

5 US ambassador meets Kuwaiti grads planning to study in US



6 Searing heat across Europe sparks scramble for shade



11 Bitcoin surges above \$11,000 thanks to Facebook currency



26 Martinez, Aguero goals send Argentina into Copa quarters



Assembly urges Kuwait govt to boycott Bahrain workshop

Israel calls on Palestinians to ‘surrender’ • US eyes Israel-Gulf rapprochement



By B Izzak and Agencies

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday strongly lashed out at a US-led workshop in Bahrain to push stalled Middle East peace and called on the Kuwaiti government to boycott the two-day conference starting today. In a statement passed unanimously, the Assembly said the conference, which is being attended by several Arab countries and boycotted by the Palestinians, aims at normalizing ties with Israel at the expense of Palestinian rights.

The statement expressed total rejection of the conference’s outcome, which undermines legitimate and historical Arab and Islamic rights in occupied Palestine. The statement insisted that any normalization with Israel is a breach of Kuwaiti principles and laws. Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah said Kuwait will not accept anything that is unacceptable to the Palestinian people, but he did not comment on the call to boycott the meeting. Kuwait has so far not announced if it will participate in the workshop and at what level. Four of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states have said they will take part, but Oman and Kuwait have not announced their decisions.

The Palestinians yesterday vowed to reject the US-led peace initiative to be presented in Bahrain that dangles the prospect of \$50 billion as an Israeli envoy bluntly told them they should “surrender”. Finance chiefs from the United States, oil-rich Arab states and international development institutions were flying to the tiny kingdom, which in a rarity is openly welcoming Israelis, who have forged an indirect alliance with Gulf rulers due to mutual hostility with Iran.

Led by US President Donald Trump’s son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner, the Peace to Prosperity economic workshop that begins today evening is billed as the start of a new approach that will later include political solutions to the long intractable Middle East conflict. It proposes raising more than \$50 billion in fresh investment for the Palestinians and their Arab neighbors with major projects to boost infrastructure, education, tourism and cross-border trade.

The Palestinian Authority is boycotting the workshop, denouncing the plan for saying nothing about ending the Israeli occupation. “This economic workshop in Bahrain is really going to be nonsense,” Palestinian prime minister Mohammad Shtayyeh told a cabinet meeting. “What Israel and the United States are trying to do now is simply to normalize relations with the Arabs at the expense of the Palestinians,” he added. President Mahmoud Abbas has said the Palestinians “will not be slaves or servants” of Kushner or other Trump aides. “For America to turn the whole cause from a political issue into an economic one, we cannot accept this,” he said.

Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, criticized the Palestinian leadership for declaring that the plan amounted to surrender.

Continued on Page 24

News in brief

Indian Muslim man lynched

NEW DELHI: Indian police are searching for around a dozen people who tortured a Muslim man for hours, forcing him to shout Hindu slogans and capturing it on a video which has gone viral since the victim died. A 10-minute video shows scores of men beating Tabrez Ansari in the latest suspected case of religious violence to stain India’s secular image. The mob also forced Ansari to shout “Jai Shri Ram” - Hail Lord Ram - a slogan widely used by Hindu hardliners. Ansari died in hospital on Saturday, four days after he was attacked, tied to a pole, then beaten and punched over accusations that he carried out a burglary in Jharkhand state. “We have arrested the main accused for the murder, but a dozen people from the mob are on the run,” Kartik S, the Seraikela police chief, told AFP. Kartik said the villagers accused the 24-year-old of being a thief and beat him for nearly 12-hours before he was taken into custody and then hospital. — AFP

US slaps sanctions on Khamenei; Abha airport attacked, 1 killed

WASHINGTON: The United States imposed sanctions yesterday on Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and a string of military chiefs, tightening pressure on the country that President Donald Trump threatened with “obliteration” if it seeks war. Trump signed the punitive financial measures against in the Oval Office, calling this a “strong and proportionate response to Iran’s increasingly provocative actions.”

Repeating that “never can Iran have a nuclear weapon,” Trump said it was now up to Tehran to negotiate. “We do not ask for conflict,” he said, adding that depending on Iran’s response the sanctions could end tomorrow - or it “can also be years from now.” Expanding on the new measures, the Treasury said the United States will blacklist Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and block “billions” more in Iranian assets, with eight top commanders from Iran’s Revolutionary Guards already added to the list.

Meanwhile, a Yemeni rebel attack on a civilian airport in southern Saudi Arabia killed a Syrian national and wounded 21 other civilians Sunday, a Riyadh-led coalition said, in a new escalation following a series of strikes on the site. The attack on Abha airport, which the coalition said left a McDonalds outlet at the site littered with shattered glass and damaged 18 vehicles, comes amid spiraling regional tensions with Iran.

Continued on Page 24



‘Tree Man’ wants hands amputated

DHAKA: A Bangladeshi known as the “Tree Man” because of bark-like growths on his body said yesterday he wanted his hands amputated to relieve him of unbearable pain. Abul Bajandar has had 25 operations since 2016 to remove growths from his hands and feet caused by a rare syndrome. Doctors had believed they had beaten the disease but Bajandar fled a Dhaka clinic in May last year following a relapse. The 28-year-old father of one was readmitted to hospital in January because the condition worsened, with some growths several inches long. “I cannot bear the pain anymore. I can’t sleep at night. I asked the doctors to cut off my hands so I can at least get some relief,” he told AFP. His mother Amina Bibi supported the plea. “At least he will be free of pain. It’s a hellish condition,” she said. Bajandar suffers from epidermodysplasia verruciformis, a rare genetic condition also known as “tree man syndrome”. — AFP

Qatar library defies boycott, woos youth

DOHA: The Gulf’s largest book collection, Qatar’s National Library, has enhanced ties with libraries outside the region and wooed younger readers in its first year, as an anti-Doha boycott drags on. Scores of children weave in and out of the banked rows of shelves or sit on beanbags clutching books at the foot of the vast columns that support architect Rem Koolhaas’ 45,000-square-metre mega-structure. Every single book in the children’s library was borrowed in the first six months as the QNL has sought to avoid the stuffiness of some world-class libraries and attract young readers.

It has marketed itself as a “noisy” library and features a 120-seat auditorium and a special events area at



the heart of the naturally lit space that is reminiscent of a modern airport. “All of the books you see in this place can be borrowed by the users,” said the library’s

Continued on Page 24

Saudi women use wedding contracts for driving rights

DAMMAM: Saudi salesman Majd had just begun his wedding preparations when his fiancée sought to enshrine in their marriage contract a condition already guaranteed by law - her right to drive. Wedding contracts have long been a safety net for brides in the deeply patriarchal society, used to guarantee demands that are often otherwise vulnerable to the whims of the husband or his family. Such legally binding contracts typically codify anything from the woman’s right to have her own house, hire a maid, or to study or work.



But after the kingdom last year lifted a decades-long ban on female motorists, a popular new condition in the contracts is the right to own and drive a car, according

Continued on Page 24

Hayef files to grill finance minister as MPs pass laws

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Islamist MP Mohammad Hayef filed to grill Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf over two issues: Not fulfilling his oath and charging interest on loans taken by pensioners from the social security agency. Hayef had planned to file the grilling on Sunday after the finance minister did not attend a meeting of the financial and economic affairs committee to discuss the issue.

Sources said Hayef had signed on a no-confidence draft motion against the minister during a grilling two weeks ago but he withdrew his name in the last minute after he was promised that the government will drop and cancel interest on loans taken by pensioners. But the minister said yesterday that the government will not forgive or cancel any interest on such loans, insisting these are public funds and cannot be forgiven.

During the Assembly debate yesterday, MPs passed amendments to the public tender law which gives at least 10 percent of government contracts to small and medium investors. MPs also approved amendments to the copyrights law amid protests by lawmakers that there are other legislations that impose restrictions on the freedom of speech and opinion like the cybercrimes law. The Assembly also debated a few other laws. The Assembly will be holding sessions daily until Thursday to debate laws and pass budgets.



Local

Kuwait urges int'l community to cease regional escalation

Govt content over improvement in anti-human trafficking efforts



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



Senior Kuwait Army and security officials attend the meeting.

KUWAIT: Kuwait urged the international community to cease escalation in the region and that all parties should be rational in dealing with developments in the area. This came in a government statement following its weekly meeting held on Sunday and chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, during which the executives discussed tension in the region. "Kuwait urges all parties concerned to be rational and seek positive and constructive dialogue in order to defuse tension, and prevent region and its people further suffering," it said. It added that talking about confrontation would only lead to death and destruction, therefore it urged the international community to double efforts to stop escalation and tension in the region, and to prevent any measure that would destabilize security.

Good preparations

Meanwhile, the Cabinet voiced content for "good preparations" of government

departments to maintain domestic security and stability amidst regional tension. The Cabinet members discussed security and preventive measures carried out by ministries of defense and interior, as well as national guard and fire department to guarantee safety of the public.

In the meantime, ministers praised the outcome of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's recent visit to Iraq, which took place amidst "critical circumstances" in the region. The government said it was confident last Wednesday's visit would have fruitful impacts on bilateral relations and cooperation, which would contribute to regional security, stability and peace. Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah briefed the Cabinet about meetings His Highness the Amir held with Iraqi President Barham Salih and Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi over boosting cooperation in gas and trade domains. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled com-

mended the Iraqi government's counter-terrorism efforts, and affirmed Kuwait's support for fostering security and stability of Iraq to pave way for the reconstruction. Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement after the Cabinet meeting.

Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul Mahdi lauded His Highness the Amir's wise and moderate stances. Iraq and Kuwait have deeply-rooted ties, and both countries suffered from many difficulties and overcame them, an Iraqi government statement quoted Abdul Mahdi as saying on sidelines of His Highness the Amir's visit. His Highness the Amir's visit to Baghdad is an opportunity to develop bilateral relations, he said, expressing his optimism about a better future of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti ties. Kuwait Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said His Highness the Amir's visit to Iraq would give momentum to cooperation in all aspects. Jarallah said the visit have presented a great opportunity to discuss

many unresolved issues and draw a roadmap to solve them. His Highness the Amir's visit is his second to Baghdad after his first visit in March 2012 to participate in an Arab summit.

Anti-human trafficking

Separately, the government voiced relief after a US-based 2019 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report upgraded Kuwait from Tier II Watch List to Tier II in anti-human trafficking efforts. The government thanked the Ministry of Justice and the judicial authorities for contributing to this upgrade. This upgrade, said the government, reflected Kuwait's "civilized and humane" treatment of persons. Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afasi briefed the Cabinet about the upgrade which highlighted increasing efforts initiate more criminal investigations of potential trafficking crimes and more prosecutions under the anti-trafficking law.

