for in 1991.

But Yahya and other former jihadists now support the army and other security forces, the strongest part of that elite. It also includes business tycoons and former independence fighters in Algeria's ruling FLN party as well as labor unions in a state-dominated economy sustained by oil and gas production. The ex-fighters are Salafists, a literalist Sunni school of Islam whose adherents range from the radical jihadists of Islamic State to an overwhelming majority which shies away from politics.

Salafi influence in Algeria is far wider than their numbers - an estimated one in 40 people - would suggest, analysts say. This makes their anti-protest messages a significant counterweight to calls for radical change.

"Algeria has around 18,000 mosques, most of them are under Salafi influence," said political analyst Mohamed Mouloudi. One Salafi cleric has a website with a million followers. By contrast leading Sufis, a more inclusive Sunni school that most Algerians belong to, have kept a low profile since the ouster of Bouteflika, their most high-profile member.

Salafists are social conservatives heavily influenced by Saudi Arabia's Wahhabis. They reject both political Islamist groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, which led Egypt in a 2012-2013 interlude from military-backed rule, as well as Western influence - from clothing to political systems. They were part of the reason the 2011 Arab Spring pro-democracy movement bypassed Algeria, after Sheikh Ali Ferkous, a Salafi icon, declared "unrest is forbidden in Islam", and they continue to argue that stability is paramount.

Military chief, conservative leader

The Army chief, Lieutenant-General Ahmed Gaed Salah, played a key role in toppling Bouteflika by saying the president's poor health made him unfit for office. Upper House Chairman Abdelkader Bensalah became interim president but is now under pressure from demonstrators to quit, due to his links with Bouteflika and pledge on June 6 to stay in office until elections, which have been postponed indefinitely. A group of protesters and some Salafi clerics have suggested Bensalah hands over to former conservative minister Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, son of well-known cleric Bachir Ibrahimi who played a role in the independence war against France from 1954 to 1962.

Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi is a fierce opponent of Bouteflika, who did not allow him to set up a political party. Ibrahimi, 87, has promised to end of what he called "dirty money", referring to corruption under Bouteflika, and introduce transparency. "Ibrahimi is one of the rare



ALGIERS: Algerians brandishing national flags take part in a weekly demonstration in the capital Algiers. — AFP

clean politicians in Algeria who can reconcile the youth with politics. We believe he can play a very positive role," said Seif Islam Benatia, a dentist prominent among protesters who encompass a wide array of views.

Yahya, who spoke to Reuters with two of his fellow former fighters Akli and Mohamed sitting alongside, also supports Ibrahimi, as well as army chief Salah. "We want stability to remain," he said. Their village lies in what was known in the 90s as the "triangle of death" — the flash-

point of the civil war, which the army said it was fighting to prevent Taliban-style rule. The mountains with its caves and valleys were ideal hiding ground for fighters to store arms and prepare ambushes on the army.

Yahya gave up the fight in 2006 after accepting amnesty from Bouteflika and persuaded others to make peace with the state. Algeria's welfare state rewarded him with \$6,000 in aid to build a modest house where the ground floor serves as his poultry butchery. — Reuters



MPONDWE: DR Congo nationals wash their clothes in the river of Lhubirha at a non-gazetted crossing point in Mirami village, near the Mpondwe border check point between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. — AFP

At least 161 dead in northeast Congo in ethnic clashes

GOMA: At least 161 people have been killed in a northeastern province of Democratic Republic of Congo in the past week, local officials said yesterday, in an apparent resurgence of ethnic clashes between farming and herding communities. A series of attacks in Ituri province has mostly targeted Hema herders, who have long been in conflict with Lendu farmers over grazing rights and political representation, although the exact identity of the assailants remains murky.

Open conflict between Hema and Lendu from 1999-2007 resulted in an estimated 50,000 deaths in one of the bloodiest chapters of a civil war in eastern Congo that left millions dead from conflict, hunger and disease. Tit-for-tat attacks between the two groups in late 2017 and early 2018 killed hundreds of people and forced tens of thousands more to flee their homes, but a tenuous calm had taken hold until this month.

Pascal Kakoraki Baguma, a national lawmaker from Ituri,

said the latest violence was sparked by the killing last Monday of four Lendu businesspeople. "Members of the Lendu community believed that these assassinations were the work of the Hema," Kakoraki said. "This is why they launched several attacks on Hema villages." "Sources affirm that 161 bodies have been found so far. But the death toll goes beyond the bodies recovered, as there were other massacres of civilians and police officers," he said.

Jean Bosco Lalo, president of civil society organizations in Ituri, said 200 bodies had been found since last week in predominantly Hema villages, including the 161 mentioned by Kakoraki. Lalo said the toll would rise once his teams gained access to other villages where killings had been reported. Ituri Governor Jean Bamanisa said provincial authorities were still working to establish the exact death toll and declined to say who was responsible. He said the assailants' tactics were to "empty out the villages, burn them and pursue those who had fled to the surrounding areas with bladed weapons".

Congo President Felix Tshisekedi, who took office in January, is trying to restore stability to the country's eastern borderlands, a tinderbox of conflict among armed groups over ethnicity, natural resources and political power. Several rebel leaders have surrendered or been captured during his first months in office, but armed violence has persisted, particularly in North Kivu province, south of Ituri, which is the epicenter of a 10-month Ebola outbreak. — Reuters



IHSIM: Photo shows damaged and destroyed buildings in the town of Ihsim, in Syria's Idlib region. — AFP

September. But it was never fully implemented as jihadists refused to withdraw from a planned demilitarized zone.

In January, HTS extended its administrative control over the region, which includes most of Idlib province as well as adjacent slivers of Latakia, Hama and Aleppo provinces. The Syrian government and Russia have upped their bombardment of the region since late April, killing nearly 400 civilians, according to the Observatory. Syria's war has killed more than 370,000 people and displaced millions since it started in 2011 with the repression of anti-government protests. — AFP

Jihadist rocket kills 12 civilians in Syria

DAMASCUS: Rocket fire has killed 12 civilians in a regime-held village in northwestern Syria, state news agency SANA has said blaming former Al-Qaeda affiliate Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham for the attack. SANA said 15 people were also wounded late Sunday in the attack on Al-Wadihi village south of Aleppo city and said HTS, which controls parts of Aleppo's countryside as well as most of neighboring Idlib, was responsible.

It published graphic pictures purporting to show some of the victims in a hospital in the aftermath of the attack, including of bandaged men and children lying on stretchers, thick blankets covering their bodies. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported the same death toll - saying five children were among those killed - and also blamed jihadists based in rural Aleppo for the attack. But the Britain-based monitor did not specify whether HTS or other allied jihadist groups were responsible. The attack came as Syrian government forces have been locked in clashes with HTS fighters in nearby Hama province.

More than 35 combatants, mostly regime forces, were killed on Saturday in battles in Hama's countryside, according to the Observatory. Parts of Aleppo, Hama and Idlib are supposed to be protected from a massive regime offensive by a buffer zone deal that Russia and Turkey signed in

Dozen killed in Indonesia crash after argument

JAKARTA: Twelve people were killed and dozens more injured in an Indonesian traffic accident yesterday after a passenger tried to wrest control of a bus steering wheel following an argument with the driver, police said. The accident happened at around 1:00 am yesterday when the

coach swerved into oncoming traffic on a toll road in West Java, smashing into two cars and causing a truck to roll.

Some 43 people were injured in the multi-vehicle accident and rushed to hospital, police said. "In the middle of the journey, a passenger attempted to forcibly take control of the steering wheel... and the bus then lost control," Atik Suswanti, the head of the Majalengka police traffic unit, told AFP.

The bus driver was killed, according to authorities, while the 29-year-old passenger was severely injured. Traffic accidents are common in the Southeast Asian archipelago, where vehicles are often old and poorly maintained and road rules regularly flouted. — AFP

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International

Boris Johnson gets boost in race to become UK's new PM

Former rival Hancock backs Johnson

LONDON: Boris Johnson got a boost in his campaign to replace British Prime Minister Theresa May yesterday when one of his former rivals and EU supporter Matt Hancock backed him saying he was almost certain to win the contest. Johnson, a former London mayor and foreign minister, is way out in front in the race to become leader of the Conservative Party and despite so far deciding to steer clear of debates with his rivals, his popularity has yet to be dented.

Most of the other five hopefuls concede that Johnson, whose career has been marked by gaffes and scandals, will almost definitely make the final two in the race, when mainly pro-Brexit Conservative Party members will cast the deciding votes. But the race is on to decide who will challenge him.

Health Secretary Hancock, who dropped out of the race on Friday after winning 20 votes in the first ballot of Conservative lawmakers, said Johnson was the best candidate to lead the party. "Boris has run a disciplined campaign and is almost certainly going to be our next prime minister," Hancock said in an article in The Times newspaper, which tapped him as a strong contender to become finance minister. "My view is that we need to start coming together sooner rather than later."

Johnson, the face of the official campaign to leave the European Union in the 2016 referendum, has promised to lead the United Kingdom out of the EU with or without a deal. But parliament has indicated it will try to stop a no-deal Brexit, which investors warn could roil markets and shock the world economy, while the EU has said it will not renegotiate the Withdrawal Agreement that

May agreed. According to economists polled by Reuters, the likelihood of a no-deal exit has jumped in the past month.



Boris Johnson doesn't have a plan: Stewart

Environment minister Michael Gove also took a dig at Johnson, saying his absence from yesterday's hustings in Westminster was described to him as being like "Hamlet without a prince". "And of course we all remember that at the end of Hamlet, he isn't the king," Gove added. If Johnson does win the top job and does go for a no-deal Brexit, a constitutional crisis could be on the horizon if parliament tries to block such a departure.

Pro-Brexit candidate Dominic Raab has said parliament could be suspended if necessary, a possibility he refused to rule out on

contest. The second round is today with the result due around 1700 GMT. Any candidate with 32 votes or fewer is eliminated. If all candidates have more than 32 votes, the one with the fewest is eliminated. For the other five, the fight was on to prove they had what it takes to challenge Johnson, or at least test some of his arguments.

"This is a two-horse race, and we know one of these horses - it's Boris ... There is literally only one question you have to answer, who is likely to beat Boris?" international development minister Rory Stewart said in an appeal to other lawmakers who he needs the support of. "He (Boris) doesn't, as far as I can see, he doesn't have a plan. I say as far as I can see because he doesn't talk to me, he doesn't talk to you, he doesn't talk to the public," said Stewart, who is now placed second favorite.

Environment minister Michael Gove also took a dig at Johnson, saying his absence from yesterday's hustings in Westminster was described to him as being like "Hamlet without a prince". "And of course we all remember that at the end of Hamlet, he isn't the king," Gove added. If Johnson does win the top job and does go for a no-deal Brexit, a constitutional crisis could be on the horizon if parliament tries to block such a departure.

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LONDON: Conservative MP Boris Johnson leaves his home in London yesterday. Candidates to become Britain's next prime minister clashed over Brexit strategy at their first debate but the frontrunner, Boris Johnson, dodged the confrontation. — AFP

Sunday in a debate with other contenders. But the speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow, said it was fantasy to think that the lower house of parliament could be pushed aside. "It's a joke!" Bercow told

French newspaper Le Figaro in comments reported in French.

"The idea that the British parliament can be pushed aside when such a crucial decision is to be made is fantasy." — Reuters

US mayor apologizes after violent arrest videos emerge

WASHINGTON: The mayor of Phoenix apologized on Sunday after videos emerged showing police in the southwestern US city violently arresting a black family with young children. The videos, shot by bystanders when the arrest happened last month, show police using foul language while shouting at the family to get out of their car, and threatening to shoot them. A woman later emerges from the vehicle with two young children. She hands them over to a bystander before being arrested. Separately, an officer is shown kicking the legs of another man who he is handcuffing against a police car.

"I, like many others, am sick over what I have seen in the video depicting Phoenix police interacting with a family and young children," Mayor Kate Gallego wrote in a statement posted on Twitter. Calling the officers' actions "inappropriate" and "clearly unprofessional," she wrote "There is no situation in which this behavior is ever close to acceptable." "As a mother myself, seeing these children placed in such a terrifying situation is beyond upsetting," she said. "I am deeply sorry for what this family went through, and I apologize to our community."

In an appearance on the local ABC affiliate, Phoenix police chief Jeri Williams said the officers had responded to a report of shoplifting when they encountered the family. "Every time I look at that video it's extremely unsettling. It's not in keeping with what I expect from our employees," Williams told ABC15. "I'm sorry that this incident happened. I apologize to the family, I apologize to the community," she said, adding that it was being investigated. — AFP

Frenchman 'admits burning body' of murdered wife

GRAY-LA-VILLE: A Frenchman charged with murdering his wife in a case that gripped France yesterday admitted to partially burning her body after brutally beating her, following a meticulous police reconstruction of the events, the prosecutor said. Jonathann Daval, 35, had in January 2018 confessed to killing his wife Alexia in October 2017 after initially posing as a distraught husband and even organising events in her memory.

The charred body of Alexia Daval, a 29-year-old bank employee, had been found hidden under tree branches near their town of Gray-la-Ville in eastern France. But the husband had until now not admitted to burning her body after the crime—an omission that had continued to distress Alexia's parents—and had shown inconsistencies in other aspects of his version.

"Faced with the urgent demand of his parents-in-law, who had implored him to tell the whole truth, he finally admitted not only killing her but then partially burning her body," said the prosecutor for the eastern Besancon region, Etienne Manteaux. Daval also confessed to "knocking the face of his wife against a concrete wall" and then dealing between "five to 10 blows at the level of the face" before strangling her "for around four minutes," said Manteaux. "The description of the violence is perfectly consistent with the injuries found" during the autopsy, he added.

The hours-long reconstruction took place in the wood where Alexia's body was found and reunited Daval with her parents Isabelle and Jean-Pierre Fouillot. "We wanted to the truth and we had it," Isabelle Fouillot told reporters afterwards. "I know him well. I know he loves us and we have a strong connection with him. It was not easy," she said, adding: "Alexia can perhaps now rest in peace." On her son-in-law, she said: "It is so hard for now. We loved him. Forgiveness, that comes a bit later." Manteaux said he expected the trial—at which Daval risks life imprisonment if convicted—to start in the second half of 2020. — AFP

Far-right motive mooted in German pro-migrant official's murder

BERLIN: German federal prosecutors said yesterday they had taken over the murder case of a pro-migrant local city official, suggesting they suspect a far-right political motive. Police commandos had on Saturday arrested a suspect in the June 2 assassination-style shooting of Kassel city administration chief Walter Luebcke, 65, on the basis of DNA evidence. "We have taken over the case," said a spokeswoman of the federal prosecution service, which deals with crimes motivated by political and religious extremism.

Authorities did not discuss the possible motive, but German media reported that the 45-year-old suspect from Kassel, Hesse state, had in the past been connected with far-right extremism. Federal prosecutors assumed control of the investigation after "the suspicion of a right-wing extremist or right-wing terrorist background firmed up," said the Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily. News site Zeit Online, citing unnamed security sources, partially named him as Stephan E. and said he had been previously sentenced to jail for a 1993 failed pipe-bomb attack on an asylum seekers' home in Hesse.

Three opposition parties—the Greens, Free Democrats and far-left Die Linke—urged a special parliamentary hearing into what could be Germany's first targeted killing of an elected official in decades. Luebcke, a member of Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative Christian Democrats, was shot in the head at close range overnight on the terrace of his home near Kassel, 160 kilometers northeast of Frankfurt.

He had passionately spoken out in defense of migrants at the height of Europe's 2015 refugee crisis, drawing the fury of the far right for telling anti-migrant agitators they "could leave Germany". Since his death, hundreds of posts from social media accounts tied to right-wing extremists have hailed his murder, in turn drawing strong condemnations from President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and other politicians.

Racist hate

Der Spiegel weekly reported, without citing sources,

Greek road trip: Unemployment the big bogey in July 7 vote

PIRAEUS: When Greeks go to the ballot box on July 7 in early elections, unemployment and recovery from a near-decade crisis will be the main battleground between the outgoing leftist government and the resurgent conservatives. But in the favela-like neighborhood of Perama, haphazardly built on the hills above the bustling port of Piraeus, there is unlikely to be a difference no matter who wins. In this working-class neighborhood of 25,000 people that overlooks the port's oil tanks and container terminals, the jobless rate is close to 80 percent among shipyard workers, one of the main sectors of local employment.

Construction, the second most important source of work, was also hit hard by the crisis. Even after four years under Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and social benefits handed out by his leftist government, "the poor have remained poor," says Vassiliki Padeliakou, a local resident. Pavlos Tassimakis lives here with his wife and five children in a small two-bedroom house that he built himself. After 12 years without a regular job, the grizzled 51-year-old former truck driver has long ceased to receive unemployment benefits.

"We are seven at home, and we receive 640 euros in state support every two months. It is obviously not enough to survive on," says Pavlos, who has had to moonlight as a removals driver, earning 15 euros (\$17) per trip, to make ends meet. His wife Paraskevi is also out of a job after fleeing stints as a town hall cleaner in nearby Korydallos.



KASSEL: A portrait of Walter Luebcke, the administrative chief of the western city of Kassel, is on display next to his coffin during a memorial service in Kassel, western Germany. — AFP

that the suspect in custody had in the past had clear connections to the right-wing extremist scene and links to the neo-Nazi NPD party. He had come to police attention for acts of violence as well as weapons and property offences, the magazine reported. It said the suspect had received a seven-month suspended jail term a decade ago after he had joined right-wing radicals who attacked a May 1 Labor Day march in the western city of Dortmund. If the shooting death was indeed motivated by right-wing extremism, it would be Germany's first political murder of an elected official in decades, recalling Britain's 2016 killing of British Labour Party lawmaker Jo Cox.

Several German politicians have been badly injured, among them parliamentary speaker Wolfgang Schäuble who has used a wheelchair since surviving a 1990 shooting by a deranged assailant, and Cologne city mayor Henriette Reker, who survived a 2015 knife assault by a man angered

by her pro-refugee stance. From the 1970s to early 1990s, Germany was terrorized by the far-left Red Army Faction, which emerged out of the anti-Vietnam war protest movement and launched a spate of shootings, bombings and kidnappings targeting politicians, police, bankers, business leaders and US troops.

More recently Germany was shocked to learn that the far-right militant group National Socialist Underground (NSU) killed nine Turkish and Greek-born immigrants and a German policewoman from 2000 to 2007, and carried out bomb attacks and bank robberies. Free Democrats lawmaker Benjamin Strasser was among politicians sounding the alarm on Monday, telling media group RND that "for years, threats from the extreme right against politicians have been on the rise." "We need to decisively clear up and take effective measures against right-wing terrorist structures." — AFP



PERAMA: Eleni's dog stands in front of a container, which is her temporary home, in the suburb of Perama, near Athens. — AFP

The family has no health insurance and cannot pay for after-school preparatory courses which most Greek pupils need to pass end-of-year exams. They also owe over 600 euros in unpaid bills to the electricity company, which has led to power cut threats.

'No future here'

"I don't see how life can improve in Perama. What kind of future can our children look forward to? There is no work, no future here," says Pavlos' wife Paraskevi. Their daughter Evangelia, who is 15, wants to study law and get out of Perama. And perhaps out of the country too. After officially exiting its third bailout nearly a year ago, Greece under Tsipras has slowly returned to growth of 19 percent of output in 2018. But in June, official figures showed unemployment inching up to 19.2 percent from 18.5 percent in January.

In May, the New Democracy conservative party of Kyriakos Mitsotakis beat Tsipras' Syriza party by over

nine points in European parliament elections. This unexpectedly large defeat prompted the prime minister to announce early elections on July 7, three months ahead of schedule. Analysts believe that the electoral backlash faced by Syriza is partly due to additional taxation piled on middle classes already weakened by the crisis. Ahead of July 7, Mitsotakis leads Tsipras in all recent polls. Both leaders have promised to create more jobs over the next four years. At the town hall of Perama, deputy mayor Panagiotis Karagiannakis, a former shipyard unionist, is acutely aware of the difficulty facing his constituents. "The problems began in the 1980s when port activity declined, owing to competition from neighboring countries such as Turkey where the cost of labor was lower. With the global crisis, from 2008 onwards, the shipbuilding sector has been completely destroyed," said Karagiannakis, who has himself also experienced a long period of unemployment.

The situation remains critical'

"The population has become poorer since the crisis. The Greek economy is improving but in Perama, the situation remains critical and that is why the mayor decided to set up in December a social grocery store and a soup kitchen," he adds. At the soup kitchen organized by the town hall, nearly a hundred people wait for lunch every day. Vassiliki Padeliakou, 62, is one of the beneficiaries. In the last nine years she has only worked on two eight-month contracts, not enough to earn unemployment benefits, or a pension.

She has also lost 20 kilos (44 pounds). A few years back, Vassiliki worked in the port customs office. Now, she survives on the charity of friends and neighbors. "When I hear the government congratulate itself on its social policy, I am ashamed. The welfare state in Greece remains non-existent!" she sighs. "I do not know how manage to survive ... I live from day to day, with the help of the town hall, neighbors, or restaurants who give me leftovers," she says. — AFP

International

In historic shift, Vatican to consider married priests for Amazon region

Church mulls 'viri probati' to deal with shortage of priests

VATICAN CITY: A Vatican document yesterday said the Church should consider ordaining older married men as priests in remote areas of the Amazon, a historic shift which some say could pave the way for their use in other areas where clergy are scarce. The recommendation, contained in a working document prepared by the Vatican for a synod of bishops from the Amazon scheduled for October, also called for some kind of "official ministry" for women in the area, although it did not elaborate.

It was the most direct mention ever in a Vatican document of the possibility of a married priesthood, albeit limited, and a greater ministerial role for women in one area of the world. The document spoke of the possibility of ordaining what are known as "viri probati" - Latin for men of proven character - to deal with the shortage

of priests. Such men would be elderly, outstanding members of the local Catholic community and with grown-up families.

"While affirming that celibacy is a gift for the Church, there have been requests that, for the most remote areas of the region, (the Church) studies the possibility of conferring priestly ordination on elderly men, preferably indigenous, respected and accepted members of their communities," the document said. It said such men could be ordained "even if they already have an established and stable family, in order to guarantee the sacraments that accompany and sustain Christian life."

Only priests can say Mass or hear confessions, meaning that Catholics in isolated communities in the Amazon can go for many months without participating

in either of the sacraments. Monsignor Fabio Fabene, undersecretary of the Vatican department that organizes synods, told Reuters that in responses to questionnaires to bishops in the region, there had been "very widespread" requests for "Viri Probati" to be considered.

Some Catholic scholars have said the approval of "viri probati" in the Amazon may eventually pave the way for their use elsewhere in the world as a response to the shortage of priests.

Pope Francis, in an interview with a German newspaper in 2017, said he was willing to consider ordaining "viri probati" men as priests in isolated communities. He has also mentioned their possible use on remote Pacific islands.

But he ruled out a general opening the priesthood to

all married men or watering down the Catholic Church's commitment to celibacy, seen as a virtue that frees priests to devote their lives fully to serve God. The synod on Oct 6-27 at the Vatican will include bishops and other representatives, including indigenous peoples, from Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname and French Guyana.

At the end of their conference, participants will vote on various articles in a final document, which will then go to the pope, who will decide whether to make it an official Apostolic Exhortation based on the synod meetings. The document also issues a strong defense for the protection of the environment in the Amazon, deforestation, illegal mining and development projects that threaten native cultures and the delicate ecosystem vital for the planet. —Reuters

Indian doctors stage nationwide strike over 'inhuman' conditions

NEW DELHI: Hundreds of thousands of doctors across India went on strike yesterday demanding better working conditions, the country's top medical body said, as the outrage over lax security conditions at hospitals escalated. The nationwide protests, affecting hundreds of hospitals, started after an attack at a medical college in West Bengal state a week ago.

The attack left three junior doctors seriously injured after a dispute with a family whose relative had died. The incident resonated with Indian doctors, many of whom are poorly paid and overworked compared with their foreign counterparts.

Thousands of doctors protested outside hospitals across India yesterday, holding placards and wearing black arm bands and bloodied mock bandages. The Indian Medical Association (IMA), that represents more than 300,000 doctors and half-a-million junior doctors, medical students and other staff, said almost all of its members, apart from those providing emergency services, have joined the protests.

"Practically, the entire medical fraternity is on strike," Dr RV Asokan, the IMA's honorary general secretary said yesterday. "Everybody is on the street." The IMA is demanding tougher punishments for those who attack doctors, as well as higher recruitment to support the overworked staff. A doctor in an outpatient unit in India often saw more than 100 patients in a day. Asokan said, and despite tens of thousands of junior doctors graduating every year, many were out of work.

"The workload of doctors is inhuman," he said. "The government is not recruiting enough." Doctors, who have been protesting in West Bengal ever since the attack a week ago, were due to hold talks with the government after the state authorities permitted the media to cover the meeting. There were queues at Ernakulam Government Hospital in the southern state of Kerala yesterday morning, as patients waited to consult the limited number of doctors who were on duty. —Reuters

Hong Kong protests a rare defeat for Xi

BEIJING: China's powerful President Xi Jinping has been dealt a rare setback with the suspension of unpopular legislation in Hong Kong following massive protests, but Beijing could bite back by tightening its grip on the semi-autonomous city, according to analysts. Hundreds of thousands of protesters returned to the streets of Hong Kong on Sunday, calling for the resignation of the territory's pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam—even after she suspended a deeply unpopular bill that would have allowed extraditions to the mainland.

Xi is not used to such challenges, having consolidated his power and tightened his grip on civil society on the mainland since taking office in 2012. But Hong Kongers defiantly demonstrated en masse in the past week against a bill that was seen as another sign of the Chinese Communist Party's growing influence in the city, which should enjoy its own laws and certain liberties such as freedom of speech until 2047 under the terms of its handover from Britain to China in 1997.

"It's a massive repudiation of the idea that Hong Kong will be effectively, over time, fully absorbed into mainland China," said Bill Bishop, publisher of the Sinocism China Newsletter. "The party under Xi has become more worrisome and that's certainly a rejection of not just Xi but the party overall," Bishop said.

Beijing has sought to distance itself from the unrest, saying the bill was the brainchild of the Hong Kong government and portraying the violent demonstrations last week as a "riot" backed by foreign forces, while censors have worked to block discussion on social media. Experts say Lam would not have pushed the legislation without guidance from her backers on the mainland, and on Monday Beijing said it will "continue to firmly support" the beleaguered chief executive.

But Xi himself has been physically distant: Away on a visit to Central Asia as protests turned violent on Wednesday, and returning on Sunday evening when hundreds of thousands flooded the streets again. "This is a defeat for Xi Jinping," said Victoria Hui, a native Hong Konger and associate professor in political science at the University of Notre Dame in the United States. "People don't believe that Carrie Lam would on her own accord try to rush through something that is not even in the Basic Law," Hui said. —AFP

Indian Houdini feared drowned; stunt goes wrong

KOLKATA: An Indian magician who went missing after being lowered into a river while tied up with chains and ropes in a Houdini-inspired stunt is feared drowned, police said yesterday. Chanchal Lahiri, known by his stage name "Jadugar Mandrake" (Wizard Mandrake), was lowered by winch into the river in Kolkata on Sunday in a yellow and red costume.

But the 40-year-old, his legs and his arms tightly bound, failed to emerge from the water, to the horror of onlookers including his family and team members. Rescue workers have been scouring the fast-flowing murky waters since Sunday but he was yet to be found. Syed Waqar Raza from the river traffic police told AFP. "We fear he drowned in the

river," he said. Lahiri told AFP beforehand that he had successfully pulled off a similar stunt 21 years ago at the same venue in the eastern city.

"I was inside a bullet proof glass box tied with chain and locks and dropped down from Howrah bridge. Then I came out within 29 seconds." He admitted it would be tough to free himself this time. "If I can open it up then it will be magic, but if I can't it will be tragic," he said. He also said he was undertaking the death-defying stunt to "revive interest in magic". When Lahiri tried another stunt at the river in 2013, he was assaulted by onlookers who saw him escape from a locked cage via a door that was clearly visible.

He was beaten and punched and his long flowing golden-brown wig was pulled off by the crowd. Almost a decade earlier, he declared he would walk on the river waters but had to beat a hasty retreat when the act went wrong. Harry Houdini was a Hungarian-born American stuntman who became a



KOLKATA: Indian stuntman Chanchal Lahiri, known by his stage name 'Jadugar Mandrake', is lowered into the Ganges river, while tied up with steel chains and ropes, in Kolkata. —AFP

sensation in the early 20th century with daredevil feats including escaping from

a crate lowered into the East River in New York in 1912. —AFP

Sara: Israeli premier's scandal plagued wife

JERUSALEM: Sara Netanyahu the wife of Israel's prime minister, who was convicted Sunday of misusing public funds, has long been the target - with her husband - of corruption and mismanagement allegations. With her shoulder-length blonde hair and always made-up face, she is widely said to be at the heart of decision-making for everything from who should head the spy agency Mossad to the list of parliamentary candidates in her husband's Likud party.

But her supporters - first and foremost her husband Benjamin Netanyahu - accuse the media of a witch-hunt, claiming she has no say in public affairs and devotes her energies to helping those in need. Born in a town in northern Israel, her father was a poet author and educator. Sara, now 60, served in the Israeli military before studying psychology. She was married to a member of a kibbutz between 1980-1987, and met Netanyahu while working as an air stewardess for

the Israeli flag carrier El Al after her divorce.

She married Netanyahu in 1991 and the pair have two sons: Avner, who keeps away from the public eye, and the older and outspoken Yair, who vehemently defends his parents and his father's policies while savaging opponents on social media. While present at many of her husband's public events and overseas trips, Sara also holds a part-time position as an educational psychologist for the Jerusalem municipality. Recordings of her screaming at cleaning staff in the prime minister's official Jerusalem residence reached the press, causing waves of contempt but also concern for her emotional health.

Sara Netanyahu is being sued by a former cleaner who claims the premier's wife mistreated her. In 2016 a court awarded some \$47,000 in damages to another former housekeeper who had accused Sara of repeated workplace abuse. Sara Netanyahu's conviction on Sunday for using public funds to pay for meals brought an end to a trial that risked further exposing the Netanyahu's lifestyle, which critics say is a combination of luxury wed with pathological stinginess.

'Punching bag for media'

Benjamin Netanyahu - a millionaire - is also facing possible indictment for bribery, fraud and breach of trust in the months ahead. In one case, the premier and his wife are suspected of having received luxury gifts, including cigars and champagne, from wealthy individuals, including Hollywood producer Arnon Milchan, in exchange for financial or personal favors. On Saturday Netanyahu - who is gearing up for September polls after failing to form a coalition following April general elections - took to Facebook to defend his wife.

He denied that Sara was involved in Israeli public affairs, describing her as a "real heroine" who was "a punching bag for the media". "Anyone who is not appointed to a position, or anyone who is dismissed from a position, knows what to do: Attack Sara," he wrote. "The facts and the truth do not matter at all. Sara has long been in a punchbag for the media," Netanyahu said. He detailed her work with "children with cancer, bereaved families... Holocaust survivors, and many other people in need". "My beloved wife, you are a real heroine," concluded Netanyahu. —AFP



JERUSALEM: Sara Netanyahu, wife of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, leaves the Magistrate's Court in Jerusalem, following her conviction of fraudulently using state funds for meals. —AFP

Joshua Wong: Poster child of Hong Kong's 'Umbrella Movement'

HONG KONG: Joshua Wong was the unlikely hero who helped lead a movement that inspired hundreds of thousands of Hong Kongers to take over the city's streets for two months in 2014 calling for fully free elections. Scrawny, with gaunt features and a studious frown, the then 17-year-old spearheaded the mass "Umbrella Movement" protests, which were a reaction to restrictions from Beijing on how Hong Kong's next leader would be chosen. Alongside fellow student leaders Nathan Law and Alex Chow, Wong's speeches and calls for civil disobedience electrified the crowds but the movement failed to win any concessions from China or Hong Kong's pro-Beijing leaders.

He captured the attention of the world in his casting as David against the Goliath of the Chinese Communist Party, and was hailed as one of the world's most influential figures by Time, Fortune and Foreign Policy magazines. He even became the subject of Netflix documentary "Teenager vs Superpower", released in 2017. Born to

middle-class Christian parents Grace and Roger Wong, he began his life of activism aged just 13 with a protest against plans for a high-speed rail link between Hong Kong and the mainland.

At the age of just 15, Wong campaigned successfully for Hong Kong to drop a pro-China "National Education" program, rallying a crowd of 120,000 to blockade the city's parliament for 10 days. In many ways he pioneered a protest method that has since been embraced by Hong Kong's protest movement—seizing streets in non-violent civil disobedience—after years of peaceful rallies failed to achieve much. But he has paid for his activism. Prosecutors came after him and many of the Umbrella Movement's leaders.

'The city I love'

In mid-May he was sentenced to two months on a contempt charge after pleading guilty to obstructing the clearance of a major protest camp in 2014. He was also convicted in a second prosecution related to the storming of a government forecourt during the 2014 protests. He spent some time behind bars for that case, but in the end the city's top court ruled that community service was sufficient punishment.

Alongside Nathan Law and Alex Chow he went on to found the political party Demosisto which campaigns for more self-determination for Hong Kong but not independence—a clear red line to Beijing. His demands have been both consistent and fairly simple: that Hong Kongers should get to decide their city's fate, not communist party officials in Beijing.