Also during the session, the Cabinet

expressed condolences to the President of Cyprus Nicos Anastasiades and Cypriot people over the death of former President Demetris Christofias. The Cabinet meanwhile condemned the bombing of a mosque in Al-Baladiyat district east of Baghdad on Friday, which left scores killed and wounded, expressing its sincere condolences to the Iraqi leadership, government, people and the victims' families and wished speedy recovery to the wounded. The Kuwaiti Cabinet deplored the "terrorist" attack that targeted a security checkpoint in South Arish, in Sinai, Egypt, and killed several police officers and militants, expressing sincere condolences to the families of the victims as well as the Egyptian government and people. The Cabinet stressed rejection to these criminal acts that have claimed the lives of innocent people in violation of all humanitarian laws, norms and values. The Kuwaiti Cabinet expressed sorrow over the victims and casualties of the earthquake that struck Yibin city, southwest China. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) and Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) officials attend the meeting.

KFSD, MEW hold coordination meeting

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Director General of Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Lt Gen Khalid Al-Mikrad chaired a coordination meeting with Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) Undersecretary Mohammad Bushehri as well as directors of pow-

er generation stations in order to implement joint cooperation procedures. Separately, the KFSD campaign "We want you safe" being held in cooperation with EQUATE petrochemicals company went to 360 mall in the presence of KFSD Public Relations and Information Director Brig Khalil Al-Ameer.

Oil price might reach \$100 in regional war scenario: Analysts

KUWAIT: As geopolitical tension grips the region, the price of oil, especially the Brent crude, is expected to hover around \$70 per barrel with the possibility of reaching \$100 if war occurred as tension between the US and Iran escalates. The price of Kuwaiti oil jumped by \$4, reaching \$65.17 pb Friday as opposed to the rate a week before.

Kuwaiti oil analysts said that the hike in oil price would have a grave effect on global economy in general. Head of Al-Ufouq (horizon) strategic study center Dr Khaled Bodai said that the current status quo of the oil market was adequately reacting to the level of tension in the region, predicting that the price will hover around \$60 to \$70 per barrel if tension continues. In the case of war, the price will rise over \$100 per barrel as the flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz - which accounts for 20 percent of global crude consumption - will surely be affected, said Dr Bodai who revealed that the percentage amounted to 20 million barrels per day.

About 25 percent of natural gas also goes through the same strait, he indicated, revealing that Saudi Arabia and the UAE have exporting alternatives, which were used to max capacity as of the current moment. He noted that the closure of the Strait of Hormuz for more than two months will have a tremendous effect on refineries operations, flow of oil, and industries; however, such scenario is highly unlikely and even if it occurs, the closure will be short-



lived due to the fact that the strait was also used for commercial goods transportation. The process of closure will heavily affect China, India, and various Asian countries, Dr Bodai affirmed.

The most likely event to occur will be the increase of oil prices, said the analysts who revealed that such increase could be avoided providing that there were alternative methods to cover the decrease in supplies. Whether the increasing production of shale oil could save the situation, Dr Bodai said that the amount produced currently would not be able to cover the market's needs. He added that OPEC, in the current situation, has fewer economic options to counter this alarming political upheaval. Meanwhile, fellow oil analyst Mohammad Al-Shatti said that Asian markets highly depended on supplies from the GCC region with the European and North American regions coming in second and third respectively. Any malfunction

in delivering supplies will lead to a quick international reaction, pointed out Shatti who added that though there were alternatives for delivering oil in the world via the Red Sea, the world still needs the oil flow coming from the Strait of Hormuz.

Despite the recent incidents in the region, the price managed to be between \$60 and 65 per barrel, said Shatti, adding that the trade dispute between the US and China contributes to the hike in prices to reach \$75 pb. He added that the scenario of the record hike in prices was still possible with the continuation of regional tension. The decrease of the price to reach \$50 pb is farfetched especially due to the Gulf regional tension and the trade war between China and the US, said Shatti who noted that the world is awaiting the upcoming meeting of OPEC next week, which would surely address the current global status quo. — KUNA

Benin lauds Kuwait's humanitarian, legislative roles

CARIO: A number of officials from Benin commended the role played by Kuwait in the humanitarian and legislative domains, expressing hopes to develop relations with the Gulf state. In a statement to the press, Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan said that Minister of State for Planning and Development in Benin Abdoulaye Bio Tchane praised His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's humanitarian vision for Africa. During the meeting with Bio Tchane, the minister said that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah deserved the UN honoring as a global humanitarian leader, stated Mashaan who was present with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Benin Faisal Al-Musaileem.

Minister Bio Tchane lauded the role played by Kuwait in the educational and cultural domains and its assistance given to Benin, added Ambassador Mashaan. The minister, said the Kuwaiti diplomat, referred to 14 projects carried out by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in his coun-

try, affirming that the fund's \$130 million loans helped to finance development in Benin. KFAED began its operations in the country back in 1984. Minister Bio Tchane touched on the current economic situation in Benin, saying that the government took important decisions to help boost various developmental projects.

Ambassador Mashaan noted that the Benin official called on Kuwaiti business personnel to invest in his country especially in the agriculture. Mashaan extended an offer to Benin business personnel to visit Kuwait and survey investment and business opportunities offered by Kuwait. Meanwhile, President of the National Assembly of Benin Louis Vlavonou commended in a meeting with Ambassador Mashaan the efforts to consolidate legislative relations between Kuwait and his country. Ambassador Mashaan, accompanied by Kuwaiti Ambassador Musaileem, said that his meeting with Vlavonou touched on means to bolstering parliamentary ties and the upcoming visit by the recently elected Benin parliament President to the State of



Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan meets with Minister of State for Planning and Development in Benin Abdoulaye Bio Tchane.

Kuwait and his meeting with Speaker of the National Assembly of Kuwait Marzouq Al-Ghanem. Mashaan is currently on an African tour, which began in Kenya, Tanzania, and ends in Niger. The tour aims to active political discourse agreements signed between Kuwait and the respective African countries which Mashaan is visiting. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The prevention department at Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) continued its inspection campaigns in commercial areas and popular markets, resulting in finding several prevention violations, so legal action was taken. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

Local

Power consumption rates peak as temperatures continue to soar

Court overrules former minister's decision to dissolve charity

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Power consumption rates during peak hours yesterday reached 13,200 megawatts, driven by the rising temperatures, according to Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) reports, which marks new hikes after consumption had dropped to 12,000 megawatts during the past few days. Although summer has only officially started this week, Kuwait has already recorded temperatures of nearly 50 °C degrees on several days since the beginning of the month, while temperatures are expected to continue rising through July and August. UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO) experts said last week that Kuwait recorded the world's highest temperature in recent years: 53.9 °C degrees in Mitribah northeast the country on July 21, 2016. Meanwhile, informed sources said minister of electricity and water and minister of oil Khaled Al-Fadhel signed the excellent performance bonus lists and that the bonuses had been deposited in employees' bank accounts.

New teachers

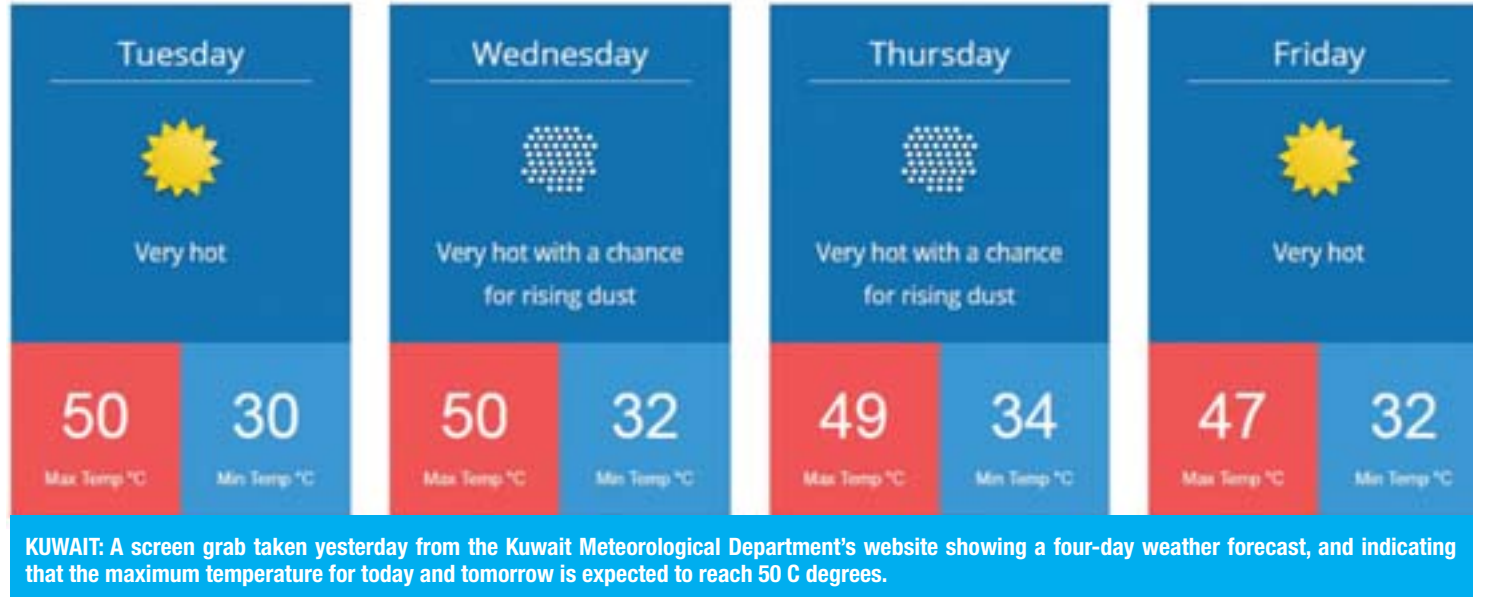
The Ministry of Education (MoE) finished contracting 202 new teachers of French, physical education, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, English and geology from Tunisia and Jordan, well-informed educational sources said. Meanwhile, the committee dispatched to Jordan failed to hire the required 175 teachers due to the low salaries MoE offers, the sources said, noting that

another committee will soon be dispatched to Palestine after getting the needed security approvals. The sources said only 100 teachers were hired locally and that this number is very low compared to the 780 new teachers required for the new school year. Meanwhile, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) promised to study the cases of teachers whose qualifications are different from those mentioned in their work permits individually and not collectively as MoE had demanded.

In the meantime, informed sources at the CSC said all government bodies had finished inputting their employees' performance assessment reports, adding that only three remain, including MoE, which finished 85 percent of the reports. The sources explained that the delay was mainly in public schools, where implementing the new integrated assessment system caused some confusion due to having to input piles of manual documents of sick leaves. The sources also expected finishing the reports by the beginning of July, and expected that with the new system, over 40 percent of state employees will not get the excellent performance bonuses.

Charity restored

Director of Al-Salam Charity Jassem Al-Oun hailed the verdict by the appeals court yesterday in favor of Al-Salam Charity Society, noting that this sentence confirmed the soundness and legality of the society's activities. Oun added that the former minister of social affairs and labor Hind Al-Subaih had



made haphazard, unstudied abusive decisions ignoring the law, which led to dissolving many NGOs. "Subaih's violation of the law has done great harm to charity and voluntary work in Kuwait," he added, pointing out that the court had proved this by passing two consecutive verdicts cancelling Subaih's "unjust decision."

Railway project

The GCC railway project will be offered for bidding through the public-private-partnership (PPP) system, Public Authority for Roads and Transportation's (PART) Acting Director Soha Ashkanani said, adding that the project's execution

will be supervised by PART. In a letter addressing Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmad Al-Manfouhi concerning his proposal that PART be subjected to the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ashkanani stressed that PART had been established in 2014 in compliance with law 115/2014 to run a modern, safe and economic land transport system and supervise and maintain it according to the state's vision, adding that PART has all the jurisdictions and liabilities that help it achieve sustainable development. Ashkanani added that many countries have separate road authorities and that it was not its responsibility to respond to such proposals.

National identity centers

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) is scheduled to launch six national identity centers by the beginning of July, said security sources, noting that the new centers will mark a new phase after e-connection with bodies concerned with national identities from birth to death. The sources added that the new centers in Shamiya, Ishbelia, Saad Al-Abdullah, West Mishref, Adan and Fahd Al-Ahmad will include special counters for nationality and passports, e-passports, Public Authority of Civil Information and Ministry of Health to provide all identity-related services to Kuwaitis.

Tenders under KD 75,000 given to entrepreneurs

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Kuwait National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development (SME Fund) announced that for the first time, entrepreneurs will be prioritized in government tenders after amending the public tenders law number 49/2016. The public ten-

ders law amendments give a great opportunity to make use of government spending and open new markets for entrepreneurs through having them compete to take part in major projects, the fund explained in a statement released yesterday. "Allocating 10 percent of these projects for entrepreneurs will provide them with more chances for effective contribution to the national economy," the statement added. The SME Fund explained that tenders worth less than KD 75,000 will be mainly given to entrepreneurs, who used to stand no chance in competing with major companies.

Oil slick contained off Doha station

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A 50-m oil slick was spotted near Doha water station, so Shuwaikh fire station's sea rescue team, in cooperation with the Environment Public Authority, Ministry of Electricity and Water and Kuwait Oil Company, contained the spill. The process took several hours and the slick was removed.

Cars on fire

Several vehicles went up in flames yesterday in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, prompting Jleeb fire station to respond. Firemen found three buses on fire near a power transformer. The fire was put out without injuries. An investigation was opened to reveal the cause of the fire.



Fireboats are seen during an operation to contain an oil slick off the Doha water station.



KUWAIT: Vehicles heavily damaged by a fire reported yesterday in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

Khaitan man's death ruled a suicide

KUWAIT: Investigations revealed that an Indian man who recently was found dead in Khaitan had committed suicide. The coroner's report agreed with that of the detectives, which said the suspect stabbed himself in the neck, then left his room and collapsed and died in the house's yard. The case was initially suspected as murder.

Public funds' theft

Criminal detectives arrested an Egyptian man on accusations of stealing public funds by making two workers at a gas station use two petrol cards belonging to the interior ministry in exchange for a percentage of money. Detectives found the suspect works for the interior ministry, so they went to the gas station and arrested the two Asians with the two cards on them. Both told police they got the cards from the main suspect, who confessed to the charges, adding that he gets KD 180 from each card per month.

115 bogus companies

The Public Funds Protection Committee

kept its report to the National Assembly about investigations in the issue of agricultural holdings secret. Informed sources said the investigation targeted 115 bogus companies established with forged documents to gain land holdings from the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), but the committee could not get enough information about those companies. The sources said the committee found that decisions of the farm-lands committee issued in 2014 are not correct with regards to five farms owned by one person who is suspected to establish 115 companies, 60 of which were sold, while 55 remain under his name. The committee was able to account for 16 companies that had suspicions about establishment, licenses and getting lands with other partners in the ministry of commerce or PAAAFR. Sources said that one of the companies got land only five days after receiving the license, while other companies got land even before their establishment.

Physical assault

An Iranian national accused a state security officer of storming into his grocery store and beating him. The victim went to the police station and complained about a person beating him in the store. The prosecutor ordered the suspect's arrest.

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

What's your plan this Summer ?

WORKOUT

Kuwait Times

Subscribe or renew your subscription & get K.D 50

1 Coupon FREE

50 KD

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

Local



KUWAIT: Aerial shot of the Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center and Kuwaiti City. — Photo by Mohammad Al-Hadhoud (KUNA)

Int'l Music Festival kicks off by honoring veteran musician

Official calls on the public to attend various cultural events



A musical performance during the International Music Festival.

KUWAIT: The 22nd International Music Festival, organized by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), was launched coinciding with the International Music Day under the patronage of Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri. In a statement to the press, the representative of the ceremony sponsor, Assistant Secretary-General of the Arts Sector at the Council, Dr Bader Al-Duweesh, said that the Council is proud to select the Kuwaiti musician Anwar Abdullah, whose name was associated with the greatest artists, to be the opening figure in this festival. Duweesh called on the public to follow up and attend the different events, appreciating the support of the Ministry of Information and their cooperation in transmitting this event through Kuwait Radio. In his opening speech, Duweesh said that since its discovery, music has played a key role in the improvement of the human spirit, the building of civilizations and the development of society. The festival runs from 23 to 28 of June with a number of different



KUWAIT: Musician Anwar Abdullah is honored during the ceremony. — KUNA photos

musical evenings with the participation of international artists and teams. — KUNA

Kuwait backs FAO food security efforts

ROME: Kuwait said yesterday that it trusts the role and goals of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in wiping out poverty and promoting sustainable development. Addressing a FAO meeting, Kuwait's Representative to the FAO General Conference Ali Al-Farsi voiced his country's confidence in fighting poverty and famine, supporting food security and consolidating sustainable development. Farsi, who doubles as Deputy Director-General of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources, reiterated that Kuwait throws much weight behind the FAO's policies purposed to notch up global sustainable development goals. Noting Kuwait's willingness to prop up its relations with the FAO, he said the FAO is poised to open a partnership and liaison office in Kuwait in the near future in order to promote its food

security and boost its technical capabilities. With its marked advancement in the food sector, Kuwait hinges upon the FAO's technical support thanks to its great expertise in the realm of water and fish resources, the Kuwaiti official added.

Meanwhile, Farsi congratulated the new Director-General and China's candidate Qu Dongyu. Speaking on behalf of Kuwait and the Group of Near East Countries to FAO, which is chaired by Kuwait, Farsi also thanked the outgoing Director-General Graziano Da Silva for his great efforts during the last eight years. Farsi noted the contributions of Da Silva to the development of the organization and work with its members to assist them in achieving the most important strategic objectives of sustainable development to eradicate poverty and hunger.

"Our region looks forward to further FAO efforts to help it develop various sectors of agriculture and find suitable solutions to market its products to contribute to economic development and food security in their countries," he added. Farsi reiterated Kuwait's support to the new Director-General from the Near East, North Africa and the Arab region and wished him success in leading the organization and achieving a critical goal for food security and safety. — KUNA



Musician Anwar Abdullah (right) performs on the Oud during the International Music Festival.

Media forum reflects cooperative bond with Kuwait: Jordanian PM

AMMAN: Jordanian Prime Minister Omar Al-Razzaz yesterday stressed the deep brotherly relations with Kuwait, saying the Kuwait-Jordan media forum in Amman "translates" the cooperative bond. This came while meeting a Kuwaiti delegation participating in the media forum which kicked off on Sunday with seminars held to discuss challenges ahead of the proposed subjects and facing them, Jordan's Petra news

agency said. Razzaz praised the relations with Kuwait and considered them a "model" for Arab relations in all fields, underlining the need to develop prospects of cooperation serving the interest of both countries.

He turned to the joint horizons that bring together Jordan and Kuwait starting with the political culture and mindfully working and preserving the language of dialogue with cases and challenges that face the region and work towards building bridges of confidence and make sure to strengthen the cooperative Arab work. He also lauded the large support that was presented by the Jordanian cadres in the journey of development and building that Kuwait witnessed. Present at the meeting were Jordan's Minister of State for Media Affairs Jumana Ghneimat and Secretary General Mansour Al-Ajmi and heads of the delegations participating in the forum. — KUNA



AMMAN: Jordanian Prime Minister Omar Al-Razzaz meets with members of the Kuwaiti delegation. — KUNA

Local

British publication marks 120th anniversary of the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Agreement

Current and former British officials gave statements on special occasion

LONDON: Britain's 'FIRST' magazine released an issue commemorating the 120th anniversary of the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Agreement. The publication included a number of statements by current and former British officials who spoke about the strong relations between Kuwait and the UK. In the publication, Queen Elizabeth II sent special greetings to the Kuwaiti leadership and people on this occasion. Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jeremy Hunt also provided a lengthy statement on this occasion. "I hope to broaden our cooperation in financial services, infrastructure and Cyber Security," said Hunt, adding, "I hope we can do even more together. In particular, I hope to broaden our cooperation in financial services, infrastructure and Cyber Security." Hunt lauded Kuwait's role globally, saying that the Gulf country "used its place on the United National Security Council and other international forums to be a voice of reason and moderation."

Shared values and interests

"Our shared values and interests have allowed our countries to pursue joint goals, including the lasting stability of the Gulf," he said. Similarly, Secretary of State for International Trade Liam Fox affirmed, "This year we celebrate the 120th anniversary of the UK-Kuwait Friendship Treaty. Our two countries have a close bond built on a long, shared history. This anniversary is not just a chance to reflect on years of successful partnership. It is an opportunity to think about where we go in the future."

He added, "We will of course continue to build on our defense and security collaboration - particularly cyber - and Kuwait will remain a key development and humanitarian partner for the UK, using its unique influence in the Middle East and Africa to help us respond to some of the world's most pressing crises." On UK-Kuwaiti trade and economic relations, Fox said com-

mercial exchange grew from September 2017 from the month last year, revealing "UK exports to Kuwait grew by a staggering 17.9 percent, up to 2.5 billion British Pound Sterling (Around \$3.18 billion)." Fox pointed out that "the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) is the oldest Sovereign Wealth Fund in the world and has been operating through the Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) in London since 1953."