HONG KONG: Hong Kong democracy activist Joshua Wong (center) leaves Lai Chi Kok Correctional Institute in Hong Kong yesterday. —AFP

Since the end of the Umbrella Movement, he has been denied entry into Malaysia and Thailand, attacked in the street, and abused by pro-China protesters in Taiwan. But he has said he will fight on. In an article written for Time Magazine in prison last week—as historic protests gripped the city once more over a deeply divisive extradition law—he wrote: "My lack of freedom today is a price I knew I would have to pay for the city I love." He stepped back into the fray yesterday when authorities released him just one month into his prison term.

Authorities did not confirm whether the decision was procedural or a gesture to protestors. He immediately called for Hong Kong's pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam to step down over her role pushing for the controversial extradition bill and vowed to join the protests. "She is no longer qualified to be Hong Kong's leader," Wong told reporters. "She must take the blame and resign, be held accountable and step down." "After leaving jail today I will also fight with all Hong Kongers to oppose the evil China extradition law," he added. —AFP

Business

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019

12 NBK-Egypt launches 'NBK EG Wallet'**13** US ban hurting more than expected, to wipe \$30bn off revenue: Huawei**14** Lexus ES 300h crowned 'Best Midsize Luxury Sedan' at MECOTY Awards

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron and French Defence Minister Florence Parly listen to explanations at the Airbus stand during a visit at the 53rd International Paris Air Show at Le Bourget Airport near Paris yesterday. — AFP

Boeing dealt new blow as Airbus launches A321

Slowing economies, trade tensions and geopolitical uncertainties cast pall over Paris Airshow

LE BOURGET, France: Boeing suffered a fresh setback on the opening of the Paris Airshow yesterday as its engine supplier announced a delay for the US planemaker's all-new 777X jet while Airbus launched a rival plane aimed at the middle of the market. GE Aviation said it had found unexpected wear in a part for the GE9X engine it is making for the 777X, the world's largest twin-engine jet, forcing a delay of several months while it redesigns and tests the part.

The news is another headache for Boeing as it continues to grapple with the grounding of its top-selling 737 MAX aircraft in March after two deadly crashes.

European arch-rival Airbus, meanwhile, launched a long-range version of its A321neo jet, aiming to carve out new routes for airlines with smaller planes and steal a march on Boeing's own plans for another potential all-new jet, the NMA.

"We can fly from north-eastern Asia into south Asia, from the Middle East to Bali or from Japan deep into Australia, and so on," said Airbus chief salesman Christian Scherer. "It is therefore the lowest-risk investment for airlines on these kinds of routes."

Leasing company Air Lease Corp became the first customer of the new aircraft - the A321XLR - lining up for 27 as part of a deal for 100 Airbus planes. Sources familiar with the matter said Airbus would announce close to 200 orders for the new model at the air show, with JetBlue Airways Corp and US-based private equity firm Indigo Partners among the buyers.

The aerospace industry's biggest annual event, which alternates with Britain's Farnborough Airshow, is traditionally a slugging match between Airbus and Boeing sales teams in the \$150 billion a year commercial aircraft market. But analysts expect this year's gathering to be relatively subdued, with slowing economies, trade tensions and geopolitical uncertainties unsettling airlines - highlighted by a profit warning from Germany's Lufthansa late on Sunday.

Airbus and Boeing are also grappling with their own problems, with the US firm striving to bring the 737 MAX back into service and Airbus occupied with a long-running corruption scandal. Analysts expect anything from 400 to 800 commercial aircraft orders and commitments at the show, compared with 959 at

Farnborough last year, though it can be hard to identify truly new business against firm-up commitments and switched models.

Boeing commercial airplanes boss Kevin McAllister said he was "staying very close to the situation" with the GE9X engine, and that it was premature to make any predictions on delays for the 777X program. Boeing is targeting a maiden flight this year and 2020 entry into service, but Gulf airline Emirates has said it expects the first plane in June of that year. Flight tests often take more than a year.

Size vs comfort

The Airbus A321XLR will be the longest-range narrow-body jetliner and arrives as airlines look to maximize the flexibility of more fuel-efficient, single-aisle aircraft. Its range of up to 4,700 nautical miles - about 15 percent more than the previous A321LR - will leapfrog the out-of-production Boeing 757 and nudges it into the long-jump category occupied by more costly wide-body jets. Airbus shares were up 0.7 percent at 123.30 euros in afternoon trade. The

A321XLR also eats into a range category targeted by the possible NMA mid-market, twin-aisle jet under review by Boeing.

"It does provide a very effective airplane for many of the same routes as the NMA, and it does so many years earlier," Air Lease CEO John Plueger said of the new Airbus jet. But there is a debate over whether passengers will enjoy flying longer distances in medium-haul planes and at what price.

In particular, the rise of the single-aisle, long-distance jet involves revisiting years of industry marketing about the benefit of roomier cabins to counter jet lag on long trips. Airbus did not give a price for the A321XLR. The current A321neo has a list price of \$129.5 million. Boeing Chairman and CEO Dennis Muilenburg on Sunday said the A321XLR would only "scratch an edge" of the market segment targeted by the NMA. He added that Boeing expected to announce orders for wide-body jets at the Paris show but its main focus at the event was safety, with executives taking turns to apologize for the 737 MAX crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia that killed 346 people. — Reuters

Bank of Japan cuts inflation, growth forecasts

TOKYO: Japan will fail to hit its two percent inflation target even by 2022, the central bank predicted yesterday as it also revised down its estimate for growth in the world's third-largest economy. In its closely watched quarterly report, the Bank of Japan forecast inflation of 1.6 percent in the fiscal year ending March 2022, meaning its years-long battle to reignite prices is far from won.

The BoJ lowered its inflation forecast for the year to March 2021 to 1.3 percent from 1.4 percent. Japanese inflation currently stands below one percent, less than halfway to target, despite six years of aggressive monetary stimulus under BoJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda.

The central bank kept its ultra-loose monetary policy in place after a two-day policy board meeting but added a fresh timeframe, saying the "extremely low" rates would be maintained "at least through around spring 2020". It cited global economic uncertainties and the risks of a scheduled hike in consumption tax later this year from eight percent to 10 percent.

"It is extremely regrettable that we have not reached the two percent inflation target six years after January 2013" when the government and the BoJ agreed on the target, Kuroda told a press conference. He said the current monetary easing "could continue beyond" spring 2020, and future policy



TOKYO: Haruhiko Kuroda (left), governor of the Bank of Japan (BOJ) and Taro Aso, Japan's deputy prime minister and finance minister attend the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors meeting in Fukuoka yesterday. —AFP

decisions will be made taking into account economic indicators and other conditions.

Kuroda said the new timeframe was intended to show the cheap money policy will continue for "longer than you think", also noting that global economic uncertainties were also a factor behind clarifying the bank's intentions. But he insisted the economy is moving gradually toward the inflation target, given a tight labor market and "relatively good" economic conditions. Economic growth would also come in at 0.8 percent this fiscal year, climbing to 0.9 percent the year after-both downward revisions of 0.1 percentage points, the cen-

tral bank said in the latest report.

It forecast GDP at 1.2 percent in the fiscal year ending in 2022. Kuroda has come under fire over the effectiveness of his monetary easing program and how he intends to return the bank's policy to normal. In 2013, the BoJ embarked on a huge bond-buying program in a bid to stimulate long-dormant prices with the stated aim of hitting the two percent mark within two years. But while the plan-which ran in tandem with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's big-spending drive to ramp up the economy-showed early promise, the bank has been forced to delay several times the date for hitting its target. — AFP

Jet Airways lenders to go to bankruptcy court

MUMBAI: Lenders to crippled Jet Airways said yesterday they would start bankruptcy court proceedings after failing to find someone to take over the Indian carrier.

Once India's biggest private airline, Jet stopped operating in April after it ran out of cash and its planes were grounded. Doubts have mounted since over whether the carrier will fly again. The airline's creditors, who are owed more than \$1 billion, said after a meeting in Mumbai that only one "conditional" offer has been received for Jet Airways. That is believed to have come from Abu Dhabi-based Etihad Airways, which already had a 24 percent stake in Jet.

The creditors, led by State Bank of India, said the meeting decided to turn to India's insolvency and bankruptcy code (IBC). "After due deliberations, lenders have decided to seek resolution under (the) IBC since only a conditional bid was received," the lenders said in a statement.

They added the bidder had sought "exemptions" on pricing from the Security and Exchange Board of India, the market regulator, which was only possible under the insolvency code. Indian media quoted sources as saying the creditors could still try to arrange a sale under the code.

Jet Airways shares fell by another 17 percent on the Bombay Stock Exchange yesterday as the lenders' meeting was on. The shares are now worth less than \$1. The airline once employed more than 16,000 people but many pilots and flight staff have already gone to other carriers, which have built up their operations since Jet was grounded. On top of its debts to creditors, Jet Airways has accumulated losses and salary arrears worth another \$1 billion. —AFP

Business

US ban hurting more than expected, to wipe \$30bn off revenue: Huawei

CEO says he expects revival in business in 2021

HONG KONG: China's Huawei Technologies Co Ltd has taken a harder-than-expected hit from a US ban, the company's founder and CEO Ren Zhengfei said, and slashed revenue expectations for the year.

Ren's downbeat assessment that the ban will hit revenue by \$30 billion, the first time Huawei has quantified the impact of the US action, comes as a surprise after weeks of defiant comments from company executives who maintained Huawei was technologically self-sufficient. The United States has put Huawei on an export blacklist citing national security issues, barring US suppliers from selling to the world's largest telecommunications equipment maker and No 2 maker of smartphones, without special approval. The firm has denied its products pose a security threat.

The ban has forced companies, including Alphabet Inc's Google and British chip designer ARM to limit or cease their relationships with the Chinese company.

Huawei had not expected that US determination to "crack" the company would be "so strong and so pervasive", Ren said, speaking at the company's Shenzhen headquarters yesterday. Two US tech experts, George Gilder and Nicholas Negroponte, also joined the session.

"We did not expect they would attack us on so many aspects," Ren said, adding he expects a revival in business in 2021.

"We cannot get components supply, cannot participate in many international organizations, cannot work closely with many universities, cannot use anything with US components, and cannot even establish connection with networks that use such components."

Huawei, which turned in a revenue of 721.2 billion yuan (\$104 billion) last year, expects revenue of around \$100 billion this year and the next, Ren said. This compares to an initial target for a growth in 2019 to between \$125 billion and \$130 billion depending on foreign exchange fluctuations.

Trade war

The Trump administration slapped sanctions on Huawei at a time when US-China trade talks hit rough waters, prompting assertions from China's leaders about the country's progress in achieving self-sufficiency in the key semiconductor business. Huawei has also said it could roll out its Hongmeng operating system (OS), which is being tested, within nine months if needed, as its phones face being cut off from updates of Google's Android OS in the wake of the ban.

But industry insiders have remained skeptical that Chinese chip makers can quickly meet the challenge of supplying Huawei's needs and those of other domestic technology firms. Negroponte, founder of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab, said the US ban was a mistake.

"Our president has already said publicly that he would reconsider Huawei if we can make a trade deal. So clearly that is not about national security," he said. "It is about something else," Negroponte added.

Huawei's smartphone sales have, however, been hit by the uncertainty. Ren said the firm's international smartphone shipments plunged 40 percent. While he did not give the time period, a spokesman clarified the CEO was referring to the past month. Bloomberg



SHENZHEN: Huawei founder and CEO Ren Zhengfei (C) gets make-up and a microphone as he prepares to take part in a panel discussion on technology, markets and enterprise in Shenzhen yesterday. —AFP

reported on Sunday that Huawei was preparing for a 40-60 percent drop in international smartphone shipments. The CEO, however, said Huawei will not cut

research and development spending despite the expected hit from the ban to the company's finances and would not have large-scale layoffs. —Reuters

Brazil development bank chief quits, fueling crisis

RIO DE JANEIRO: The head of Brazil's powerful state development bank quit on Sunday, a day after far-right President Jair Bolsonaro threatened to sack him, fueling a political crisis engulfing the government. BNDES president Joaquim Levy, a Chicago-educated economist and former finance minister in the left-wing government of ex-president Dilma Rousseff, submitted his resignation to Economy Minister Paulo Guedes after Bolsonaro said he had a "price on his head."

"I thank the minister for his invitation to serve the country and I wish for success in the reforms," Levy said in a statement. Levy's sudden departure follows a tumultuous week for a troubled government less than six months into its term, in which Bolsonaro fired his third minister, retired general Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, who had clashed with Bolsonaro's sons, and then sacked the head of Brazil's postal service.

Bolsonaro on Saturday offered equivocal support for embattled Justice Minister Sergio Moro, who has faced calls to resign over allegations he improperly collaborated with anticorruption prosecutors to keep leftist icon Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva out of the 2018 presidential race, which he was expected to win. While he again defended Moro against claims of wrongdoing, Bolsonaro added he did not have "100 percent"

confidence in the former judge, who is seen by many Brazilians as a hero and is a key member of Bolsonaro's cabinet.

Moro handed Lula his first conviction in 2017, ultimately ending both his hopes of contesting the election and decades of center-left rule in Brazil. Bolsonaro had threatened on Saturday to dismiss Levy, who had served as treasury secretary under Lula, over the appointment of an official to BNDES who has links to the left-wing Workers Party-Bolsonaro's ideological enemy.

"Government is like this, it can't have suspicious people" in important positions, Bolsonaro told reporters. "I told him (Levy): 'Dismiss this guy (Marcos Barbosa Pinto) on Monday or I will fire you without going through Paulo Guedes.'"

'Crisis factory'

Bolsonaro had previously criticized BNDES, which has been a major financier of infrastructure projects in Brazil, Venezuela, Cuba and Mozambique, and had promised to open its "black box" to expose corrupt dealings. Guedes told G1 columnist Gerson Camarotti on Saturday that Bolsonaro's "anxiety" with Levy was understandable given the BNDES president had failed to cooperate and then hired someone from the left.

Levy was appointed by Guedes, who himself is under growing pressure as he spearheads the government's economic reform agenda, including an ambitious overhaul of Brazil's bloated retirement system that has met with strong resistance from trade unions and a hostile Congress. A general strike called by



RIO DE JANEIRO: A man leaves the ATM area of a closed bank branch in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil during a national strike called by trade unions over Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's pension reforms. —AFP

unions on Friday paralyzed public transport and shuttered schools and banks in many Brazilian cities as thousands of protesters took to the streets against the pension proposal and the government's planned education spending cuts.

A pared-back draft of the pension reform, which was presented to Congress on Thursday, reduces expected savings from 1.2 trillion reais (\$300 billion) in 10 years to around 900 billion reais. It sparked an angry exchange between Guedes and Rodrigo Maia, the powerful speaker of the lower house of Congress with whom the Bolsonaro government's relations were already frayed.

Guedes, who has vowed to resign if the bill is not passed or is watered down too much, said lawmakers were threatening to "abort" the pension reform and had shown "there was no commitment to future generations." Maia fired back that the government was a "crisis factory."

Reforming the pension system is Bolsonaro's signature policy and is seen as crucial to his ability to deliver on other promised measures to shake up Latin America's biggest economy. The growing turmoil is likely to rattle investors already worried about Brazil's weakening economy, which is at risk of sliding back into recession. —Reuters

China pulls WTO suit over claim to be a market economy

GENEVA: China has halted a dispute at the World Trade Organization over its claim to be a market economy, a panel of three WTO adjudicators said yesterday, meaning Beijing must accept continued EU and US "anti-dumping" levies on cheap Chinese goods.

One trade official close to the case said so much of the ruling had gone against Beijing that it had opted to pull the plug before the result became official. "They lost so much that they didn't even want the world to see the panel's reasoning," the official said.

Without a WTO ruling in Beijing's favor, the EU and United States can keep imposing duties on cheap imports from China while disregarding its claim that they are fairly priced. China had insisted that they treat it as a "market economy", countering their view that the price of Chinese exports could not be taken at face value due to state interference in the economy.

It took legal action saying that under its 2001 WTO membership terms it must be recognized as a "market economy" after 15 years. "China believes that there can be no other plausible reading of this simple and unambiguous treaty language," China's WTO ambassador Zhang Xiangchen said at a WTO hearing in 2017, calling the text "crystal clear".

But the United States and the EU disagreed. They said Chinese goods—especially commodities such as steel and aluminum—were still heavily underpriced because of subsidies and state-backed oversupply,

giving Chinese exporters an unfair advantage. The row had become an explosive issue for the United States, with President Donald Trump threatening to quit the WTO if the organization did not "shape up". Chinese, EU and US officials did not immediately comment on the suspension.

Beijing launched disputes against Brussels and Washington at the WTO in December 2016. It only pursued the case against the EU, but asked to suspend legal proceedings on May 7, the panel said. After an EU request to take certain considerations into account, China reiterated its request to suspend legal proceedings. The panel accepted and halted the case on Friday.

The official said China was on course to lose the bulk of the case, with only some minor points going in its favor. "They were going to win something, but it was overshadowed by the huge defeat that they had on the main claim." —Reuters

Pfizer acquires Array Biopharma, valued at \$11.4bn

NEW YORK: US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer yesterday announced the acquisition of Array Biopharma, a biotechnology firm that specializes in cancer drugs, the latest in a long list of biotech mergers in recent years. In a statement, Pfizer said it offered \$48 per share in cash for Array, putting an \$11.4 billion value on the company.

"The board of directors of both companies have approved the merger," Pfizer said. The proposed acquisition "sets the stage to create a potentially industry-leading franchise for colorectal cancer alongside Pfizer's existing expertise in breast and prostate cancers," Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said.

Array's portfolio includes two drugs, Braftovi (encorafenib) and Mektovi (binimetinib), that when combined are effective in treating BRAF-mutant melanoma. The combination of the two drugs was authorized in September by the European Commission, several months after the US Federal Drug Administration gave its approval. Besides melanomas, BRAF mutations occur in up to 15 percent of colorectal cancers, Pfizer said.

The transaction shows how big pharmaceutical companies are looking to biotech acquisitions for growth, often buying them for astronomical sums.

In early January, Bristol-Myers-Squibb acquired Celgene in a \$74 billion mega merger. Last year, Sanofi scooped up Bioverativ, which specializes in hemophilia treatments, for \$11.6 billion and forked out \$3.9 billion euros from Ablynx of Belgium. Novartis for its part picked up AveXis, which specializes in rare genetic maladies, for \$8.7 billion. —AFP



NEW YORK CITY: In this file photo, people walk past the Pfizer logo on their world headquarters in New York City. —AFP

China's Huatai lifts off in long-awaited London-Shanghai share link

LONDON: Huatai Securities, one of China's largest brokerages, became the first company to list in London under a much-anticipated link with the Shanghai exchange, with its shares rising 7 percent yesterday.

Under the scheme, known as Stock Connect, Shanghai-listed companies can raise new funds on the London stock market while British companies can broaden their investor base by selling existing shares in Shanghai. "We firmly believe in the integrity and stability of the UK financial market," Chairman and President Zhou Yi, said in an email to Reuters after Huatai's global depositary receipts (GDRs) rose to \$21.96, before easing to \$21.25 by 1334 GMT.

Huatai's GDR offering, which ranks as the largest UK listing since 2016, comes as Britain and China hold a new round of talks to strengthen economic ties, against a backdrop of an ongoing trade war between the United States and China. Britain wants to offer Chinese companies an attractive trading environment as it sees cooperation with Beijing as critical after Brexit.

However, bankers and analysts said Huatai's listing is unlikely to spark similar moves in Shanghai by British firms, who have expressed caution over the regulatory regime in China. British finance minister Philip Hammond said Stock Connect was "a ground-breaking initiative, which will deepen our global connectivity as we look outwards to new opportunities in Asia."

City of London Corporation Policy Chair Catherine McGuinness said it could be a "gamechanger in deepening UK-China financial cooperation and expanding access to China's capital markets".

But while the government says British exports to China have tripled since the first round of economic and financial talks in 2008, from 7.6 billion pounds (\$9.56 billion) to 23.1 billion pounds in 2018, the appeal of trading in Shanghai remains low. HSBC has long been seen as a possible candidate for a Shanghai listing but the bank, which already trades in London and Hong Kong, has yet to take steps in that direction.

Few Chinese companies are seeking to follow in Huatai's footsteps for the time being, bankers said, with initial interest yet to translate into concrete listing plans.

Low volumes

Huatai, which is valued at about \$21 billion through its Shanghai and Hong Kong listings with the likes of BlackRock and Vanguard among its top investors, had originally planned its London listing for December. But it was delayed by uncertainty over how Beijing would treat currency conversion back into yuan. However, once cross-border capital management rules on depositary receipts were published on May 27, the deal gained momentum with an investor roadshow in June.

"Once the rules were set out, the deal progressed quickly. Huatai's performance today is an important test and should encourage other Chinese companies to press ahead with a London listing," said Shane Zhang, co-head of Asia Pacific Investment Banking at Morgan Stanley which acted as one of the leading banks on the deal. JP Morgan and Huatai Financial Holdings also worked as joint global coordinators and joint bookrunners, with Credit Suisse and HSBC among the joint bookrunners. —Reuters

Business

Lexus ES 300h crowned 'Best Midsize Luxury Sedan' at MECOTY awards

Pioneering hybrid electric vehicle recognized as finest in its class



KUWAIT: Lexus' enduring commitment to excellence in engineering, innovation, and driving dynamics has once again been highlighted with a prestigious industry recognition. The brand's tireless pursuit of emotional design, exceptional comfort and class-leading performance was endorsed recently when the Lexus ES 300h was honored in the 'Best Midsize Luxury Sedan' category at the 2019 Middle East Car of the Year (MECOTY) awards, one of the premier annual award ceremonies for the region's automotive industry, which took place in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Combining class-leading handling with unparalleled luxury, the Lexus ES 300h was selected for the award by a judging panel made up of 19 independent senior editors from the Middle East and North Africa's leading automotive publications. Each nominee was assessed according to a rigorous set of ten criteria including design and quality (exterior and interior); emotional appeal and driver satisfaction; handling and drivability; value for money (new purchase and resale); safety and durability; comfort and practicality; performance and capability; environmental friendliness; technological

innovation; and regional appeal.

Yugo Miyamoto, Chief Representative of Middle East & Central Asia Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, said: "We are delighted that the Lexus ES 300h has been recognized as 'Best Midsize Luxury Sedan' at the sixth annual MECOTY awards. This coveted accolade is testament to the model's winning combination of brave design and exhilarating performance, which is complemented not only by its luxurious interior, but also its outstanding efficiency and green credentials - highlighting Lexus' deep-rooted care for and consideration of the future needs of people and society. We extend our gratitude to our customers in the region for their loyal support, which remains an endless source of inspiration in our quest to develop vehicles that create amazing experiences and exceed the expectations of drivers and passengers."

The 2019 ES 300h is an electrified hybrid model that can be driven entirely by electrical power with zero-fuel consumption and carbon emissions, or through a combination of a petrol engine and two electric motors, depending on the vehicle's speed and

driver behavior. In addition, batteries in the hybrid electric drivetrain are automatically charged by either the petrol engine or when braking and decelerating, eliminating the need to plug in a power cord. The class-leading model enables customers to contribute to a sustainable future with a fuel consumption value of 22.4 km/L, while enjoying the increased driving satisfaction and engagement provided by the ES 300h's advanced technologies.

The all-new Lexus ES continues the expression of the brand's design direction and commitment towards crafting vehicles with heightened excitement, emotion, and passion. The vehicle's distinct personality is completed by its exquisite interior, which offers an array of advanced features that create a refined cabin experience. These include a 12.3-inch enhanced in-vehicle multimedia display, 10.2-inch colored and adjustable head-up display (HUD), 7-inch color multi-information display (MID) in the gauge cluster, wireless charging system for smartphones, LED ambient illumination, the Lexus Climate Concierge with a 3-zone independent temperature control system, a 17-speaker Mark

Levinson sound system, multi-adjustable power and ventilated front seats, power reclining rear seats, a rear armrest with multi-operation panel, and a hands-free power trunk lid.

The Lexus ES ensures complete peace of mind with Lexus Safety System+, an advanced safety technology package that includes Pre-Collision System (PCS) with pedestrian detection during daylight and certain low-light conditions, Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC), Lane Departure Alert (LDA) with a new feature called Lane Tracing Assist (LTA), and a two-stage adaptive high beam system (AHIS). In addition, the car offers unparalleled protection for its occupants through a comprehensive array of safety features such as 10 SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Panoramic View Monitor (PVM), Blind Spot Monitor (BSM), Parking Support Alert (PKSA), Rear Cross-Traffic Alert (RCTA), Active Cornering Assist (ACA), and Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), among many others.

Turkish Airlines 'Turkey's Most Valuable Brand' in all sectors



KUWAIT: Turkish Airlines was chosen again 'Turkey's Most Valuable Brand' in all sectors. One of the world's leading independent organizations in brand valuation and strategy consulting, Brand Finance announced the results of its 2019 evaluation. According to the results, Turkish Airlines was declared as the "Most Valuable Brand" of Turkey in all sectors. The national flag carrier, who repeatedly assumed this title before, reinforces its leading position in Turkey with recent results.

Commenting on the results, M. Ilker Ayçi, Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee: "We are proud of our achievements crowning our strategy to become the best airline company in the world. Continuing the last years' success indicates that our performance is sustainable. It shows that we are on the right track. We know the value of being the flag carrier of Turkey as we keep our flag flying in 124 countries."

Brand Finance, which evaluates thousands of brands on a global scale through the researches centered on finance and marketing variables, annually announces its ranking results, which are shaped according to the brand power and value criteria to the attention of world public opinion and sectors every year since 1996.

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its weekly draw on 16th June 2019 announcing the names of the winners for the week of 9th until 13th June 2019. The weekly draw consists of five winners who receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

The winners this week are:

Sabah Abdulmajeed Abdullah Alhazzaa
Hussain Ali Shreef Atshan
Ali Ahmad Jassim Alkout Minor
Ibrahim Boboov
Mohammad Ameen Ahmad Masoud

Gulf Bank's second Al-Danah quarterly draw for the prize of KD 250,000 will be held on 26 June 2019, and the third quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on 25 September 2019. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1,000,000, will be held on 16 January 2020, where the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced at a live event.

Gulf Bank encourages customers to increase their chances of winning with Al-Danah by depositing more into their Gulf Bank accounts using the new ePay (Self-

NBK reveals winner of KD 125,000 prize in Al-Jawhara monthly draw

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait announced the winner of the KD 125,000 prize in Al-Jawhara account's monthly draw for the month of May 2019. The winner, Mohammad Saad Mohammad Alenezi, was announced live on FM 88.8 Kuwait Pulse, in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry as well as representatives from NBK Al-Jawhara monthly and quarterly draws are supervised and audited by "Deloitte".

Surf the Internet securely with 'Secucloud' from Ooredoo

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait announced yesterday the launch of its new subscription based cyber-security service 'Secucloud'. This comes in tandem with Ooredoo's efforts to counter phishing attacks, internet scams, and fraud attempts that are becoming a serious threat to all internet users. Ooredoo customers can now surf the internet securely without worrying about sensitive data such as credit card numbers, passwords, usernames, and other personal information being compromised.

Ooredoo's Secucloud service will protect customers from phishing attacks when browsing the internet while simultaneously creating a safe and secure customer experience. This first-of-its-kind service provides a safe platform for customers to enjoy the internet by

entering in Al-Jawhara's weekly, monthly and quarterly draws, giving them the chance to win KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly and the grand prize of KD 250,000 quarterly. Every KD 50 deposited in the Al-Jawhara account gives customers one entry into the draw. Customers' chances of entering the draws double for every KD 50 if no withdrawal or transfers occur on the account during the required period.

"Al-Jawhara is a unique account that enables our customers to save and win through the weekly, monthly and quarterly draws. Customers can easily open an account with an opening balance of KD 400 by visiting their nearest NBK branch or through NBK Online Banking Service and NBK Mobile Banking service for existing NBK customers," said Suresh Varadarajan, Head of Liabilities & Insurance, Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait.

"By saving, customers also double their chances of winning when they do not withdraw or transfer amounts from their account during the required period."

Since 2012, NBK has rewarded loyal customers with prizes worth a total of up to KD 2,200,000 annually through its weekly, monthly and quarterly Al-Jawhara draws. In addition to its attractive and most innovative and safe products and services, NBK is committed to providing customers with ongoing offers and rewards in line with the needs and lifestyles of its customers.



Ashwaq Abu Hadidah



securing banking transactions, providing protection from hackers, phishing, viruses, and potential attacks.

Unlike any other protection platform, there is no need to download any separate apps that might jeopardize the security of the device used. Customers can easily subscribe to Secucloud by visiting ooredoo.secucloud.info where they will be granted a free trial. Secucloud immediately blocks any potential threats it detects allowing subscribers to surf the internet freely and without restrictions. Additionally, customers will receive weekly security reports through SMS and they will be notified of any cyber threats identified. Moreover, Secucloud is not restricted to smartphones, it is also accessible on desktops and tablets. Commenting on this service, Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub said, "Creating a safe internet environment for our customers by developing our security strategy and reducing cyber-attacks is without a doubt one of the main and most important goals at Ooredoo. We believe



that the Kuwaiti market deserves to have the latest, most advanced and innovative modalities to keep up with international trends of security."



"Al-Danah Prize Draw" system in order to assist in assessing processes, technical controls considering relevant parameters and provide recommendations in-line with industry leading practices. The study was conducted in line with industry standards and control requirements relevant to similar prize draw schemes

wherein, a detailed review of prize draw management system along with draw scheme parameters, data extraction for draw, filtration of customers as per defined business criteria and necessary system interactions was conducted to advise on any potential areas of improvements.

Health & Science

From poo to food: Kenyan toilet waste key for new animal feed

NAIROBI: Kenyan farmer Victor Kyalo's chickens have doubled the number of eggs they are laying. The reason: Human excrement. He is feeding them food from a Nairobi-based organics recycling company. Sanergy harvests waste from toilets it operates in a franchise network in Nairobi's sprawling slums and feeds it to fly larvae, which become high-quality animal feed.

Kyalo says his customers have noticed the difference in the past three weeks: yellow yolks and larger eggs. "Before we were getting like five trays (of eggs) per day, but now we are getting 10," Kyalo said. "It's kind of perfect for me." As the world looks to feed 10 billion mouths by 2050, businesses harvesting insects—either for human consumption or as animal feed—are growing. They promote themselves as a greener alternative to traditional feed such as soybeans, whose cultivation can lead to deforestation and the overuse of farm chemicals.

Fast food giant McDonald's and US agricultural powerhouse Cargill Inc are among many large companies studying using insects for chicken feed to reduce reliance on soy protein in the \$400 billion-a-year animal feed business. By 2023 the global edible insect market could triple to \$1.2 billion from current levels, market research firm Meticulous Research said last year.

In developing countries like Kenya, where the World Bank says nearly two-thirds of urbanites live in slums, feeding waste to fly larvae could solve both sanitation and nutrition problems. Feces from more than two-thirds of Nairobi's inhabitants go untreated because there are not enough toilets. Many others are not cleaned out regularly, Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company said. During the rains, they often overflow, polluting local waterways. That can make workers ill. Days off slow Kenya's economy by around 1% annually, its Health Ministry said.

From loo to food

David Auerbach co-founded Sanergy eight years ago to deal with sanitation. The waste management franchise provides more than 2,500 toilets to 100,000 people daily. Lilian Mbusia runs one of Sanergy's franchises, charging residents of Mukuru Kwa Ruben slum in the south of the city 5 Kenyan shillings to use her blue "Fresh Life" toilets. Nestled beneath her squat-toilets are small blue barrels that, once full, are sealed and taken to an organics recycling factory in Machakos County, a bumpy 40-minute drive outside the city.

Beds of writhing black soldier fly larvae feast on a mix of excrement and food waste

from hotels and agri-businesses. That produces two products for farmers: fertilizer and animal feed. In 10 days the larvae munch their way through 70 percent of the waste, leaving behind a manure laden with nitrogen and calcium, which becomes organic fertilizer. Once the recycling plant is expanded later this year, Auerbach said it will provide 400 tons of fertilizer. Larvae production will ratchet up from 7 tons to 300 tons per month.

"Right now we are receiving equity debt, and grant investment to scale up operations," Auerbach said. "We're on track for profitability by the end of 2020." The plump white larvae are boiled in hot water to kill off pathogens, Michael Lwoyelo, managing director of Sanergy, said. The larvae are then sold to animal feed millers, who grind them into powder mixed with other ingredients to create a balanced diet for poultry, pigs and fish. Frederick Wangombe, an animal nutritionist at Unifeed, a Kenyan animal feed miller that uses Sanergy's black soldier fly product, envisages it replacing fish meal from Lake Victoria, which can contain sand and other impurities, or expensive soy beans from Zambia. "The egg farmer doesn't want to know what's in the feed, they want to know the performance," he said. — Reuters



NAIROBI: Black soldier flies are seen breeding inside netted enclosures at the Sanergy organics recycling facility near Nairobi, Kenya. — Reuters

CLINIC PAGE

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Dr. Ahmed Hosni Abd Elhamid
Consultant

Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally
Senior Registrar

Dr. Abeer Khattab
Specialist

Cataract Surgery

Glaucoma

Retina

General Ophthalmology

Follow-Up All Treatments

Ophthalmology Services

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Dr Sahar Ghannam

Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser

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

Friday is a holiday.