"The KIA has a UK portfolio estimated at an astounding 35 billion British Pound Sterling (\$44.5 billion)," Fox said. "This level of investment helps to bring prosperity to

“
Kuwait is one of
the UK's
oldest allies
”

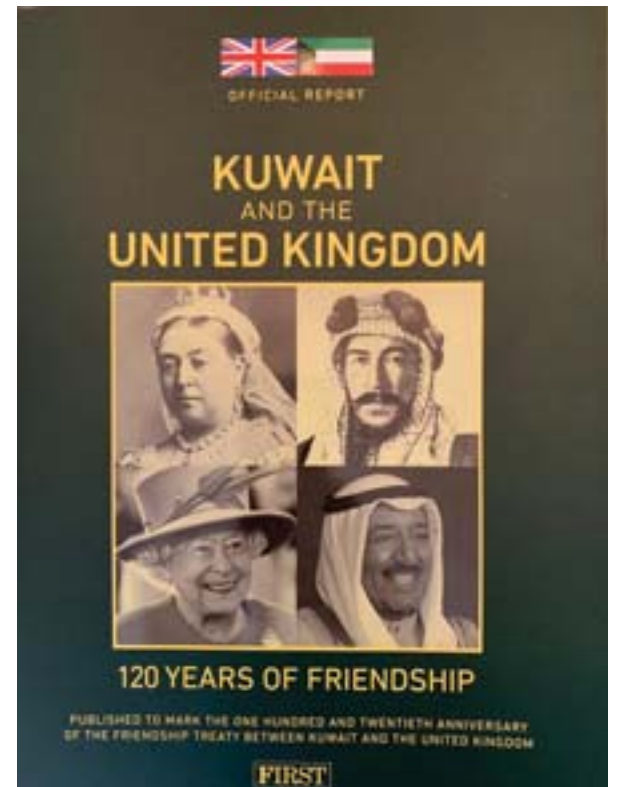
both the UK and Kuwait creating jobs for our people and increasing profits for our companies," indicated the British official, adding, "this is a signal of what is to come greater access and increased opportunity for both of our countries." Fox renewed British interest in the New Kuwait Vision 2035, indicating, "with renewed commitment to expanding our multi-faceted relationship even further, I am confident that our best years are yet to come. But this requires the proper mechanisms for effective government to government engagement which is why we have established a Joint Steering Group to provide a forum for us to share experiences."

One of UK's oldest allies

Providing more input, former UK Prime Minister Sir John Major expressed his joy over the advent of the occasion, saying, "Kuwait is one of the UK's oldest allies, with a relationship strengthened through trade, through common interests, and through personal relationships." "I warmly welcome the 120th Anniversary of the Friendship Treaty between our two nations, and look forward to our close ties being further strengthened in the years to come," said Major.

Fellow former Prime Minister Tony Blair also provided a statement on this occasion. "Our nations' friendship has long been important. From the reign of Mubarak the Great through to the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah... And as we mark 120 years since that landmark treaty between the two countries, it is important was built that we reflect on the foundations on which its heart was a security relationship." He affirmed, "Britain will remain a strong partner for the country as it continues to modernize and reform. And as we celebrate our shared past, we also reaffirm our commitment to our common future." Blair lauded the decisions made by the Kuwaiti leadership to provide more space for the private sector to contribute to the state development, affirming, "Part of the solution will be developing the private sector, as set out in its (Kuwait) Vision 2035 strategy." Finally, Defense Senior Advisor to the Middle East and North Africa, Lieutenant-General Sir John Lorimer said, "The United Kingdom has been at Kuwait's side numerous times... most notably when Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait in 1990."

"Today, Kuwait is a key partner to the Counter-Daesh Coalition," stated Lorimer, adding, "during my time as the Defense Senior Adviser for the Middle East and North Africa, I have been impressed by the strong, personal connections between the UK and Kuwait Armed Forces." The publication included various photos and shots docu-



Britain's 'FIRST' magazine cover commemorating the 120th anniversary of the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Agreement.

menting historical moments in the two countries histories including the visit by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad in 2012 and his reception by Queen Elizabeth. A photocopy of the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Agreement was also included in the issue. —KUNA

Doors open for KAFO 3rd edition participation



KUWAIT: Dr Yousef Al-Ibrahim speaks at the press conference. —KUNA

KUWAIT: Amiri Diwan Advisor Dr Yousef Al-Ibrahim announced yesterday that the doors for Kuwait's Achievers for Future Opportunities (KAFO) forum participants are open in its third edition. Ibrahim, who is also Chairman of KAFO Supervisory Committee, said in a press conference that KAFO annually holds a meeting to review what was done during the year and to highlight youth initiatives and successes that contribute to achieving New Kuwait 2035 Vision. The forum, which will be held on October 9, is an opportunity to meet with young people, learn about their capabilities, new ideas and innovations, and inform them of the latest changes on the project's website and application. Ibrahim called on young people to join KAFO to make use of the exchange of expertise.

Dr Fatma Al-Moussawi, the platform's Executive Director, said that participants will be selected this season based on their competencies and achievements in different fields through KAFO platform. She also welcomed everyone desiring to join the forum through its Instagram account. KAFO is the first national platform showcasing achievers to ease the process of searching, connecting and collaborating among each other. The main objective of KAFO is to have access to Kuwaiti achievers and talents through a platform that can display their efforts and empower them to attain more and collaborate with others. —KUNA

Ambassador addresses Kuwaiti graduates planning to study in US

KUWAIT: US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman delivered a speech addressing Kuwaiti graduates planning to study in the United States, who attended a pre-departure orientation meeting organized by the Ministry of Higher Education yesterday.



US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman speaks to the media.

In his speech, the ambassador thanked Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi and other ministry officials "for their continuous efforts to ensure that Kuwaiti students have the financial and other support needed to pursue studies at top-quality American universities."

The Ambassador then turned his attention to the graduates, applauding their decision to study in the United States. "You are about to begin what may be the most memorable period of your lives. It will be a time of many new beginnings and maybe some challenges," he said. "And during those challenging times, I want you to know that you are not alone. There are many people out there to support you and to help you make the most of your American experience. You have the support of your families and friends, your



KUWAIT: US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman at the US Embassy's pavilion during the event.

cultural office, and NUKS-USA, and the vibrant Kuwaiti student communities that already exist in many schools. I urge you to turn to these resources for assistance and support, as you need it." "Your choice to study in the US strengthens the bonds between our two nations, not just in the present, but also in the future," the Ambassador said. "Once you have completed your studies and returned to Kuwait, your education and experience in the US will strengthen the links between our cultures and our economies."

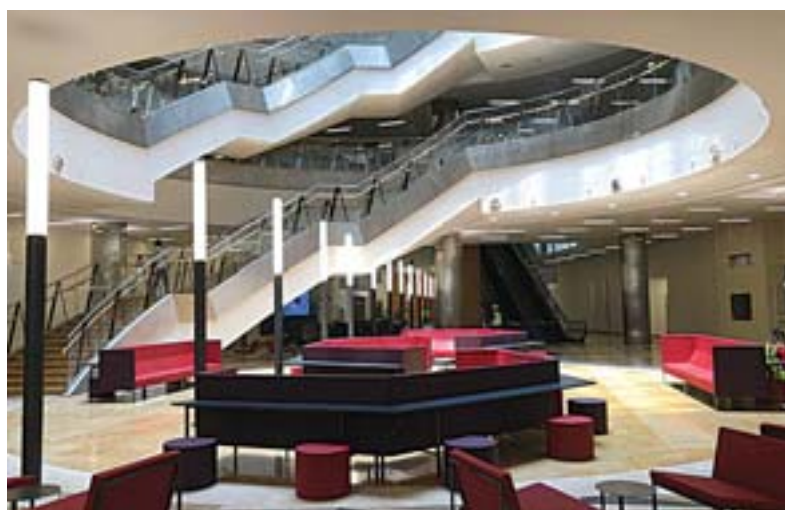
Ambassador Silverman encouraged the graduates to apply early for their student visa. "Appointments for student visas are a priority for the US Embassy," he said. "You can schedule an appointment at any time, and in order to meet the student demand, we have special days dedicated to student applications and interviews - July 16 and August 6."



US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman speaks to graduates.



KUWAIT: Kuwait University announced yesterday receiving the female students' buildings of the Faculty of Administrative Sciences and Faculty of Life Sciences in the Sabah Al-Salem University City (Al-Shadadiya). —KUNA





Democrat proposes war tax US families without military members

‘Brain fever’ death toll passes 150 in India amid investigation



ADDIS ABABA: A man reads the Ethiopian newspaper ‘The Reporter’, depicting the portraits of killed Ambachew Mekonen, left, President of the Ahmara Region, and of Gen Sere Mekonen, Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian National Forces, in Addis Ababa. —AFP

Ethiopian mastermind of attacks shot dead

Amhara attorney general dies from wounds

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopian police have shot dead a security chief suspected of orchestrating a deadly bid to overthrow the regional Amhara government, with possible links to the murder of the army chief, state media reported yesterday. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's office had named Amhara security chief Asaminew Tsige as the chief suspect in an "attempted coup" in the region that left its president, top adviser and attorney general dead on Saturday.

A few hours later in what the government said appeared to be a "coordinated attack", the army chief Seare Mekonnen was killed by his bodyguard at his home in Addis Ababa. However details of links between the two attacks and their ultimate motive have not been made clear. "Asaminew Tsige, who has been in hiding since the failed coup attempt over the weekend has been shot dead" in the regional capital Bahir Dar, state broadcaster EBC reported.

While observers say there were no telltale signs of a concerted national coup, the unrest is a major blow for Abiy, who has embarked on a series of reforms which have unleashed ethnic tensions and bitter political rivalries. Asaminew was only last year released from almost

a decade in prison over a 2009 coup plot, under a mass prisoner amnesty that began under former Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and continued under his reformist successor Abiy.

Analysts describe him as a hardline Amhara nationalist who was likely facing removal from his job over efforts to form a militia and rhetoric pushing for territory in neighboring Tigray to be reclaimed. He recently appeared in a Facebook video calling for civilians to arm themselves in preparation for attack. Amhara is one of Ethiopia's nine autonomous states and its people are the second-largest ethnic grouping after the Oromo. Both communities spearheaded two years of anti-government protests which led to the resignation of Hailemariam.

Stay united

A statement read on state television on Sunday night from parliament speaker Tagesse Chafo called for the country to "stay together and united" as he announced a national day of mourning. "All of us will remember the people who lost their lives for our togetherness and unity," a television announcer said, reading a statement

from speaker Tagesse Chafo. "It is a sad day for the whole nation. We have lost people who were patriotic. They are martyrs of peace."