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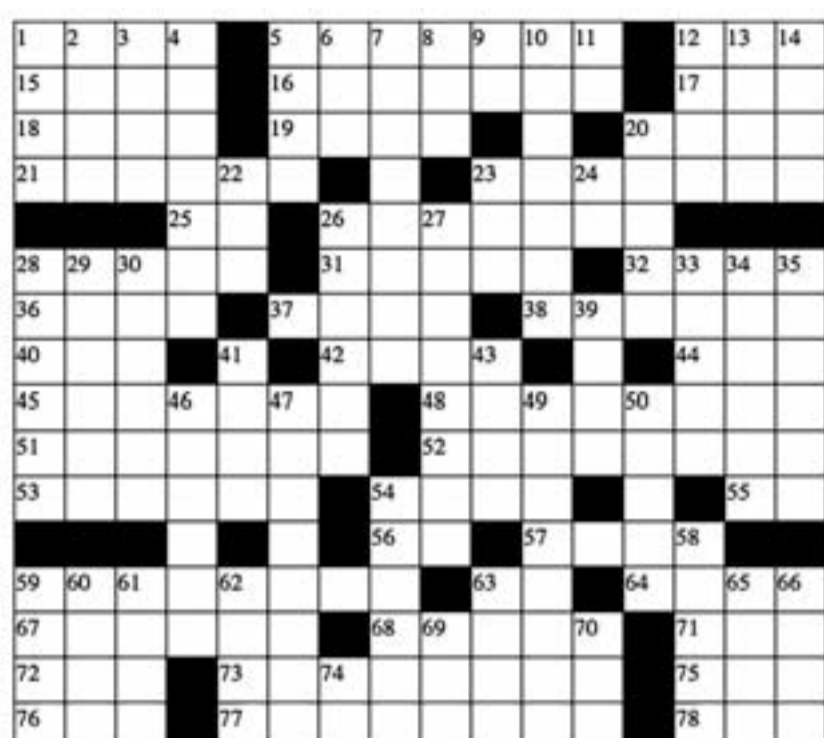
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CROSSWORD 2234



ACROSS

- Someone who copies the words or behavior of another.
- The second or lower part of a duet (especially a piano duet).
- A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
- Radioactive iodine test that measures the amount of radioactive iodine taken up by the thyroid gland.
- Used of persons.
- A boy or man.
- Affected manners intended to impress others.
- Cattle that are reared for their meat.
- The Creator.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
- Of or relating to or containing barium.
- Any collection of particles (e.g., smoke or dust) or gases that is visible.
- A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
- A fencing sword similar to a foil but with a heavier blade.
- (military) Signal to turn the lights out.
- In a foreign country.
- The site of an archeological exploration.
- A training program to prepare college students to be commissioned officers.
- A master's degree in theology.
- The unwanted discharge of a fluid from some container.
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- A toothed wheel that engages another toothed mechanism in order to change the speed or direction of transmitted motion.
- A short labored intake of breath with the mouth open.
- Roman Emperor who was the adoptive son of Trajan.
- Formerly included in genus Cedrela.
- Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
- Perennial herb of East India to Polynesia and Australia cultivated for its large edible root yielding Otaheite arrowroot starch.
- United States photographer who pioneered artistic photography (1879-1973).
- A light touch or stroke.
- Either extremity of something that has length.
- Pearl oysters.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- A set of two similar things considered as a unit.
- A genus of Mustelidae.
- British writer of novels who was born in India.
- An island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
- The compass point midway between east and southeast.
- A port city in western South Korea on the Yellow Sea.
- An awkward stupid person.
- A metric unit of length equal to one billionth of a meter.
- French philosopher and critic.
- A doctor's degree in optometry.
- Emblem usually consisting of a rectangular piece of cloth of distinctive design.
- Small European freshwater fish with a slender bluish-green body.
- A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
- Moth having nonfunctional mouthparts as adults.
- (British) A waterproof raincoat made of rubberized fabric.
- (computer science) The part of a computer (a microprocessor chip) that does most of the data processing.
- An associate degree in nursing.
- Made afraid.
- Used especially of mail.
- To or from every one of two or more (considered individually).
- (usually preceded by 'in') A detail or point.
- A member of the Dravidian people living in the Nilgiri hills in southern India.
- Coffee-flavored liqueur made in Mexico.
- The segment of the public that is easily influenced by mass media (chiefly British).
- A branch of the Tai languages.
- An informal term for a father.
- A state of deep and often prolonged unconsciousness.
- A member of a North American Indian people living in northern Baja California.
- A town in Italy in southwestern Sicily near the coast.
- Impaired by diminution.
- A Russian prison camp for political prisoners.
- Of or pertaining to or characteristic of the Baltic States or their peoples or languages.
- (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
- (Norse mythology) Ruler of the Aesir.
- One-hundredth of a right angle.
- A fastener for a door or lid.
- The capital and chief port of Qatar.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
- The month following September and preceding November.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- Half the width of an em.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

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



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Plan for the worst but expect the best. Don't let yourself be caught off-guard. A pleasant surprise is much better than experiencing a let down. Buckle down, focus and apply yourself and you will reap great reward. Anything less will likely lead to a setback and frustration. Keep your eye on the prize. Keep your attitude positive and reach for the stars.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may find this a great time to reflect and gain understanding of your own situation. How did you get to this point in your life? You know that everything happens for a reason and you have learned to have a positive outlook on adversity. You have learned lessons from obstacles that have been placed in your path in the past. This is a great time for you to gain a sense of understanding for those around you. A deeper connection is possible for your relationships. This is a good time for you to spend with a loved one. Gemini, you may find yourself at peace today.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Harmony and beauty can be deeply satisfying for you now. You have no room nor tolerance for drama or chaos in your world. You have great support from your family and friends. Your focus seems to turn on spending time with those you love. You will find great satisfaction caring for others and knowing how they care for you. Plan a trip or a weekend getaway with your special someone. This is a great time for you to strengthen a bond with someone special.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may be feeling emotionally detached from your surroundings at this time. You tend to be viewed as detached by others when you are in all reality your mind is highly focused and your wheels are turning. You are fascinated by the unusual and are finding yourself lost in your thoughts. You may find it hard to focus in the workplace today. Today may not be the best day for important decisions in the work place as you have lost yourself in your thoughts. You are quick witted and are no stranger to finding yourself having to apologize for having offended someone. Bite your tongue, keep it to yourself today as this could result in a battle of words with someone close to you. Leo, settle in with a book tonight and give your mind a break from reality. This will provide a much-needed escape for you.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

What a great day to spend some time with those you love. Enjoy some time sitting around with friends and family. You may find taking a walk down memory lane will bring much laughter into your life today. You live and learn. You have had your share of both. Good times are yours for the taking. You may find yourself extremely sensitive to the needs of others. You find yourself very understanding. Others seem drawn to you today. You are the friend others want to have.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Smells Fishy 1 - Word Search



CARP
CATFISH
CRAB
GUPPY
HALIBUT
HERRING
LOBSTER
MARLIN

OYSTER
PERCH
PICKEREL
PIKE
PIRANHA
PLANKTON
SEAWEED
SHARK

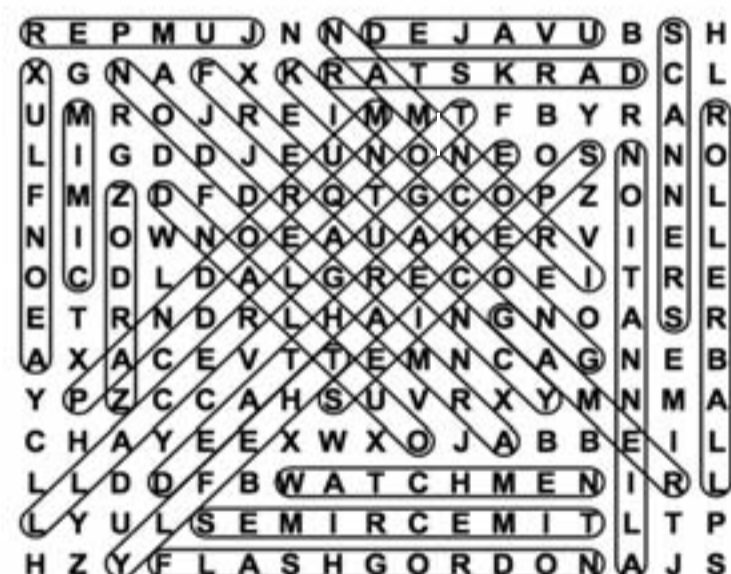
SQUID
STARFISH
STURGEON
SWORDFISH
TROUT

Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution

Sci-Fi Movies 3 - Solution



AEON FLUX
ALIEN NATION
ARMAGEDDON
DARK STAR
DEATH RACE
DEJA VU
FLASH GORDON
FREQUENCY

GAMER
IRON MAN
JUMPER
KING KONG
MIMIC
OUTLAND
PANDORUM
ROLLERBALL

SCANNERS
SPECIES
THE FLY
TIMECRIMES
TOTAL RECALL
WATCHMEN
ZARDOZ

Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019



A bullock reacts as loud music is played during a Jal Yatra procession in Ahmedabad yesterday. The devotees will return to the temple after fetching water from the nearby Sabarmati river as part of the Jal Yatra rituals. — AFP

Paris rediscovers appetite for its world-beating 'bouillons'

Every weekend a queue snakes down the street not far from the Moulin Rouge in Paris. This is not some horde of clueless foreigners easy prey for the tourist traps that dot Pigalle and Montmartre. These are savvy and often stylish Parisians eager to sit down to one of the best value meals in the French capital. Earlier this month the Bouillon Pigalle's egg mayonnaise was voted the best in the world by a jury of French gastronomes, beating Michelin three-star restaurants and the version served up by President Emmanuel Macron's kitchen at the Elysee Palace.

For just 1.80 euros (\$2) you can feast on this simple but exquisite French culinary classic. So it is easy to see why the crowds are flocking there and to a clutch of other older and grander "bouillon" restaurants, which serve classic French comfort food at modest prices. These places, where you can eat well amid Art Nouveau splendor for as little as 20 euros for three courses, are having something of a revival. "What is not to like about this?" declared Edouard, the mustachioed patriarch of the Bordier clan, with three generations of his family from the Paris suburbs seated around the table at Bouillon Julien.

Enormous desserts

"Just look at this," he said, pointing at the enormous cream profiterole before him and then sweeping his hand out to take in the restaurant's original Belle Epoque decor. "And they say the French no longer know how to live!" he laughed. The South Korean fashionistas at the next table, where singer Edith Piaf once dined daily, told AFP that it was their "favorite and cheapest meal" since they arrived. One, Kim Bo-young, liked its thick paper tablecloths so much she wondered aloud about making a dress out of them. Bouillons were invented to serve up cheap soups and steaks at speed to busy Parisians in the 19th century.

"Bouillon" means broth in French, and it was from the restorative qualities of their principal dish that the word "restaurant" comes. Bouillon Julien went back to its roots



An interior view of the restaurant Bouillon Chartier Montparnasse after a recent restoration in Paris.

last year and lowered the prices for its clever hearty food after restoring the frescos and mosaics in its beautiful 113-year-old interior.

Rabbit terrine for 5 euros

Walking through the mahogany dining hall with its glade-green walls is like "going back in time", said Kim, 32, tucking into a rabbit terrine with nuts and ravigote sauce for 5.20 euros. It is a similar story at Chartier—the daddy of all Parisian bouillons which has been going since 1896 — where the white-aproned waiters write down the orders on the paper tablecloth before totting up the bill with head-spinning speed. Chartier opened a second enormous restaurant earlier this year in Montparnasse in the south of the city with a stunning brass and tiled interior that dates from 1903.

Serving traditional starters like snails and leek vinaigrette at unbeatable prices, the hip French gastronomic guide Le Fooding saw it as further proof of the trend

towards "le retrofoodisme" that has seen French diners embrace butter. Its director Alexandre Cammas said the bouillon revival was a part of a wider return to comfort food.

Food that's a 'big hug'

"This is cooking that gives you a big hug in contrast to (top-end) cuisine which can be very refined and cold," he told AFP. But Chartier boss Yann Hulin bristled at the thought that there was anything in the least trendy about what they were doing. "We have just kept doing what we always did. If there is a trend, it is to copy us," he said, in a swipe at Bouillon Julien and Bouillon Pigalle, which is setting up a second dining room that will feature Alsatian food at a historic brasserie famous for its frescos near Republique next year.

Hulin said that having been made to pay through the nose for trendy food, the public want to be served quickly and "eat good and cheap food, that is prepared simply and well". The high turnover of diners allowed Chartier and the other bouillons to keep their prices down, he added. In another twist on the trend, the Mamma group also have diners queuing around the block at its Paris eateries for back-to-basics Italian trattoria food, with one restaurant-cum-street market set over 4,500 square metres (48,400 square feet).

Jean-Christophe Le Ho, of Bouillon Pigalle, said sourcing quality ingredients direct from producers also cuts out the middleman. He said his nostalgic menu was about rediscovering the joy of eating traditional French dishes that are being threatened by fast food, pizzerias and sushi joints. A century ago, Paris had 250 bouillons before their numbers withered to just one. But the "strong demand we have found... for these dishes our grandmothers made" shows they very much have a future, Le Ho insisted. — AFP

French billionaire Drahi to acquire Sotheby's in \$3.7bn deal

French telecoms and media mogul Patrick Drahi is acquiring Sotheby's auction house, one of the world's biggest art brokers, in a \$3.7 billion deal, the British-founded company announced yesterday. Drahi, the billionaire founder of the Altice empire which owns SFR telecoms company and several French media houses including BFM news channel and Liberation newspaper, is paying \$57 per share to acquire Sotheby's through his company BidFair USA, the art house said. The deal returns the company to private ownership after 31 years as a publicly traded company on the New York Stock Exchange.

Sotheby's shares soared 57 percent to over \$55 in opening trading in New York on news of the offer, which represents a 61 percent increase over Sotheby's closing price on Friday. "Known for his commitment to innovation and ingenuity, Patrick founded and leads some of the most successful telecommunications, media and digital companies in the world," Tad Smith, Sotheby's CEO, said in the statement. "This acquisition will provide Sotheby's with the opportunity to accelerate the successful program of growth initiatives of the past several years in a more flexible private environment," he added.

Drahi, who is worth \$9.1 billion according to US business magazine Forbes, said that he was "honored" that Sotheby's board had recommended to shareholders that they accept his offer. "Sotheby's is one of the most elegant and aspirational brands in the world. As a longtime client and lifetime admirer of the company, I am acquiring Sotheby's together with my family," he said. The deal is subject to regulatory and shareholder approval. It is expected to be finalized in the fourth quarter of 2019. His foray into the art market sees him follow in the footsteps of fellow French billionaire, Kering chairman Francois Pinault, who acquired a majority stake in Sotheby's rival Christie's in 1998.

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Rapid expansion

The self-made Drahi was born in Morocco and moved to France at 15. He is a French citizen, but also holds Israeli and Portuguese citizenship. He took advantage of historic low interest rates to embark on a major acquisition spree in 2014 and 2015. Drahi started his career at Philips and then moved to a subsidiary of cable giant Liberty Global before striking out on his own as a telecoms entrepreneur. After buying up several troubled cable and mobile operators he entered the big league in 2014 when he fought off rival Bouygues to buy France's second-biggest mobile phone operator SFR. The following year he stormed the US market, acquiring a 70 percent stake in cable company Suddenlink in a \$9 billion deal, and then snapping up Cablevision for \$17.7 billion. —AFP



This file photo shows a general view of the entrance of the restaurant Bouillon Chartier Montparnasse after a restoration in Paris. — AFP photos



An interior view of the restaurant Bouillon Chartier Montparnasse after a recent restoration in Paris.

Lifestyle | Gossip



Tom Walker has seen girlfriend seven times since proposing

Tom Walker has only seen his fiancée seven times since they got engaged. The 27-year-old singer popped the question to Annie, his girlfriend of five years, last August and confessed the pair haven't been able to see each other much since they agreed to tie the knot due to his busy schedule - but insisted that his partner is "the absolute one" and has always been "so supportive" of his music. Speaking to Absolute Radio at the Isle of Wight Festival, he said: "Aye, seen her about seven times since we got engaged in

August, she's so, so lovely. When we met I didn't actually have a job and I was nowhere in the music industry and I was just knocking on doors trying to get stuff done. So, she's been with me through the whole journey and is so supportive and lovely and just ... she's the one mate, she's the absolute one, she never gives me any grief man." The 'Leave a Light On' hitmaker recently released his debut album 'What a Time to Be Alive' and revealed that a few songs on the record are about his relationship and missing Annie while on tour. Speaking to the Daily Star newspa-

per's Wired column, he said: "Me and my missus keep getting happier and more settled. "Some of the tunes are about being in a relationship when you're away on tour and then coming back and making the most of the little time you've got. The 'Angels' singer added that the pair are in "no rush" to get married and are enjoying being engaged. He said: "There's no rush it'll be nice to be engaged for a little while."