The European Union in a statement urged "restraint from all sides of the Ethiopian political spectrum, both at national and regional levels." "The EU firmly reiterates the need for continued peaceful and democratic reforms in Ethiopia and its support to the efforts of the Prime Minister and his government in this context," said the statement. Minister of Defense Lemma Megresa described the army chief as "humble, a very good colleague, a brother", on national television on Sunday night.

"The attack left the country in a difficult position. It is important for the army to remain united in this difficult time," he said. The internet remained completely cut across the nation for the third consecutive day, after being severed for much of the prior week without explanation.

Security beefed up

In the capital Addis Ababa it was a busy day as people went about their business as usual but security at the airport was beefed up with the presence of special

forces. In the Amhara capital Bahir Dar there was a significant presence of federal police officers around government offices, residents told AFP. Observers have said that the killings underscore the tensions across Ethiopia sparked by Abiy's efforts since he came to power in April 2018 to loosen the iron grip of a state long run by emperors and strongmen.

His efforts to transition from one-party state to democracy have seen him embarking on economic reforms. He has allowed dissident groups back into the country, sought to crack down on rights abuses and arrested dozens of top military and intelligence officials. These moves have been lauded abroad, but have earned Abiy enemies at home. Exactly a year ago he survived a grenade attack at a rally which left two dead.

Long-simmering ethnic tensions along the borders of the autonomous regions-divided along ethnic lines-have burst into violence, leaving scores dead and more than a million displaced. Meanwhile the prospect of elections in 2020 has shaken up local politics as long-standing regional parties find themselves facing challengers to their power, while observers say there has been a surge of ethno-nationalism.—AFP

Searing heat across Europe sparks scramble for shade

PARIS: Fans flew off store shelves and public fountains offered relief from the heat as temperatures soared in Europe yesterday, with officials urging vigilance ahead of even hotter conditions forecast later in the week. Meteorologists blamed a blast of torrid air from the Sahara for the unusually early summer heatwave, which could send thermometers up to 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) across large swathes of the continent.

Authorities have issued warnings against dehydration and heatstroke, in particular for children and the elderly, and hospitals have been placed on high alert. "I'm worried about people who are downplaying this, who are continuing to exercise as usual or stay out in the sun," French Health Minister Agnes Buzyn said. "This affects all of us, nobody is a superman when it comes to dealing with the extreme heat we're going to see on Thursday and Friday," she told a press conference.

"It's unprecedented because it's hitting so early in June, we haven't seen this since 1947," said Emmanuel Demael, a forecaster at the Meteo-France weather agency. He expects records will be set for the month, "and in some places records for all months combined." In Paris, officials pledged to open "cool rooms" inside public buildings, set up temporary water fountains, and leave the city's parks unlocked at night.

City workers also plan to distribute water to the homeless and install fans in schools and nurseries. But fans were in short supply after weather reports prompted a rush on stores over the weekend, and France's electric grid operator RTE is expecting a surge in demand as air-conditioning is turned up to maximum. French retailer Boulanger said sales of "air treatment" equipment had jumped 400 percent from normal levels in recent days.

Records in view

Spain's AEMET weather agency warned of an "extreme risk" of forest fires in areas including Aragon, Navarre and Extremadura, with temperatures that could exceed 42 degrees in the Ebro valley in the northeast. In Germany, forecasters said the June record of 38.2 degrees for Frankfurt in 1947 was likely to come under threat, with little prospect of storms to cool things down. "It could get up to 39 degrees, some places could even crack the 40 degree mark," said Sabine Krueger of the German weather service, with the southwest due to be the hottest.

Even Scandinavian countries aren't being spared, with parts of southern Denmark and Sweden likely to reach 30 degrees starting Tuesday. The temperatures will be most intense from Thursday, forecasters say, and high humidity is likely to make conditions even more difficult, especially at night. France's Labor Minister Muriel Penicaud urged businesses to "adapt their hours and equipment" to help employees cope.

Meteorologists have said such heatwaves are likely to be more frequent, even if countries succeed in their commitments to limit global temperature increases as part of the 2015 Paris climate accord. The deal aims to contain increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.6 Fahrenheit), committing nations to reduce emissions to this end. The European Union pledged to cut carbon emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. —AFP

Scars on Middle East landscape bear witness to past peace failures

JERUSALEM: Talk of Middle East peace is in the air again, as politicians are set to gather in Bahrain to launch the latest in a long line of initiatives to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thousands of words and millions of dollars will likely be expended at the U.S.-led conference on June 25-26 aimed at boosting the Palestinian economy, as the first phase of President Donald Trump's long-delayed peace plan gets under way. Bearing witness to the difficulty of the task are the scars left by wars past across the landscape of Israel, the Palestinian Territories and the Golan Heights.

Ancient ruins and medieval castles bear witness to the fact that conflict between the peoples of the Levant is nothing new. Since the end of British Mandate rule and the creation of the modern state of Israel in 1948, invasions, wars, armistices, treaties, uprisings, barriers, checkpoints and civil wars have shifted the boundaries of who can travel - and live - where. Yet on the ground there remain fragments of who came and went before.

In the far north, on the western edge of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, a decades-old rusting Syrian tank can still be seen lying upside down in a whitewater stream. It lies in what used to be a demilitarized zone that separated the Syrian and Israeli armies from 1949 until the Six Day War of 1967, when Israel captured most of the mountainous plateau from Syria, occupying and later annexing it. Today, Israeli tourists

carve graffiti into the metal of the tank while dangling their feet in the foaming water below. "It's surrealistic," said Daniel Alonim, 54, as his friends played Scrabble atop the hulk. "Like it fell from space." It did fall, but not from space.

Trenches, fortifications

Amiram Efrati, from nearby Kibbutz Dan, fought in a June 1967 battle against half a dozen Syrian tanks that had advanced on Israeli positions from the then Syrian-held Golan. One of the tanks opened fire in a dry wheat field, he recalls. "The fire caught up to the tank tracks and metal chains and they started to retreat," said Efrati, now 82. "One of the tanks went too close to the edge, it was too heavy for that kind of terrain and it fell down. It's still there."

Fifty-two years later he has little confidence that peace efforts will succeed. "I don't believe it, not in the Middle East." Across the Golan are other reminders of the 1967 and 1973 wars between Israel and Syria: minefields, foxholes and abandoned armour. One former Syrian building bears Arabic graffiti reading "The Syrian army passed by here". It is not the only army to have passed through.

The British army arrived in 1917 and left in 1948, when British rule ended. As they departed, neighboring Arab countries invaded, and Jordanian forces captured the West Bank and East Jerusalem. An armistice a year later created the "Green Line" that separated Israeli-controlled West Jerusalem from the Jordanian-held east of the city for nearly two decades from 1949 until the 1967 war, when Israel captured East Jerusalem.

There is now almost no visible sign of the "Green Line" in the middle of the city. But on Jerusalem's Ammunition Hill, a memorial preserves the old Jordanian trenches and fortifications, on a site originally built by the British.—Reuters

International

Italian mafia boss Morabito flees Uruguayan prison

Inmates escape through hole in roof of building

MONTEVIDEO: Italian mafia boss Rocco Morabito has fled prison in the Uruguayan capital Montevideo, where he was awaiting extradition to Italy, the interior ministry announced yesterday. Morabito and three other inmates “escaped through a hole in the roof of the building” late Sunday and robbed the occupants of a nearby farmhouse, the ministry said in a statement. The statement said the 52-year-old Morabito—a top ‘Ndrangheta figure arrested in Uruguay in 2017 after decades on the run—was awaiting extradition for “international drug trafficking”.

Italy’s Interior Minister Matteo Salvini reacted angrily to the “disconcerting and serious” news. “I make two commitments, first to shed full light on how he escaped, asking for an immediate explanation from the Montevideo government. Then we will continue the hunt for Morabito, wherever he is.” Long-time fugitive Morabito—dubbed “the king of cocaine”—was one of Italy’s most-wanted men when he was arrested in a downtown Montevideo hotel. His lawyer told reporters at the time he was staying there while looking for a new apartment after splitting from his wife.

Registering for new accommodation would have helped expose Morabito, who had been on the run for 23 years. He had been living since 2004 in Punta del Este, a playground for South America’s rich about 90 minutes drive northeast of Montevideo. He eventually settled in a country estate with a Tuscan-style farmhouse some 40 kilometers from Punta del Este.

Officials said at the time that he had acquired

Uruguayan residence after entering the country with a false Brazilian passport in the name of Francisco Capeletto. Morabito, a capo with the Calabrian ‘Ndrangheta, Italy’s most feared organized crime gang, was originally arrested on charges of falsifying identity papers, but has been awaiting extradition on the more serious charges since September 2017. The three other men who escaped with Morabito were awaiting extradition to Brazil and Argentina, including one on charges of homicide.

King of Cocaine

Morabito arrived in trendy Milan from his hometown of Africo in Italy’s poor southern region of Calabria at the age of 23, and quickly carved out a reputation as the city’s “king of cocaine.” Nicknamed ‘U Tamunga’ in reference to a German military vehicle, the Dkw Munga, the young Morabito became a charismatic figure in Milan who frequented bars and parties, according to Italian press reports. He quickly came to the attention of Italian anti-Mafia investigators and they regularly tracked him delivering suitcases filled with millions of lira to Colombian drug traffickers in a Milan piazza.

Police finally moved in on his birthday as he made what would be his last delivery, in October 1994, but the capo managed to escape. The following year he was sentenced in absentia to 28 years’ imprisonment for mafia association and drug trafficking. Later the sentence was extended to 30 years. — AFP



MONTEVIDEO: Handout file photo shows Italian Rocco Morabito, wanted for more than 20 years for drug trafficking and mafia activities, during his arrest in Uruguay. — AFP

Australian IS orphans rescued from Syria

SYDNEY: Eight orphans of Australian Islamic State fighters have been spirited out of a camp in Syria, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said yesterday, in an apparent U-turn. The children and grandchildren of two notorious jihadis are now in the care of Australian officials, he said in a statement. The children are believed to be aged between two and 17 and were living in a camp in northern Syria-making consular access all but impossible.

Morrison previously indicated his government would only help citizens if they approached an embassy or con-

sulate but appeared to have had a change of heart. “The fact that parents put their children into harm’s way by taking them into a war zone was a despicable act,” Morrison said in a statement. “However, children should not be punished for the crimes of their parents.”

The group includes three surviving children and two grandchildren of Sydney-born Khaled Sharrouf—who came to prominence after posting a photo of one of his sons holding the head of a Syrian soldier. There are also three children of Yasin Rizvic who travelled from Australia to Syria with his wife. Both Islamic State fighters are presumed dead. Morrison did not name the children or elaborate on how they were removed, but confirmed they were “repatriated from the conflict zone into the care of Australian government officials”.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported that the children had been moved to a country neighboring Syria. Their case had gained widespread attention after the grandmother of the Sharrouf children — 17-year-old

heavily pregnant Zaynab, her younger sister Hoda, their eight-year-old brother Hamzeh, and Zaynab’s two young children Ayesha, three, and Fatima, two—had pleaded with Canberra to bring them home.

Grandmother Karen Nettleton even travelled to the camp earlier this year to meet them but was rebuffed by authorities, and Morrison said he did not want to put Australian lives at risk. The prime minister on Monday repeated his concerns, adding that “repatriating these children was not a decision the Australian government made lightly”.

“Australia’s national security and the safety of our people and personnel have always been our most important considerations in this matter,” he said. The fate of foreign fighters and their families has become a significant problem for governments as the conflict against IS draws to a close. Several European countries, including France and Belgium, have repatriated children from Syria in recent months. — AFP

Sanders unveils US student debt cancellation bill

WASHINGTON: Liberal US senator and 2020 presidential candidate Bernie Sanders yesterday rolled out a proposal to erase all \$1.6 trillion in student loan debt, cleaning the slate for 45 million Americans. “If we could bail out Wall Street, we sure as hell can #CancelStudentDebt,” Sanders posted on Twitter shortly before announcing his major legislation in an event at the US Capitol. The proposal, which is co-sponsored by Democrats Pramila Jayapal and Ilhan Omar in the House of Representatives, would be paid for through a tax on Wall Street, according to the Sanders campaign.

“This is truly a revolutionary proposal,” tweeted Sanders, whose calls for tuition-free college and student debt forgiveness gained traction during his 2016 presidential

run. “All Americans will get the college education or job training they need, while having all student debt forgiven.” The measure would have difficulty passing the Republican-led Senate. But it would escalate the political duel between Sanders and liberal rival Senator Elizabeth Warren, who has also proposed a massive plan for student loan debt elimination.

Under Warren’s plan, more than 95 percent of the nearly 45 million Americans with student loan debt would have that debt cancelled. Her arrangement is estimated to cost some \$640 billion. Sanders said Sunday that his plan would “probably go further than Senator Warren’s.” The hot-button issue has been a common thread on the 2020 campaign trail, with several Democrats noting the extraordinary financial burden under which many college students and graduates find themselves when they take on tens of thousands and even hundreds of thousands of dollars in loans. Sanders argues that the debt prevents young Americans from buying homes, improving their credit, and engaging more deeply in the US economy. — AFP



ISTANBUL: Turkish soldiers stand guard in Istanbul, outside the Silivri courthouse. — AFP

Turkish civil society leaders on trial over 2013 protests

SILIVRI, Turkey: Sixteen leading Turkish civil society leaders appeared in court yesterday, accused of seeking to overthrow the government during the “Gezi Park” protests of 2013, in a trial dubbed an absurd sham by critics. The group includes renowned businessman and philanthropist Osman Kavala, whose detention since November 2017 has made him a symbol of what critics say is a crackdown on civil society.

Kavala rejected the “irrational claims which lack evidence” in his opening statement, shortly after the trial began under high security in the prison and court complex of Silivri on the outskirts of Istanbul. He is accused of orchestrating and financing the protests which began over government plans to build over Gezi Park, one of the few green spaces left in Istanbul. The protests snowballed into a nationwide movement that marked the first serious challenge to Erdogan’s brand of Islamic conservatism and grandiose development projects.

The 657-page indictment seeks to paint the protests as a foreign-directed conspiracy with links to the Arab Spring, which, ironically, the Turkish government supported. “None of these actions were coincidental... they were supported from the outside as an operation to bring the Turkish Republic to its knees,” the indictment says. Amnesty International’s Andrew Gardner said the trial “speaks volumes about the deeply flawed judiciary that has allowed this political witch-hunt to take place.”

“It is absurdly attempting to portray routine civil society activities as crimes,” he said. One of the allegations is the claim that a map on Kavala’s phone

showing bee species actually depicted his plans to redraw Turkey’s borders.

Political sham

A respected figure in intellectual circles, Kavala is chairman of the Anatolian Culture Foundation, which seeks to bridge ethnic and regional divides through art, including with neighboring Armenia, with which Turkey has no diplomatic ties. “I was involved in projects contributing to peace and reconciliation. There is not a single piece of evidence or proof in the indictment that I prepared the ground for a military coup,” Kavala told the court.

Among the others on trial are experts in urban planning and architecture. Six are being tried in absentia after fleeing the country, including Turkish actor Memet Ali Alabora and dissident journalist Can Dundar. The case against Alabora focuses on his appearance in a play featuring a revolt against the ruler of a fictional country.

But Erdogan has particularly focused on Kavala, accusing the businessman of “financing the terrorists” during the protests and linking him to US billionaire George Soros, whose efforts to promote democracy around the world have made him a target for several authoritarian leaders. Last year, Erdogan said Kavala was the representative in Turkey of the “famous Hungarian Jew Soros” whom he accused of trying to “divide and tear up nations”.

Soros’s Open Society Foundation, which ceased activities in Turkey last year, called Monday’s trial a “political sham”. “The charges in this case follow a political script that seeks to silence all critical voices in Turkey,” said foundation president Patrick Gaspard in a statement. “That they are now on trial, facing possible life sentences, is a tragedy.” Some of the suspects were already tried and acquitted for their role in the Gezi Park protests in 2015. But there has been a renewed crackdown on dissidents since a coup attempt in 2016, blamed by the government on US-based Muslim preacher Fethullah Gulen, with thousands arrested and tens of thousands sacked from government and military jobs. — AFP

US Supreme Court strikes down stiff firearms penalties

WASHINGTON: Conservative Justice Neil Gorsuch sided with the US Supreme Court’s four liberal members yesterday in striking down as unconstitutionally vague a law imposing stiff criminal sentences for people convicted of certain crimes involving firearms. In the 5-4 ruling, with Gorsuch’s fellow conservatives in dissent, the court ruled against President Donald Trump’s administration in declaring that the federal law in question was written too vaguely and thus violated the U.S. Constitution’s guarantee of due process. Trump’s two appointees to the court, Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, disagreed in the decision.

The court invalidated the firearms convictions of two men prosecuted in Texas on a variety of charges for their roles in a series of 2014 gas station robberies in Texas. Although the robbers were armed, no shots were fired. Gorsuch, appointed by Trump in 2017, wrote that laws passed by Congress must give ordinary people notice of what kind of conduct can land them in prison. “In our constitutional order, a vague law is no law at all,” Gorsuch added.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh, appointed by Trump in 2018, wrote a dissenting opinion expressing surprise at the court overturning a law in use for decades. The law’s most recent version was passed by Congress in 1986. “The court’s decision today will make it harder to prosecute violent gun crimes in the future,” Kavanaugh wrote. Kavanaugh said there was evidence that steep prison sentences have been a contributing factor in a decline in US violent crime.

Gorsuch said Congress could pass a more specific law to address the issue, but added that “no matter how tempting, this court is not in the business of writing new statutes to right every social wrong it may perceive.” It represented the third ruling in the court’s current term in which Gorsuch has joined the court’s liberals in a 5-4 decision.

The court sided with defendants Maurice Davis and Andre Glover, who were convicted of multiple robbery counts, one count of conspiracy to commit robbery and two counts each of brandishing a shotgun during a crime of violence. Davis was originally sentenced to 41 years in prison. Glover faced a 50-year sentence. Both likely will now get shorter sentences. The decision does not affect their other convictions.

Yesterday’s ruling was similar to another 5-4 ruling a year ago in which Gorsuch also joined the liberals in the majority. The court ruled that a law requiring the deportation of immigrants convicted of certain crimes of violence also was unconstitutionally vague. Gorsuch is ideologically aligned with the late conservative Justice Antonin Scalia, whom he replaced on the court in 2017. Scalia wrote a 2015 ruling that Gorsuch invoked in Monday’s decision that found that a similar provision in a federal criminal sentencing law also was overly broad.

Trump’s Justice Department appealed the case to the Supreme Court after the New Orleans-based 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals last year threw out one of each of the two defendants’ firearm-related offenses. The case did not involve the right to bear arms under the US Constitution’s Second Amendment, which the Supreme Court’s conservative justices tend to interpret broadly. — Reuters

Jailed daughter of late Uzbek leader says gave state \$1 b

UZBEKISTAN: The jailed daughter of Uzbekistan’s former president, once tipped to succeed her father, says she has given \$1.2 billion to the state and asked to be released. Gulnara Karimova, the 46-year-old daughter of late strongman Islam Karimov, was sentenced to a decade behind bars in 2017 on fraud and money laundering charges. In a statement via Instagram on Sunday she stopped short of acknowledging guilt but made an apology to the people of the central Asian nation for “disappointment that I might have brought”.

The former diplomat and popstar said more than one billion dollars of her “personal assets” had been given to the state “in the interest of the republic’s budget”. The Russian-language post also said Karimova and her legal team had relinquished claims to \$686 million kept in foreign banks. “It’s authentic,” Karimova’s Swiss lawyer Gregoire Mangeat told AFP of the Instagram story on Monday, while refusing to comment on the contents.

In 2018 a court commuted Karimova’s sentence to a five-year term under house arrest. But in March this year Uzbek prosecutors said Karimova had been returned to jail for repeatedly violating conditions of her house arrest. Karimova’s problems began in 2014 when her father was still alive and she was reportedly placed under house arrest after hurling insults at her mother and sister on Twitter.

In 2017, prosecutors said she was a member of an “organized criminal group” that controlled assets worth more than \$1.3 billion in 12 countries. Karimova has also been the subject of a multi-year corruption probe targeting Western telecoms firms. US and European investigators say the firms paid her billions of dollars to secure access to the Uzbek market.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev took power after the death of Uzbekistan’s long-reigning hardliner Karimov in 2016. He has won plaudits for trimming many of his predecessor’s authoritarian excesses but has kept a repressive political system intact. — AFP



CALIFORNIA: Graduating students pose for a class picture at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), in Los Angeles California. — AFP

Munitions depot blasts prompt evacuation in Kazakh

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan: A series of explosions at a southern Kazakh munitions depot yesterday led authorities to evacuate a nearby town of 40,000 people and saw dozens reportedly hospitalized. The blasts near the town of Arys were caused by “a fire, which led to the explosion of some of the ammunition (at the depot),” Kazakhstan’s defense ministry said in a statement. Social media users shared videos of people fleeing the area with huge plumes of smoke rising towards the sky in the backdrop.