Fleetwood Mac set for Glastonbury 2020



Fleetwood Mac have teased they will be headlining Glastonbury in 2020. The 'Go Your Own Way' rockers are currently on the UK leg of their sold-out European tour and whilst performing at London's Wembley Stadium on Sunday night drummer Mick Fleetwood told the crowd that the band still had a "big field to play" at "a rained out festival in England". Although Mick, 71, didn't name the festival, Glastonbury is renowned for its inclement weather at the end of June when it takes place on Worthy Farm in Somerset, South West England, and is often swamped with mud and sludge. His comments were picked up by specialist Glastonbury social media accounts and fans at the gig. The Glasto Thingy Twitter account wrote: "Unconfirmed reports coming in that Fleetwood Mac announced they will be playing 'a rained out festival in England' next year. (sic)" Glasto Fest Feed added: "Could Fleetwood Mac just have confirmed for #Glastonbury2020? Unconfirmed reports are indicating that

the iconic band may be set to headline Glastonbury Festival next year... (sic)" Surprisingly, Fleetwood Mac have never performed at Michael Eavis' world renowned event and Mick has admitted that the band would "burn in hell" if they didn't headline it at least once. He said: "Of course, we've been asked to play and it's never worked out. I think the legend of Glastonbury and Fleetwood Mac will come true. I think I'll burn in hell if we don't do it one day." The Glastonbury Festival celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2020 and Michael - who organises the event with his daughter Emily Eavis - recently dropped a huge hint that Sir Paul McCartney will be one of the headliners. Speaking to BBC Somerset, he said: "Paul's on good form at the moment." When asked if he had "spoken to him" and if he was coming to play at Worthy Farm again, Michael added: "Hopefully for the 50th, yeah. 'Don't make a big thing of it though will you?' Beatles legend Paul, 76, last topped the bill on the Pyramid Stage in 2004.

Slayer play last ever UK show at Download Festival

Slayer played their final ever UK show at Download Festival on Sunday night. The thrash metal legends signed off on the second stage, while Tool closed the spectacle on the main stage at the event held at Donington Park in Leicestershire, England. Slayer treated the packed crowd to a set full of their classic tracks, including 'Raining Blood', 'Evil Has No Boundaries', 'Hell Awaits', 'Gemini', 'Black Magic' and 'Chemical Warfare', and finished off with 'Angel of Death' - from their 1986 album 'Reign in Blood', which was the first time they collaborated with Rick Rubin. At the end of the historic performance the band stood motionless as the crowd applauded and cheered before heading backstage. Later, 58-year-old singer Tom Araya reappeared for the fans and simply said: "Thank you very much. Good night." The crowd continued clapping and cheering and chanting "Slayer" long into the night. Other highlights on the Sunday of the heavy metal festival included performances from Anthrax, Dream Theater and Lamb of God. Slipknot, Stone Temple Pilots and Trivium were among the Saturday performers, while Rob Zombie and Def Leppard wowed the crowds on Friday.



Lorde says third album is coming

Lorde has confirmed that her new album is getting close. The 22-year-old singer - whose real name is Ella Marija Lani Yelich-O'Connor - announced in an Instagram post on Sunday celebrating the two-year anniversary of the release of her acclaimed 2017 LP 'Melodrama' that her third studio album is "in the oven" and will be ready to come out soon. On her Instagram stories, she wrote about 'Melodrama': "I was such a baby making that work, lots of emotions and learning so much all the time. Feels like I've grown a lot since then, I've been to Antarctica, I have a dog now and a cat and I can bake bread and cook dinner and keep plants alive etc. It's a good life you've given me. Thank you thank you. Third one in the oven. (Sic)" The 'Royals' hitmaker thanked her fans for their support and making 'Melodrama' "their own" since it was released. She wrote:

"Apparently Melodrama came out two years ago today ... Want to say thank you for how you took that record and made it your own. Swells my damn heart thinking about your love for it and your willingness to go there with me and to dance the way that we did together. "The day it came out i did a jigsaw puzzle all day in my hotel room in NY. I felt so emptied, i didnt really know yet that you make a record and get filled up, and then releasing it empties you ... and slowly fills you up again (sic)." The 'Green Light' singer teased last year that the new album could potentially have some piano-based songs as she recently learned the instrument. She said: "I haven't started properly on the next record yet, and I'm not sure how long it'll be. "But I've been teaching myself how to play piano, and here and there little bits come out."



Glynne's Isle of Wight set cancelled at the last minute

Jess Glynne has pulled out of the Isle of Wight festival 2019. The 'These Days' hitmaker was due to take to the stage at the annual music extravaganza at Seaclose Park, Newport, on Sunday but was forced to pull out at the last second for undisclosed reasons. The stage was set up for her performance when a festival organizer came on stage 10 minutes after her set was due to start to inform the crowd she would not be able to start her set. Instead, Richard Ashcroft and headliners Biffy Clyro will have their sets moved forward to fill the gap, though it's unknown as of the time of writing if either act will play for longer than planned. Jess - who has been supporting the Spice Girls on their huge comeback tour - recently said songwriting

helps her process her feelings and emotions and when she expresses herself in words she finds the whole process a healing one. She explained: "The moment I got in the studio and started making music everything changed ... The reason I write music, it's kind of like a therapy for me, it's my way of expressing myself." The 'All I Am' hitmaker also insisted that she feels "reassured" that she is able to talk about her own "insecurities" through her songs because the music industry can affect her confidence and mental health. She said: "The industry that I work in though, it gives you a lot of insecurities and self-doubt, and it's quite reassuring to know that somebody like myself for others have definitely been able to talk about it."



Fatboy Slim aware of 'shelf life'

Fatboy Slim is aware "the clock is ticking" on his music career. The 'Right Here, Right Now' hitmaker feels lucky that he is still successful but after more than 35 years in the industry, he knows that he does have a "sell-by date" and success won't last forever. He said: "I'm just at a point in life where I'm kind of tremendously enthralled that I'm still allowed to do this but aware that in terms of shelf life and sell by dates the clock is ticking. "So, I'm trying to cram in all the things that I haven't done yet." The 55-year-old star - whose real name is Norman Cook - admitted he sometimes gets "jaded" by his work because he's been doing it for so long. He added: "I can occasionally get jaded about my musical career as I have been doing this for 35 years." Despite his long career, the DJ still has a list of things he wants to achieve - even if some of them are "stupid". Speaking to Absolute Radio presenter Danielle Perry backstage at the Isle of Wight festival over the weekend, he said: "A film sound track was definitely the last one on my printed list, but it just frees me up to think of more and more stupid things. I'm gonna play in a toilet this summer somewhere." The 'Praise You' hitmaker recently served as musical director on Julian Temple's 'Ibiza - The Silent Movie' - and had a great time working with the "iconic" filmmaker. He said: "He is one of the most iconic and talented documentary producers. Well obviously I know quite a lot about Ibiza, at least I thought I did until we started this film. "Julian Temple has just been a director that I've always rated and the way he makes films is very similar to how I make records. He uses little found bits and then glues them all together and makes a kind of collage out of it. So, we got on really well. "We have kind of got history going back through Glastonbury and everything."

Clyro close out Isle of Wight festival with firework display

Biffy Clyro closed the Isle of Wight festival 2019 in style on Sunday with an impressive firework display. The Scottish rockers - comprised of Simon Neil and brothers James and Ben Johnston - headlined the third and final day of the music extravaganza at Seaclose Park, Newport, and made sure it was a night no-one would forget as they wowed crowds with a lengthy firework display. The impressive show took place during the group's final song, 2013's 'Stingin' Belle', and came after the trio had already stunned with show stopping displays of pyrotechnics and confetti throughout their almost two-hour set. Biffy Clyro played for 10 minutes longer than expected after Jess Glynne pulled out of the festival at the last minute, citing "exhaustion" as the reason for her cancelled set. The stage was set up for her

performance when a festival organiser came on stage 10 minutes after her set was due to start to inform the crowd she would not be able to start her set. Instead, both Biffy and Richard Ashcroft had their sets moved forward to fill the gap, but the former Verve frontman - who had the whole crowd singing along to classic hit 'Bitter Sweet Symphony' - chose not to extend his set any further. Elsewhere in the festival's final day, Madness had crowds on their feet and dancing along to several hit tracks including 'Baggy Trousers', 'Our House', and 'It Must Be Love'. Closing out the Big Top stage this year were Keane, who played to a packed tent, with audiences belting out the words to the likes of 'Somewhere Only We Know' and leaving frontman Tom Chaplin teary eyed.





CRAIG TO RESUME FILMING ON BOND 25 THIS WEEK

Daniel Craig will resume filming for 'Bond 25' this week. Last month, it was announced that the 51-year-old actor had to have "minor" surgery on his injured ankle and undergo two weeks of rehabilitation after he slipped whilst shooting a running scene for the action blockbuster on location in Jamaica. Now, it has been revealed that Daniel - who will play the spy for the fifth and final time in the upcoming installment - will return on set at some point this week and is "hitting the gym hard" in preparation for the role. Sharing a photo of Daniel working out in the gym, on Sunday the official James Bond Instagram account wrote: "#007 Daniel Craig

hitting the gym hard @pinewoodstudios, prepping for shooting next week! #Bond25 (sic)" The Hollywood hunk was reportedly flown to the US after the fall so he could be examined by the same surgeon who has treated England and Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane. The official Twitter account for 'Bond 25' released the statement at the time reading: "Daniel Craig will be undergoing minor ankle surgery resulting from an injury sustained during filming in Jamaica. Production will continue whilst Craig is rehabilitating for two weeks post-surgery. The film remains on track for the same release date in April 2020." A source said recently: "Daniel was suited and

booted for one of the last scenes in Jamaica. He was sprinting during filming when he slipped and fell quite awkwardly. "He was in quite a lot of pain and was complaining about his ankle. As you'd expect he was also pretty angry that it had happened. He threw his suit jacket on the ground in sheer frustration. "Daniel flew out of Jamaica for the US and has already seen a specialist. "In a pure coincidence it's the same surgeon who treated Tottenham and England striker Harry Kane. He's hoping it won't delay things for too long."

The Nightingale director defends film against claims of excessive violence

The 'Nightingale' director has insisted the movie is not "gratuitous or exploitative" after claims it had too many scenes of graphic violence and rape. The 2018 Australian period thriller film was written and directed by Jennifer Kent and follows a young convict woman (Aisling Franciosi) in 1825 Tasmania seeking revenge for a terrible act of violence committed against her family during the frontier war massacres of Indigenous Australians. Following a mass walkout at early screenings of the movie, the 'Babadook' filmmaker has defended her film, alleging that the movie is "not about violence" and revealed that she had been contacted by victims of sexual violence, who had thanked her for the honest portrayal. In a statement, she said: "I do not believe this would be happening if the film was at all gratuitous or exploitative. "Whilst 'The Nightingale' contains historically accurate depictions of colonial violence and racism towards our Indigenous people, the film is not 'about' violence." Jennifer went on to say that 'The Nightingale' had actually toned down some of the violence suf-



fered by Indigenous Australians and contains a historically accurate depiction of the violence suffered by those in Tasmania. She said: "We've made this film in collaboration with Tasmanian Aboriginal elders, and they feel it's an honest and necessary depiction of their history and a story that needs to be told. I remain enormously proud of the film." "If we showed what really happened in Tasmania in 1825, no audience could bear it." The movie debuted at the Sydney Film Festival last week and saw the majority of the sold-out audience at The Ritz in Randwick walk out within the first 20 minutes of the movie.



Dark Phoenix director Kinberg blames himself for film's failures

Dark Phoenix' director Simon Kinberg says it's his fault the film didn't "connect with audiences". The latest 'X-Men' movie made its debut last weekend and pulled in just \$33 million at the US box office against an estimated \$200 million production cost, the superhero film also scored 23 per cent on Rotten Tomatoes, the lowest ever rating for a film in the franchise. The 45-year-old director wrote and helmed the movie - which followed Sophie Turner's Jean Grey as she's transformed into one of the world's most powerful and dangerous mutants - and he accepts that it's "on him" that the movie "didn't work". Speaking on KCRW podcast The Business, he said: "I'm here and I'm saying when a movie doesn't work, put it on me. I'm the writer/director of the movie, the movie didn't connect with audiences, that's on me." Despite the film's poor reception, the 'Deadpool' director insisted that he enjoyed making the movie, and referenced a conversation he'd previously had with Sir Ridley Scott in which he revealed that the much maligned 'G.I. Jane' - which

was released in 1997 and starred Demi Moore as Lieutenant Jordan O'Neil, a woman trying to make it in the US Navy - was his favorite film to work on, rather than his more acclaimed movies such as 'Alien', 'Gladiator' or 'Blade Runner'. Kinberg - who he worked with Scott on the 2015 thriller 'The Martian' - explained: "He said it was his favorite because it was just a great process and he learned a lot on the process of making it. I've thought about that a lot over the years, and I thought about it a whole lot over the last weekend." Kinberg added that he also received support from Tim Miller, with whom he worked on the first 'Deadpool' film, following the far from enthusiastic response to 'Dark Phoenix'. He said: "He wrote me an email having empathy for a movie that doesn't work. People will come to see the movie differently, and out of the context of this particular moment, see things in it they will appreciate and that he appreciated as a fan."

Reinhart to star in Chemical Hearts



Lili Reinhart is set to star and executive produce Amazon Studios' coming-of-age romantic drama 'Chemical Hearts'. The 22-year-old actress - who is best known for playing Betty Cooper on the CW drama series 'Riverdale' - is on board for the lead in the film adaptation of Krystal Sutherland's young adult novel 'Our Chemical Hearts'. The movie will be written and directed by Richard Tanne for Amazon Prime Video and will follow Henry Page, a teen romantic who has never been in love and is focusing all his attention on getting good grades and attending a decent college. When he meets Grace Town, a new student who walks with a cane, wears oversized boys' clothes, and rarely seems to shower, and begins editing the school newspaper with her he quickly finds himself falling for her. Julie Rapaport, Co-Head of Movies at

Amazon Studios, said in a statement: "We are thrilled to work with this talented team to bring to life a beautiful story of first love and heartbreak. "Krystal Sutherland's novel captured the hearts of readers around the world, and we are excited to bring this film to our global Prime Video customers." 'Chemical Hearts' will be produced by Page Fifty-Four's Alex Saks and Tanne while the film is executive produced by Jamin O'Brien and Reinhart, in her first executive producer role. As well as 'Riverdale' Lili has starred opposite Elle Fanning and Ben Foster in Melanie Laurent's 'Galveston' which made its world premiere at SXSW last year as well as Julia Hart's 'Miss Stevens' opposite Lily Rabe and Timothee Chalamet which followed a high school drama teacher as she attends a drama competition with three of her students.



Sophie Turner: Don't expect superhero tropes in Dark Phoenix

Sophie Turner insists 'X-Men: Dark Phoenix' isn't a traditional superhero movie. The 23-year-old actress returns as Jean Grey for the latest installment of the comic book franchise but she feels it is very different to the other films in the series. She said: "It's far more character-driven and emotional - in the same way that 'Logan' was different in style from the other 'Wolverine' and 'X-Men' films. This is a family drama, rather than a superhero movie." Sophie admitted she had no idea her alter ego would eventually take the central role when she signed up for 'X-Men: Apocalypse' three years ago and was "frightened" about being able to step up to the challenge. Asked if she knew what producers had in mind, she said: "Absolutely not. When I was playing Jean Grey in the previous movie, there were

vague rumours that the 'Dark Phoenix' story from the comics might be adapted for the follow-up movie. It was only a year and a half later that Imon Kinberg invited me to lunch and told me what he was planning. I was frightened because, in the comic world, this particular plot line is a big deal, so it meant I would be under a lot of pressure. But, at the same time, it was a real honour to be taking up the challenge." Sophie particularly enjoys working with her co-star Tye Sheridan because they are very close off screen. Speaking to Psychologies magazine, she said: "We're great friends. I've always said to Tye that he's the best on-screen boyfriend I've ever had. It's so nice to have such a wonderful relationship with someone with whom you're sharing really intimate scenes."