The defense ministry said there had been no deaths or injuries recorded. But

Radio Free Europe’s Kazakh service reported over 50 hospitalized, citing sources at two hospitals in the south of the country.

Three people in a hospital in Shymkent, a city of one million, were in a serious condition, RFE reported. The head of the administrative region where Arys is located said that the town would be evacuated “completely” yesterday. “Given the scale of what is happening, we see that we need to evacuate the city as a whole,” Umirzak Shukeyev, Turkestan regional head, said in comments published by the private Tengrinews website. — AFP

International

Democrat proposes war tax on affluent US families without military members

‘War tax’ to support Veterans Health Care Trust Fund

WASHINGTON: Democratic presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke yesterday proposed taxing affluent American families who do not have members in the US military as a way to fund healthcare for veterans. The former congressman from Texas unveiled a plan for military veterans that includes a "war tax," in which taxpayers who earn over \$200,000 a year would pay \$1,000 in a new tax for each war embarked on by the United States.

O'Rourke, who did not serve in the military but sat on the House of Representatives Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs committees, said the tax would be levied on households without current members of the US military or military veterans. He did not specify what types of war, or the scale and origins of the wars, on which the tax would be levied.

The money raised from the war tax would be deposited into a newly created Veterans Health Care Trust Fund, which would be created at the start of each new war and be used to support veterans' healthcare, disability and other medical needs when they return from conflict, O'Rourke said.

The proposal was part of a broader plan by

O'Rourke, who has struggled to gain traction in opinion polls among Democratic contenders, to improve services for military veterans. He also urged an end to "wars in Iraq and Afghanistan," and reinvestment of the savings in veterans programs. The military has about 1.36 million active-duty members out of a total US population of some 327 million people. The country's armed forces have been all-volunteer since the military draft ended in 1973 as the United States wound down its involvement in the Vietnam War.

In language borrowed from former Democratic President John F Kennedy, O'Rourke said Americans must be "willing to pay any price, and bear any burden" to provide care, support and resources to all veterans. He called for ending the "blank check for endless war" waged by the United States and to invest spending on the care of those who had served in armed conflicts. O'Rourke, 46, launched his presidential bid in March after rising to national prominence last year when he narrowly lost his bid to defeat Republican US Senator Ted Cruz in Texas. His national support among likely Democratic primary voters is currently around 4 percent. — Reuters



COLUMBIA: Democratic presidential candidate former Rep Beto O'Rourke delegates from the floor at the South Carolina Democratic Party State Convention in Columbia, South Carolina. — AFP

parliament, said Ivanishvili. It was unclear whether the announcement would be enough to mollify protesters, who were also demanding a snap vote and planning another demonstration for Monday night. The protests have sparked a political crisis and raised tensions with Moscow to levels not seen in years. They erupted after a Russian lawmaker addressed parliament from the speaker's seat last week, a hugely provocative move for two countries whose ties remain strained after a brief war in 2008.

The rallies evolved into a broader movement against Ivanishvili, a billionaire businessman widely believed to be calling the shots in Georgia. Demonstrators gathered in front of the imposing building of Georgia's parliament, flooding the capital's main Rustavi Avenue and blocking traffic. Protest placards took aim at Ivanishvili and Russian President Vladimir Putin who, in response to the protests, banned Russian airlines from flying to Georgia and Georgian air carriers travelling to Russia.

The first day of the protests saw a violent police crack-

down that left 160 demonstrators and 80 police officers injured. More than 300 people were arrested. Media reports said that several protesters-including a 19-year-old girl-lost their sight after being hit by rubber bullets. The Kremlin has branded the protests a "Russophobic provocation" and suspended air travel from July 8, a move criticized by many Russians who often travel to Georgia for holidays.

Relations between Georgia and Soviet-era master Russia have long been fractured over Tbilisi's efforts to join the European Union and NATO. The confrontation culminated in a war over Georgia's breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in August 2008. After the war, which claimed the lives of hundreds of soldiers and civilians from both sides, Moscow recognized South Ossetia and another separatist enclave, Abkhazia, as independent states where it then stationed permanent military bases. Tbilisi and its Western allies denounced the move as an "illegal military occupation". The two regions constitute 20 percent of Georgia's territory. — AFP

pointed to UNICEF estimates that there are some 29,000 children of foreign fighters in Syria — 20,000 of them from Iraq-and most of them under 12. France, which has one of the largest contingents of jihadists who were captured or turned themselves in, took in 12 children of French jihadists earlier this month. Paris has said it is studying the files of all its citizens held in northeastern Syria on a case-by-case basis.

Irresponsible cruelty

Many of the children were born in Syria, and some governments have refused to grant them their parent's nationality. "Despite the complexity of these challenges, rendering people stateless is never an acceptable option," Bachelet said. "Thousands of young children have been born to foreign families during the years of conflict, and states should provide the same access to nationality for children born to their nationals in conflict zones as is otherwise applicable," she said. "To inflict statelessness on children who have already suffered so much is an act of irresponsible cruelty," she insisted. Bachelet also stressed that countries remained responsible for their citizens facing prosecution for being foreign fighters in Syria, as well as in Iraq, where more than 150 have been sentenced to death under anti-terrorism laws. "States have important responsibilities for their own nationals," including ensuring they receive fair trials, she said.

Sudan request

Separately, Bachelet voiced deep concern over Sudan, which has been wracked by tensions between protesters and the generals who seized power after the army ousted long-time president Omar al-Bashir in April. Bachelet cited reports that more than 100 people were killed and many more injured in a breakup of a peaceful June 3 rally. "We have received allegations of rape and sexual abuse of both women and men during the crackdown, as well as information alleging that hundreds of protesters may be missing," she said. "I regret that the government has not responded to our request for access to investigate allegations of serious human rights violations by the joint security forces during the crackdown," she added. Bachelet also called for Sudan to end a nationwide internet blockade. — AFP



BIRMINGHAM: Conservative MP Boris Johnson gestures as he answers questions from journalist Iain Dale as he takes part in a Conservative Party leadership hustings event in Birmingham, central England . — AFP

UK's Hunt urges Johnson not to bea 'coward'

LONDON: Jeremy Hunt, the underdog in a bitter battle with Boris Johnson to become Britain's next prime minister, yesterday called on his rival not to be "a coward" trying to "avoid scrutiny"-over both a domestic row and his policy agenda. Foreign minister Hunt urged Johnson, who has become embroiled in a scandal over a dispute with his girlfriend that led to a police visit last week, to "man up" and show he can cope with questioning.

Johnson, the overwhelming favorite to replace Theresa May as Conservative Party leader, and therefore prime minister, has refused to discuss the early Friday incident. He has also kept an unusually low profile during the weeks-old race, skipping a candidates' TV debate and doing barely any media interviews. "I am not interested in debating Boris's private life," Hunt said in an article in The Times, arguing he instead wants to quiz Johnson on his Brexit plans and other ideas.

"A new prime minister needs the legitimacy of having made his arguments publicly and having them subjected to scrutiny. "Only then can you walk through the front door of No 10 with your head held high instead of slinking through the back door, which is what Boris appears to want." Urging Johnson to attend a TV debate proposed for Tuesday evening, Hunt added: "Don't be a coward Boris, man up and show the nation you can cope with the intense scrutiny the most difficult job in the country will involve."

Sky News said yesterday that Johnson had so far declined its invitation to take part in the head-to-head debate, and that without him it would not go ahead. "But we will reissue our invitation for Mr Hunt and Mr Johnson to debate live on Sky News next Monday, 1 July," the broadcaster added in a statement. Johnson, 55, a former London mayor and foreign secretary, was involved in a loud altercation early Friday at the home of his 31-year-old girlfriend Carrie Symonds.

Neighbors called police after hearing screams, shouts and bangs at the south London property, shortly after Johnson had secured his place in the final run-off to become prime minister. The couple, who were spoken to by officers but face no further action, have reportedly fled the home following the incident and a handful of anti-Johnson protesters gathering there Sunday. When asked about it at a Conservative grassroots event Saturday, Johnson said: "I don't think people want to hear about that kind of thing." — AFP

Georgia party chief announces reforms after protests

TBILISI: The head of Georgia's ruling party announced sweeping electoral reforms yesterday, meeting some of the demands expressed at the anti-government protests that have gripped the capital Tbilisi for days. Speaking at a news conference after four days of demonstrations, Bidzina Ivanishvili announced a "large-scale political reform". Parliamentary elections next year will now be held under a proportional system, a key demand of protesters who said the existing system favored Ivanishvili's ruling Georgian Dream party.

There will also be no threshold for parties to enter

UN rights chief urges states to repatriate families of IS fighters

GENEVA: The UN rights chief called yesterday for countries to repatriate family members of suspected foreign fighters in Syria, including thousands of foreign children of Islamic State group jihadists. The call from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, came as world leaders face divisive decisions over the families of foreign jihadists captured or killed in Syria and Iraq.

Australia yesterday confirmed that eight orphans of Australian IS fighters had been spirited out of a camp in Syria and were now under the government's care. The move marked a U-turn for Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who had previously indicated his government would only help citizens if they approached an embassy or consulate. Morrison said Australia's decision to assume care of the eight children-believed to be aged between two and 17 — was not "made lightly". But ultimately he concluded "children should not be punished for the crimes of their parents".

Following the collapse of IS's self-proclaimed caliphate, foreigners from nearly 50 countries have been detained in Syria and Iraq, and more than 11,000 of their family members are being held in difficult conditions in Syria's al-Hol camp. In a speech to the opening session of the UN Human Rights Council, Bachelet sought to provide clarity to governments uncertain how to handle the families-and especially children-of jihadist fighters from their country.

"Foreign family members should be repatriated, unless they are to be prosecuted for crimes in accordance with international standards," she said. "Children, in particular, have suffered grievous violations of their rights, including those who may have been indoctrinated or recruited by ISIL to perpetrate violent acts," she said, using another acronym for IS. "The primary consideration must be their rehabilitation, protection and best interests." The UN rights chief



MONTREAL: In this file photo an Air Canada plane sits on the tarmac at Trudeau airport near Montreal, Canada. — AFP

way. "He is in shock, asking how the heck they left me on the plane," she said. "I'm wondering the same." Air Canada apologized for the incident, Adams said, but she hasn't had

much sleep since and is struggling with night terrors. Air Canada told broadcaster CTV News that it was reviewing the episode but declined to offer further details.—AFP

Air Canada passenger falls asleep on plane, wakes up alone

MONTREAL: A woman boarded an Air Canada flight earlier this month, fell asleep after takeoff and woke up alone in a dark, parked plane, apparently forgotten about by ground staff. Tiffani Adams's story was posted by a friend on Air Canada's Facebook page, drawing incredulous reactions from readers and a request for details from the airline. According to the post, Adams was flying from Quebec to Toronto Pearson International Airport when she fell asleep, aided by the fact that she'd ended up with a whole row of seats to herself.