Bautista 'didn't care' if defending Gunn caused problems

Dave Bautista "didn't care" if Disney fired him over his defense of James Gunn. The 50-year-old actor was furious when the director was axed from 'Guardians of the Galaxy 3' over some controversial past Twitter jokes so was happy to speak up to support his pal, even if it means he lost his role as Drax in the franchise because he felt the studio made a "bad call" and he "didn't want to be a part" of the filmmaker's downfall. Asked about rumors he threatened to opt out of future projects as Drax if James

wasn't rehired, he said: "No, it wasn't that I was going to jump ship and do 'Suicide Squad'. I was more at the point where I was like, 'Fire me. I don't care. You're going to hear what I have to say. And this is the way I feel and I think you made a bad call and I don't care if you fire me because I feel this way. This is me being honest and me sticking up for my friend who was wronged.' "So that was it. It wasn't about me-I'm not threatening to go do 'Suicide Squad', but I was just saying, 'If things aren't here, I'm just going to leave, I don't want to be a part of this.'" The 52-year-old filmmaker - who was hired late last year to write the next 'Suicide Squad' film - was fired last July after joking about child abuse and rape a decade ago, but apologized shortly afterwards and was reinstated in March. And Dave thinks it is impressive of Disney to have brought back the director and thinks they have shown anyone can apologize for making a "mistake". He added to 'Entertainment Tonight': "I feel great! They admit that they just made a wrong decision. For a huge juggernaut of a corporation like Disney to say, 'We made a mistake and we're going to make this wrong a right.' "I mean, that says something, you know? If they can do that, if they can change their minds and say they made a mistake, then anybody can. And sometimes it's never too late to say you were wrong."



Cudi cast in Bill and Ted reboot

Kid Cudi has been cast in the 'Bill & Ted' reboot. The 35-year-old rapper - who has sold more than 16 million records as a solo artist - is set to star alongside Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter in the much-anticipated reboot movie, which is slated for release in 2020. Cudi's casting has already been officially confirmed, although his role has not yet been publicly revealed. In an exchange on Twitter, Alex - who plays the part of Bill S. Preston, Esq in the comedy series - wrote: "@KidCudi dude. It's been over five years since you and I talked about you being part of this movie. Thanks for your patience :) (sic)" And Cudi replied: "Alex!!! Man i remember like it was yesterday! Life is wild!! Cant wait to reunite and see u dude!! Big hug for ya (sic)" Deadline has published a synopsis of the eagerly awaited new film, teasing details of what fans can expect from the project. The synopsis reads: "Yet to fulfill their rock and roll destiny, the now middle-aged best friends, Bill and Ted, set out on a new adventure, when a visitor from the future warns them that only their song can save life as we know it and bring harmony to the universe. "Along the way, they will be helped by their daughters, old friends, a new batch of historical figures, and a few music legends." — Bang Showbiz



Lifestyle | Features

Gun 'Van Gogh killed himself with' to go under hammer

The revolver with which Vincent van Gogh is believed to have shot himself is to go under the hammer tomorrow at a Paris auction house. Billed as "the most famous weapon in the history of art", the seven mm Lefauchaux revolver is expected to fetch up to 60,000 euros (\$67,000). Van Gogh experts believe that he shot himself with the revolver near the village of Auvers-sur-Oise north of Paris, where he spent the last few months of his life in 1890. Discovered by a farmer in 1965 in the same field where the troubled Dutch painter is thought to have fatally wounded himself, the gun has already been exhibited at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam.

While Art Auction, who are selling the gun, say there is no way of being absolutely certain that it is the fatal weapon, tests showed it had been in the ground for 75 years, which would fit. The Dutch artist had borrowed the gun from the owner of the inn in the village where he was staying. He died 36 hours later after staggering wounded back to the auberge in the dark.

It was not his first dramatic act of self-harm. Two years earlier in 1888, he cut off his ear before offering it to a woman in a brothel in Arles in the south of France. While most art historians agree that Van Gogh killed himself, that assumption has been questioned in recent years, with some researchers claiming that the fatal shot may have been fired accidentally by two local boys playing with the weapon in the field.



A revolver believed to be the gun Dutch 19th century painter Vincent Van Gogh would have used to kill himself on 27 July 1890 is on public display at Paris' Drouot auction house before it goes under the hammer later today.—AFP photos

Were local boys to blame?

That theory won fresh support from a new biopic of the artist starring Willem Dafoe, "At Eternity's Gate". Its director, the renowned American painter Julian Schnabel, told AFP that Van Gogh had painted 75 canvases in his 80 days at Auvers-sur-Oise and was unlikely to be suicidal. The legendary French screenwriter Jean-Claude Carriere—who co-

wrote the script with Schnabel—insisted that there "is absolutely no proof he killed himself."

"Do I believe that Van Gogh killed himself? Absolutely not!" he declared when the film was premiered at the Venice film festival last September. He said Van Gogh painted some of his best work in his final days, including his "Portrait of Dr Gachet", the local doctor who later tried to save his

life. It set a world record when it sold for \$82.5 million in 1990. The bullet Dr Gachet extracted from Van Gogh's chest was the same calibre as the one used by the Lefauchaux revolver.

'He was not at all sad'

"Van Gogh was working constantly. Every day he made a new work. He was not at all sad," Carriere argued. In the film the gun goes off after the two young boys, who were brothers, got into a struggle with the bohemian stranger. Auction Art said that the farmer who found the gun in 1965 gave it to the owners of the inn at Auvers-sur-Oise, whose family are now selling it.

"Technical tests on the weapon have shown the weapon was used and indicate that it stayed in the ground for a period that would coincide with 1890," it said. "All these clues give credence to the theory that this is the weapon used in the suicide." That did not exclude, the auction house added, that the gun could also have been hidden or abandoned by the two young brothers in the field. The auction comes as crowds are flocking to an immersive Van Gogh exhibition in the French capital which allows "the audience to enter his landscapes" through projections on the gallery's walls, ceilings and floors. "Van Gogh, Starry Night" runs at the Atelier des Lumieres in the east of the city until December.—AFP

Vincent van Gogh:
five things to know

As the revolver with which Vincent van Gogh is believed to have shot himself goes under the hammer on Wednesday, here are five things to know about the acclaimed artist.

France: most creative period

Born to a middle-class Dutch family in 1853, Van Gogh moved to Paris in 1886, joining his brother Theo who ran an art gallery in Montmartre. He spent the most prolific years of his career in France, inspired by his friends Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Emile Bernard, and meetings with Impressionists Georges Seurat, Camille Pissaro and Paul Signac. Attracted by the bright light of Provence in southern France, he moved to the small town of Arles in 1888.

His Post-Impressionist friend Paul Gauguin stayed with him in his "Yellow House" for several months. After a year in a mental asylum, Van Gogh passed the last months of his life in Auvers-sur-Oise, north of Paris. There he was under the care of doctor and amateur painter Paul Gachet, the subject of a famous 1890 portrait.

Vivid colors

Hugely inspired by the works of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists but not respecting their rules, Van Gogh developed a unique style. As a young man, he studied Dutch painting and admired English engraving and Japanese woodcuts, which he collected with his brother.

His fascination with Japan can be seen in his splashes of vivid colors and use of black, which was avoided by pure Impressionists. He applied the colors with energetic brush strokes, with paint often undiluted on the palette.

Mental illness

In 1888, after a fierce argument with Gauguin, Van Gogh cut off part of an ear in a fit of madness, offering it to a prostitute as a gift. He was admitted to a mental asylum in Saint-Remy-en-Provence where he convalesced for a year. He produced some of his biggest masterpieces during this period of intense creativity, characterized by swirling and spiraling motifs, like "The Starry Night" (1889). He left the asylum in May 1890. Several months later he shot himself with a revolver in Auvers, dying two days afterwards on July 29, 1890, aged 37.

Posthumous recognition

Supported financially during his life by his brother, to whom he regularly sent canvases, Van Gogh enjoyed only moderate recognition in his last years. He sold only one painting during his lifetime, "The Red Vineyard at Arles" (1888). His brother's widow Johanna Van Gogh-Bonger, who organized several exhibitions, played a key role in his posthumous recognition which accelerated between the two World Wars.

In 1930 an exhibition of his work at New York's Museum of Modern Art was visited by 120,000 people. Today on show in the world's biggest museums, his brilliant artistic career and personality have created a mythical figure that continues to inspire and has been the subject of films, songs and cartoons.

Rare at auction

Van Gogh is one of the most expensive Impressionist and modern artists, with 12 of his works having gone for more than \$30 million at auction. In 2017 "Laboureur dans un champ" (1889) went under the hammer for \$81.3 million. His output of about 2,000 pieces, of which 900 are paintings, are mainly held in museum collections, which means they are a rarity on the art market. "There are no more than two or three auctions of Van Gogh works in the world each year," the French auction house Artcurial said in Paris in 2018, when presenting one of the works from his youth.—AFP

Lagerfeld's Chanel made
\$11 billion in his last year

Chanel clocked up sales of nearly 10 billion euros (\$11.1 billion) in its final year under the late designer Karl Lagerfeld, the French label said yesterday. The notoriously secretive brand owned by the Wertheimer family, which has only reported its results publicly twice in its 109-year history, said sales rose more than 10 percent in 2018. Chanel's iconic creator—who had so dominated fashion that he was called the "Kaiser"—died of cancer in February aged 85.

Lagerfeld worked until the end, and despite his final illness his creations "achieved double-digit growth with great performances in leather goods and ready-to-wear", the label said. Profits rose to close to \$3 billion, with finance chief Philippe Blondiaux hailing "another strong year". The performance was particularly strong given that the fashion house had sunk \$1 billion into upping its digital presence, Blondiaux said, as well as securing "supply chains... and strengthening social and environmental commitments."

He said its perfume and beauty division had also shown rapid growth with the launch of new fragrances such as Coco Mademoiselle and Bleu de Chanel. Chanel is regarded as one of the world's richest and most stable fashion brands, said to be worth in excess of \$20 billion. Only rival Paris house Louis Vuitton has more financial clout, although much of its profits come from its luggage and handbag business. In terms of turnover, it is also comes second behind Vuitton, whose owners LVMH reported sales of "well over \$10 billion" in 2018.

The results were released on the eve of Paris men's fashion week, where a special event will honor Lagerfeld in the city's vast Grand Palais, the scene of some of his greatest catwalk triumphs. Chanel opened its books for the first time last year, showing that its owners Alain and Gerard Wertheimer were the fourth and fifth richest people in France and among the 40 wealthiest on the planet.—AFP



In this file photo taken on August 23, 1954 shows US actress and fashion designer Gloria Vanderbilt.—AFP photos



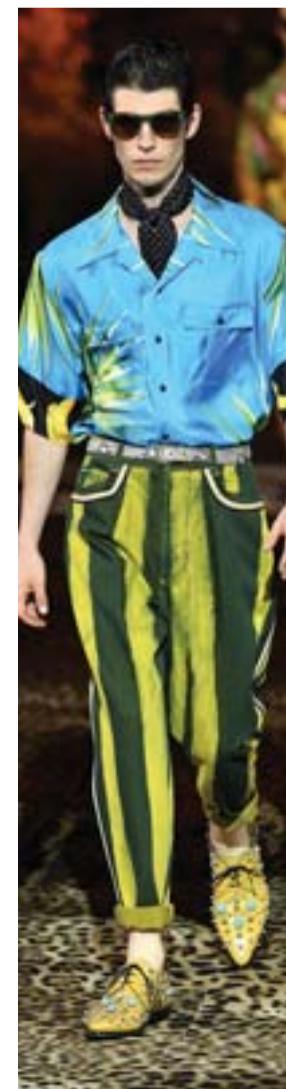
In this file photo taken on October 13, 2004 fashion designer Gloria Vanderbilt speaks during a store appearance for her new book 'It Seemed Important At The Time' at Barnes and Noble bookstore in New York City.

Heiress Gloria Vanderbilt dies
at 95, says son Anderson Cooper

American heiress Gloria Vanderbilt, a designer and artist who became one of the most chronicled socialites of her era, died yesterday, her son Anderson Cooper said on CNN. She was 95 years old. "Gloria Vanderbilt was an extraordinary woman, who loved life, and lived it on her own terms," Cooper said in a tribute read on air at CNN, the television network he works at.

"She was a painter, a writer, and designer but also a remarkable mother, wife, and friend. She was 95 years old, but ask anyone close to her, and they'd tell you, she was the youngest person they knew, the coolest, and most modern."—AFP

Men's spring/summer 2020 fashion collection



Models present creations for fashion house Dolce & Gabbana during the presentation of its men's spring/summer 2020 fashion collection in Milan.—AFP



Indian Muslim international karate champion Syeda Falak (center left) shows self-defense techniques to students at the Telangana Minorities Residential Girls School in Hyderabad yesterday. — AFP

Brain disease kills 97 Indian kids, 'heat curfew' imposed

PATNA, India: The Indian state of Bihar grappled yesterday with twin crises, with a brain virus potentially linked to lychees killing almost 100 children and extreme heat leaving 78 people dead. The heatwave - India's second-longest on record - prompted authorities in part of the northern state, one of the country's poorest, to impose curfew-like restrictions. Daytime temperatures across large parts of India have hovered above 40 degrees Celsius for the past 32 days, just one short of a record 33-day period in 1988.

Temperatures touched 50.3 degrees Celsius in the town of Churu in the northern desert state of Rajasthan recently, just below India's record of 51 degrees. Bihar, home to almost 100 million people, has seen temperatures hovering around 45 degrees for several days. Severe heat there has killed 78 people - most of them

aged above 50 - across three districts since Saturday afternoon, local official Sandeep Kumar told AFP. More than 130 others were undergoing emergency treatment for heatstroke in various hospitals.

Authorities in Gaya district which has borne the brunt of the heatwave invoked an Indian law to prohibit residents from going outdoors for non-essential work. The district magistrate also banned construction work and any outdoor program between 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Heatstroke is usually caused by prolonged exposure to sun or from physical exertion in high temperatures.

It has left more than 36 people dead in southern India in recent weeks. Large parts of India are also reeling from drought, with annual monsoon rains late in coming. Last week four passengers on a train travelling

from Agra - the city of the Taj Mahal - to Coimbatore in the country's south died from heatstroke.

Bihar, home to some of India's worst health indicators, has also been struggling with an outbreak of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES), a viral infection, since the start of this month. Eighty children have now died in the state's biggest government-run hospital - the Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital (SKMCH), in the city of Muzaffarpur - and 17 others at a private facility, health official Ashok Kumar Singh said. Most of the victims had suffered a sudden loss of glucose in their blood, Singh told AFP.

TV channels showed distraught parents sitting next to their children, several of whom were cramped on one bed. One parent heckled India's Health Minister Harsh Vardhan as he took his entourage around the

SKMCH for an inspection. A doctor told a local TV channel that the SKMCH was ill-equipped to handle the rush of patients, most of whom were wheeled in semi-conscious.

The outbreak of the disease has happened annually during summer months in the same districts since 1995, typically coinciding with the lychee season. Several years ago US researchers had said the brain disease could be linked to a toxic substance found in the fruit. Known locally as Chamki Bukhar, the disease claimed a record 150 lives in 2014. They also said more study was needed to uncover the cause of the illness, which leads to seizures, altered mental state and death in more than a third of cases. Outbreaks of neurological illness have also been observed in lychee-growing regions of Bangladesh and Vietnam. — AFP

Iran to breach nuclear deal...

Continued from Page 1

for the unilateral US withdrawal from the accord last year, which saw Washington impose tough economic sanctions on Tehran.

Tensions between Tehran and Washington have escalated ever since, with the United States bolstering its military presence in the region and blacklisting Iran's Revolutionary Guards as a terrorist organization. The US has also blamed Iran for last week's attacks on two tankers in the Gulf of Oman, a charge Tehran has denied as "baseless".

Iran has threatened to go even further in scaling down nuclear commitments by July 8 unless remaining partners to the deal - Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia - help it circumvent US sanctions and especially enable it to sell its oil. "The current situation is sensitive" and there is still time for the deal's partners to save this agreement, Rouhani told the French ambassador to Tehran Philippe Thiebaud yesterday.

Speaking in Paris, Macron said he regretted Tehran's latest announcements. "We strongly encourage Iran to behave in a way that is patient and responsible," he said. Any kind of escalation "is damaging to the interests of the Iranians themselves and also to the international community", he added. "So we will do everything with our partners to dissuade Iran from this (surpassing the limit)," he said. German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas rejected the Iranian ultimatum and insisted

Tehran stick to its commitments under the deal. A spokesman for the British government echoed the call, saying the E3 - the European signatories to the deal - has "consistently made clear that there can be no reduction in compliance".

Under the agreement, Iran pledged to reduce its nuclear capacities for several years and allow international inspectors inside the country to monitor its activities in return for relief from international sanctions. The deal set a limit on the number of uranium-enriching centrifuges, and restricted its right to enrich uranium to no higher than 3.67 percent, well below weapons-grade levels of around 90 percent. It also called on Iran to export enriched uranium and heavy water to ensure the country's reserves would stay within the production ceiling set by the agreement, yet recent US restrictions have made such exports virtually impossible.

According to Rouhani, the ultimatum he issued last month was intended to "save the (deal), not destroy it". The three European parties to the accord created a trade mechanism meant to bypass US sanctions, but their attempt was dismissed by Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as a "bitter joke".

The spokesman for Iran's atomic energy organization warned further steps could be taken if world powers do not step up to help the country. "They range from going to 3.68 percent to any other percent according to the country's needs," said Kamalvandi. Authorities were still debating whether to "redesign or revive" the Arak reactor, he added. Uranium enriched to much higher levels than Iran's current stocks can be used as the fissile core of a nuclear weapon, while heavy water is a source of plutonium, which can be used as an alternative way to produce a warhead. — AFP

Ousted Egypt president Morsi...

Continued from Page 1

Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, another strong backer of Morsi, took to Twitter to say "we received with deep sorrow the news of the sudden death of former President Dr Mohamed Morsi". "I extend to his family and to the Egyptian people brotherly condolences," he wrote.

Morsi spent just one turbulent year in office after the 2011 uprising. He was toppled in a military overthrow after millions took to the streets demanding his resignation. The Islamist leader has been in prison since his ouster on trial for several cases including for spying for Iran, Qatar and militant groups such as Hamas in the Gaza Strip. He was also accused of plotting terror acts. He was sentenced to death in May 2015 for his role in jailbreaks during the uprising that ousted his predecessor, longtime autocrat Hosni Mubarak.

Since his overthrow on July 3, 2013, his former defense minister and now president Sisi has waged an ongoing crackdown targeting his supporters from the Muslim Brotherhood with thousands jailed and hundreds facing death sentences. Sarah Leah Whitson, Human Rights Watch Middle East director, tweeted "This is terrible but ENTIRELY predictable, given gov-

ernment failure to allow him adequate medical care".

Other Brotherhood leaders have also died in custody. The years following Morsi's overthrow have seen a surge in bombings and shootings targeting security forces, particularly in the restive northern Sinai Peninsula, a stronghold of the Islamic State group. Morsi's turbulent rule was marked by deep divisions in Egyptian society, a crippling economic crisis and often deadly opposition protests.

Morsi was elected to power in 2012 in Egypt's first free presidential election, having been thrown into the race at the last moment by the disqualification on a technicality of millionaire businessman Khairat Al-Shater, by far the Brotherhood's preferred choice. His victory marked a radical break with the military men who had provided every Egyptian leader since the overthrow of the monarchy in 1952. Morsi promised a moderate Islamist agenda to steer Egypt into a new democratic era where autocracy would be replaced by transparent government that respected human rights and revived the fortunes of a powerful Arab state long in decline.

But the euphoria that greeted the end of an era of presidents who ruled like pharaohs did not last long. The stocky, bespectacled man, born in 1951 in the dying days of the monarchy, told Egyptians he would deliver an "Egyptian renaissance with an Islamic foundation". Instead, he alienated millions who accused him of usurping unlimited powers, imposing the Brotherhood's conservative brand of Islam and mismanaging the economy, all of which he denied. — Agencies

Facebook to unveil new cryptocurrency

LONDON: Facebook was set yesterday to unveil a bid to bring cryptocurrency payments into the mainstream, reportedly with the endorsement of governments and financial giants. The world's biggest social network was expected to outline details of a virtual currency launching next year that it hopes will avoid the rollercoaster volatility of "blockchain" technologies such as bitcoin. Facebook is setting up a consortium called "Libra" which, according to the Wall Street Journal, has been joined by more than a dozen companies including Visa, Mastercard, PayPal and Uber. The companies along with venture capitalists and telecommunications firms will reportedly invest around \$10 billion each into the consortium.

Facebook has been trying to ward off hostile regulatory scrutiny after a series of privacy abuses and the spread of fake news. The consortium will be managed externally and seek to build trust among consumers by pegging the virtual coin to a basket of currencies including the dollar and euro, the Journal said. Facebook has already sought blessings from the US Treasury and the Bank of England, the BBC reported last month.

Regulators have been reticent about cryptocurrencies, not only due to potential abuse by criminals but the wild swings in their value harming consumers. With more than two billion users across its platforms, which include WhatsApp and Instagram, Facebook could have the clout to bring cryptocurrency out of the fringes and emulate the likes of WeChat in China, where the US site is banned. WeChat allows its users to chat, shop and play games without leaving its platform, generating more revenue by offering a one-stop portal. — AFP

PAWS animal shelter hit by...

Continued from Page 1

After the animals were released during the fire, most were recovered, but a few are still at large. "We freed the animals because we didn't want them to die. We are still looking for some 20-25 cats and dogs.

Hopefully, they are all safe and we might still find them alive somewhere," she added.

Notably, a few days ago, animal lovers protested at Irada Square in Kuwait City against the poisoning of stray dogs. Reports and videos have appeared on social media recently showing stray dogs dying after ingesting poison allegedly left by personnel working for the Public Authority of Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources. Animal shelters in Kuwait are mostly run by NGOs and private individuals with minimal or no support from the authorities. Most of the shelters are overburdened, especially during the summer, when pets are abandoned by their travelling owners.

'Sand mafias' threaten coast...

Continued from Page 1

attraction for visitors -beaches themselves," the report warned. Theft of sand from beaches or coastal dunes in Morocco is punishable by five years in prison.

Siphoned away by donkey, delivery bike and large trucks, the beaches are being stripped from north to south, along a coastline that runs from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic. "On some beaches, the sand has nearly disappeared" in parts of the north, said an ecological activist in Tangiers. "There has been enormous pressure on the beaches of Tangiers because of real estate projects," he said. To the south, the UNEP report noted, "sand smugglers have transformed a large beach into a rocky landscape" between Safi and Essaouira.

Activist Jawad points to "small scale looting, like here in Mohammedia". But "then there is the intensive and structured trafficking by organized networks, operating with the complicity of some officials". While the sand mafias operate as smugglers, "key personalities - law-makers or retired soldiers - hand out permits allowing them to over-exploit deposits, without respect for quotas", he added.

A licensed sand dredger spoke of "a very organized

mafia that pays no taxes" selling sand that is "neither washed nor desalinated", and falls short of basic building regulations. These mafia outfits have "protection at all levels... they pay nothing at all because they do everything in cash", this operator added, on condition of anonymity. "A lot of money is laundered through this trade". A simple smart phone helps visualize the extent of the disaster. Via a Google Earth map, activist Adnane showed a razed coastal forest, where dunes have given way to a lunar landscape, some 200 km south of Casablanca.

Eyes fixed on the screen, he carefully scrutinized each parcel of land. "Here, near Safi, they have taken the sand over (a stretch of) seven kilometres. It was an area exploited by a retired general, but there is nothing left to take," he alleged. Adnane pointed to another area - exploited, he said, by a politician who had a permit for "an area of two hectares". But instead, he "took kilometres" of sand.

Environmental protection was earmarked as a priority by Morocco, in a grandiose statement after the country hosted the 2016 COP22 international climate conference. Asked by AFP about measures to fight uncontrolled sand extraction, secretary of state for energy Nezha El Ouafi pointed to "a national coastal protection plan (that) is in the process of being validated". The plan promises "evaluation mechanisms, with protection programs and (a) high status", she said. Meanwhile, environmental activists are pleading against the "head in the sand approach" over the scale of coastal devastation. — AFP

25 Simbine, Ahoure win 100 meters at Boston Games track meet



26 India paceman Kumar could be out for three games: Kohli



27 Suarez, Cavani score as Uruguay crush Ecuador in Copa America



Padres top Rockies in slugfest

Brewers halt Giants' four-game winning streak



DENVER: Charlie Blackmon #19 of the Colorado Rockies hits a RBI single in the sixth inning against the San Diego Padres at Coors Field, in Denver, Colorado. — AFP

DENVER: Greg Garcia had four hits, including a two-run triple as part of a four-run ninth inning, and the San Diego Padres rallied to beat the Colorado Rockies 14-13 in Denver on Sunday. The two teams combined for 92 runs in their four-game series to set a modern-era record. Rockies outfielder Charlie Blackmon homered and had three hits in the finale to set a record for most hits in a four-game series with 15. Hunter Renfroe hit two home runs for San Diego on Sunday, and Fernando Tatis Jr. had three hits and was a home run short of a cycle. Gerardo Reyes (3-0) struck out the side in the eighth inning to get the win, and Kirby Yates got the last three outs for his 24th save. The Padres rallied in the ninth for the second time in the series after coming back from six down Friday. Rockies closer Wade Davis (1-2) walked two, Wil Myers cut it to 13-11 with a single and Garcia tied it with his triple.

DODGERS 3, CUBS 2

Cody Bellinger hit a home run, and closer Kenley Jansen found a bit of redemption as Los Angeles held off visiting Chicago. Jansen earned his 21st save, although just barely, one day after he gave up a two-run home run to Anthony Rizzo in the ninth inning that gave the Cubs a 2-1 victory. Jansen put the first two runners aboard in the ninth inning but escaped unharmed. The Dodgers took a 3-2 lead in the eighth inning when Russell Martin fought off a breaking ball from Steve Cishek (1-4) to dunk a single into left field and score Chris Taylor from second base. Ross Stripling (3-2) pitched a scoreless eighth inning for the victory.

RED SOX 8, ORIOLES 6 (10 INNINGS)

Rafael Devers led off the top of the 10th with a home run while Mookie Betts and Christian Vazquez each added two-run singles in the inning as visiting Boston rallied past Baltimore for its fifth straight win. Boston trailed 3-2 heading into the ninth but Marco Hernandez tied the game with a one-out homer off Mychal Givens (0-4), who also gave up Devers' blast in the 10th. Brandon Workman (5-1) earned the victory for the Red Sox. Stevie Wilkerson helped Baltimore try to rally in the 10th with a two-run homer, and Trey Mancini added a solo shot, but it wasn't enough.

YANKEES 10, WHITE SOX 3

Cameron Maybin homered as New York went deep for the 19th straight game and salvaged a four-game series split with host Chicago. Austin Romine drove in a season-high four runs, and Brett Gardner also had four RBIs for

the Yankees, who won for the fifth time in their last 13 games. New York starter James Paxton (4-3) allowed two runs on eight hits in six innings, striking out seven and walking one. Odrisamer Despaigne (0-2) allowed seven runs on nine hits in 4 1/3 innings in the loss.

RAYS 6, ANGELS 5

Brandon Lowe and Tommy Pham hit solo home runs to help lift Tampa Bay past Los Angeles to earn a split of the four-game series at St. Petersburg, Fla. Pham hit his 10th home run of the season in the fifth inning to break a 3-3 tie. The Rays tacked on two more runs in the eighth on an RBI single by Yandy Diaz and a wild pitch, important runs after Mike Trout hit a two-run homer in the ninth to cut the deficit to 6-5. Colin Poche (1-1) got the win in relief for Tampa Bay. Angels rookie right-hander Griffin Canning (2-3) went six innings, allowing four runs on six hits and striking out seven.

INDIANS 8, TIGERS 0

Trevor Bauer notched his first win since April 30 with the first complete-game shutout of his career, rookie Oscar Mercado drove in a career-high four runs and Cleveland cruised past host Detroit. Bauer (5-6) allowed just four hits and walked none while striking out eight as the Indians swept the three-game series. His last complete-game victory was June 22, 2016. Tigers starter Spencer Turnbull (3-6) allowed six runs on 10 hits in five innings. Detroit has lost four in a row and dropped 11 of its last 14 games.

ROYALS 8, TWINS 6

Martin Maldonado went 3-for-4 with two RBIs and two runs scored, and Jorge Bonifacio and Billy Hamilton each drove in two runs as Kansas City held off Minnesota at Minneapolis. Nicky Lopez and Cheslor Cuthbert each scored two runs for the Royals, who defeated Minnesota for the first time in five games this season. Jorge Lopez (1-6), in relief of Jakob Junis, allowed one run on four hits in 2 1/3 innings to pick up the win, and Ian Kennedy picked up his seventh save. Nelson Cruz homered and drove in three runs, Miguel Sano also homered and Max Kepler went 4-for-6 for the Twins, who left 15 batters on base. Martin Perez (7-3) allowed five runs (four earned) on six hits, all singles, and a walk while striking out seven to pick up the loss.

BRAVES 15, PHILLIES 1

Josh Donaldson homered for the second straight game.

one of three long balls hit by Atlanta in a blowout of visiting Philadelphia. The victory gave the Braves their ninth win in their last 10 games. The Phillies have lost five of their last seven. Donaldson was 3-for-4 — his second straight three-hit game — and Ronald Acuna Jr. added four hits for Atlanta. Braves starter Mike Foltynewicz (2-5) pitched six innings and allowed one run on four hits, walking five and striking out six, while Phillies righty Vince Velasquez (2-4) worked 2 1/3 innings and allowed four runs on four hits for the loss.

BLUE JAYS 12, ASTROS 0

Trent Thornton worked 6 2/3 shutout innings as Toronto salvaged the finale of its three-game series at Houston. Thornton (2-5), a fifth-round selection by Houston in the 2015 draft, allowed six hits and three walks with seven strikeouts for his third scoreless start this season. Rookie first baseman Rowdy Tellez slugged the first of five Toronto home runs with two outs in the first inning, a solo shot off Astros right-hander Brad Peacock (6-4). Nine of the Blue Jays' 14 hits went for extra bases.

CARDINALS 4, METS 3

Paul DeJong continued to thrive against New York when he hit a tiebreaking solo homer with one out in the eighth inning to lead visiting St. Louis to victory. DeJong snapped a 3-3 tie when he lifted a 3-1 breaking ball from Chris Flexen (0-3) into the lower rows of the left-field seats. It was the shortstop's third homer of the four-game series, in which the Cardinals won three games. Andrew Miller (3-2) worked around a single in the seventh, and Carlos Martinez pitched two scoreless innings and recorded his second save, ending the game by getting pinch hitter Wilson Ramos on a double play started by DeJong.

BREWERS 5, GIANTS 3

Eric Thames and Jesus Aguilar hit home runs, and the bullpen tossed five scoreless innings as Milwaukee ended host San Francisco's win streak at four. Christian Yelich went 2-for-5 with two doubles in the Brewers' 12-hit attack, and Yasmani Grandal, Travis Shaw and Thames each added two hits. Matt Albers (3-2) got the win, and Josh Hader retired all six batters he faced for his 17th save in 18 chances. San Francisco starter Jeff Samardzija (3-6) grounded an RBI single but allowed four runs and nine hits in five innings.

MARINERS 6, ATHLETICS 3

Kyle Seager's two-run double with the bases loaded in

the eighth inning sparked a four-run rally as Seattle defeated host Oakland. Mallex Smith homered for the Mariners, who took two of three games in the series. Mike Leake (6-6) pitched seven strong innings, allowing three runs (two earned) on seven hits with no walks and seven strikeouts, and Roenis Elias worked the ninth for his seventh save of the season. Khris Davis and Ramon Laureano homered for the A's. Oakland right-hander Lou Trivino (2-5) took the loss, despite just one of the four runs he surrendered in the eighth being earned after a fielding error by right fielder Mark Canha.

NATIONALS 15, DIAMONDBACKS 5

Matt Adams had two homers and a career-high seven RBIs, including a grand slam in the eighth inning, and Anibal Sanchez had another strong outing as host Washington dumped Arizona for a split of a four-game series. Adam Eaton, Anthony Rendon and Howie Kendrick added three hits for Washington, which has won 14 of its last 21 contests. Sanchez (3-6), who gave up two runs in six innings, captured his 100th MLB win and third straight decision over four starts. Archie Bradley (2-4) gave up four runs in 1 1/3 innings in his first start for the Diamondbacks since 2016.

REDS 11, RANGERS 3

Jesse Winker homered to highlight his career-best four-hit, five-RBI performance as host Cincinnati drubbed Texas. Yasiel Puig launched a two-run homer for the second straight game, and Reds starter Sonny Gray (3-5) allowed three runs on five hits and struck out eight over five innings. Texas' Hunter Pence belted a two-run homer before exiting in the fifth inning with tightness in his right groin, the team announced. Rangers starter Ariel Jurado (4-3) was roughed up for seven runs on nine hits in three innings.

PIRATES 5, MARLINS 4

Josh Bell hit a go-ahead RBI double in the seventh inning, helping visiting Pittsburgh rally past Miami. Pirates reliever Richard Rodriguez (1-3) earned the win, pitching one scoreless inning. In all, the Pittsburgh bullpen pitched four innings of scoreless ball, getting five outs from Kyle Crick and four from Felipe Vazquez, who earned his 16th save. Reliever Nick Anderson (2-3), who gave up two runs in the seventh, took the loss. The Marlins offense was led by rookie Harold Ramirez, who hit a three-run homer. — Reuters