She woke up in "pitch black," with the plane having landed and apparently been towed away from the airport, after passengers and crew had disembarked. "I think I'm having a bad dream (because) like seriously how is this happening," she wrote. She briefly called a friend but was cut short when her phone's battery died. "I'm trying to focus on my breathing and control my panic attack while I attempt to charge my phone by plugging into every USB port I could find," she wrote, but that proved fruitless because the electricity on the plane was turned off.

After finally finding a torch in the cockpit, she managed to open one of the doors but faced a drop of up to 50 feet to get out of the plane. She then used the torch to draw the attention of a luggage cart driver, who arrived to find Adams with her legs hanging out of the plane's open door-

International

‘Brain fever’ death toll passes 150 in India amid investigation

Health minister under investigation: crisis under control

PATNA, India: The death toll from a brain disease that has stricken children in India's Bihar state rose above 150 yesterday as a court ordered an investigation into the crisis. The country's Supreme Court also demanded the government explain what measures it has taken to combat the spread of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) — a deadly disease that has been widely linked to the eating of unripened lychee fruit.

Authorities said 152 children have died in districts across the eastern state, with 131 in two hospitals in Muzaffarpur, the epicenter of the outbreak. Health officials said 111 children have died at the state-run Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital, and another 20 at the Kejriwal hospital, which is run by a private trust. Muzaffarpur's chief magistrate ordered an investigation into possible negligence by federal health minister Harsh Vardhan, as well as Bihar's health minister.

Social activist Tamanna Hashmi—who filed a complaint at the court—confirmed that the investigation had been ordered. In New Delhi, the Supreme Court also ordered Bihar's government to report on “medical facilities, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene conditions” in the state, the Press Trust of India news agency reported. Lawyers for the Bihar government told the court that the crisis was now under control.

More than 1,350 children have died from the syndrome in the past decade, including 355 in 2014. AES is an inflammation of the brain, affecting mostly undernourished children under 10. The precise causes of the syndrome are not known, but experts say a toxin in unripe lychee fruit—which is grown abundantly in Muzaffarpur—causes blood sugar levels to plummet in malnourished children, affecting the brain. Symptoms include high fever, vomiting and seizures. Experts say the deaths could be avoided if people had awareness and access to better health care and nourishment. Bihar is one of India's poorest states. The National Family Health Survey states almost half of the children under five in the Muzaffarpur are stunted, almost 60 percent are anemic, and more than 40 percent underweight. — AFP



MUZAFFARPUR: In this file photo the father, center, of four-year-old Khushbu Kumari carries his son, who is suffering from Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES), at Kejriwal hospital along with relatives before going to another hospital in Muzaffarpur in the Indian state of Bihar. — AFP

Indonesia to vet public servants to identify Islamists

JAKARTA: Indonesia plans to tighten vetting of senior public servants amid fears that hardline Islamist ideology has permeated high levels of government, according to documents reviewed by Reuters and a senior official involved in the plan.

Indonesia is officially secular, but there has been a rise in politicians demanding a larger role for Islam in the world's biggest Muslim-majority country, with some groups calling for an Islamic state.

The rise in conservatism was a major test for President Joko Widodo in the April election, with some Islamist groups accusing him of being anti-Islam and throwing their support behind political rivals, including challenger Prabowo Subianto. Widodo was re-elected for a second term but voting patterns revealed deepening divisions between areas known for a moderate following of Islam and conservative Muslim regions that backed Prabowo.

The senior government official, who is part of a team formulating the new vetting policy, said Widodo intends it to be a part of his legacy of ensuring Indonesia remains a model for moderate Islam. The official said the president strongly believed that radical Islam threatened the state apparatus as well as the future of democracy. The vetting

plan was a big priority for him, said the official, who declined to be identified.

“He wants that before the next election in 2024, hardline and radical elements be weeded out to aim for a healthier democracy,” said the official. Widodo's office did not respond to requests for comment.

According to the documents reviewed by Reuters, the government wants to introduce stricter background checks and a new psychological test to gauge candidates' political leanings — especially for those seeking promotions to the top two rungs of the bureaucracy.

The official said the plan will be rolled out by the end of the year at 10 of the country's biggest ministries by budget and several state-owned enterprises. Ministries to be targeted as priorities include Finance, Defence, Health, Education, Religious Affairs, and Public Works. Priority enterprises include state energy company Pertamina, flag carrier Garuda Indonesia, the biggest state bank BRI, state miners Antam and Timah, and two state media companies.

Seeds planted years ago

Civil servants would not be sacked but the new policy could be used to keep those with hardline leanings from rising through the ranks, the official said. One of the factors driving the new policy is a 2017 survey done by independent Jakarta-based pollster Alvira Research Center that found one in five civil servants and 10 percent of state enterprise workers did not agree with the secular state ideology Pancasila, and instead favored an Islamic theocratic state.

“What we're seeing is not sudden but the result of seeds that were planted years ago through small move-

ments that at the time were not considered a threat to the state. For over 10 years, these ideas have been tolerated, accepted, and perhaps even used by elements of the state,” one government document said. The government official who spoke to Reuters is part of a team of 12 officials and experts that will work with the National Agency to Promote Pancasila and with civil society organizations to formulate new metrics to strengthen existing recruitment tests.

Pancasila includes upholding national unity, social justice and democracy alongside belief in God, and enshrines religious diversity in an officially secular system of government. The official said the government is expecting a backlash both from within the state bureaucracy and from rights activists who could liken the moves to the authoritarian era of former President Suharto, when loyalty to the state ideology was mandatory and equated with loyalty to the regime. “We are aware the Pancasila was used in the past as a tool to consolidate power, but we believe it is an umbrella that protects all Indonesians and is a tool to unify against the virus of radicalism,” Benny Susetyo, an official at the national Pancasila agency, said in an interview. A representative for the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), an Islamist group that calls for sharia law to be imposed in Indonesia, said the planned vetting procedures would “amount to discrimination against Islam”.

“This government is affected by the disease of secularism and is trying to separate politics and religion, which is very dangerous,” said Novel Bamukmin of the FPI's Jakarta chapter. “They should be focusing on targeting the communists and Shia (minority Muslims) in the bureaucracy instead,” he added. — Reuters

Kashmir separatists ready for talks

SRINAGAR: The leader of disputed Kashmir's largest separatist group said it was ready for talks with India's government yesterday, after the state governor said he was optimistic about dialogue. The Muslim-majority Kashmir valley is at the heart of more than seven decades of hostility between nuclear arch-rivals India and Pakistan. Both claim it in full but rule it in part. Rhetoric from both sides, as well as Kashmiri separatists, some of whom want to join Pakistan, has been highly charged since a February suicide car bomb attack by a Pakistan-based militant group killed more than 40 Indian police in the part of the region it controls.

Any talks to resolve the conflict would be hugely difficult. But on Saturday, Satya Pal Malik, the governor of Jammu and Kashmir state where Indian-controlled Kashmir lies, told a news conference he had seen a softening in approach from separatist leaders, including the influential Hurriyat Conference. “I feel happy that the temperature in the valley has gone down as compared to what it was during my arrival in Kashmir,” he told a news conference.

Malik has governed the state since August 2018, shortly after India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) withdrew from a coalition with a local party, imposing direct rule from New Delhi. “Today Hurriyat, who once closed their doors... are ready for the talks with the Government of India,” Malik added. In response, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, the chairman of Hurriyat, a political movement that wants independence from India, told Reuters on Monday he would welcome talks.

“Hurriyat Conference has always been in favor of talks as the means of resolution,” he said. “Kashmiris, being the most affected party for the past 72 years, naturally want its resolution.” Kashmir, whose fate was left unresolved during partition in 1947, is a key focus for the BJP government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, that won a second term in power with an increased majority in May.

It launched a huge crackdown on separatists and militants operating in the region after the February attack, with gun battles between security forces and armed militants becoming an almost daily occurrence. The BJP also wants to abolish special privileges for Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim majority state, to the fury of many Kashmiris. — Reuters

News in brief

Trump to visit Seoul

SEOUL: US President Donald Trump will visit South Korea at the weekend after the G20 summit to discuss deadlocked nuclear talks with the North with President Moon Jae-in, Seoul's presidential office said yesterday. Trump will fly to the South Korean capital on Saturday after attending the G20 summit in Japan, officials said, prompting speculation he could try to visit the Demilitarized Zone that divides the peninsula. The visit comes after Trump exchanged letters with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who said the US president's letter to him had “excellent content”, according to the North's state-run media Sunday. Trump received a missive from Kim earlier this month and called it a “beautiful letter”. — AFP

Quake shakes Indonesia

JAKARTA: A 7.3-magnitude earthquake struck remote eastern Indonesia yesterday, forcing people to flee office buildings as far away as the northern Australian city of Darwin, officials and reports said. The deep and powerful earthquake sent shockwaves around the region, with people on the tourist island of Bali as well as in East Timor reporting feeling the tremor. Indonesia's disaster agency, which urged people to “stay calm”, said the tremor was felt weakly in faraway Bali. It hit at a depth of 208 kilometers south of Ambon island in the Banda Sea at 11:53 local time, according to the US Geological Survey (USGS). There were no reports of casualties or any major damage. — AFP

Rescuers to airlift bodies

NEW DELHI: Bad weather hampered efforts yesterday to bring down the bodies of seven climbers from the upper reaches of the Himalayas, an Indian military spokesman said. The search for the final member of the group of four Britons, two Americans, one Australian and their Indian guide was set to continue in harsh conditions, said Indo-Tibetan Border Police spokesman Vivek Kumar Pandey. The seven bodies were retrieved Sunday on Nanda Devi in India's northern state of Uttarakhand and taken to a “safe place” some 800 feet down, after a search operation that lasted nearly a month. — AFP

Top Sri Lanka defense official faces charges over Easter attacks

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's most senior defense official yesterday became the latest government figure to face possible criminal charges over “major lapses” linked to the Easter Sunday bombings that killed 258 people. Hemasiri Fernando, who was defense secretary before the April 21 bombing of three churches and three hotels, should be investigated for his failure to prevent or minimize the attacks, Attorney General Dappula de Livera said.

The attorney general said in a letter to Sri Lanka's acting police chief that a presidential commission of inquiry had found “major lapses” by Fernando, who has since resigned from his top job. While Fernando is the most senior defense official to face action, President Maithripala Sirisena also suspended police chief Pujith Jayasundara after he refused to step down over the handling of the attacks.

Jayasundara and Fernando have testified before a parliamentary inquiry and accused Sirisena of failing to follow established protocols in assessing threats to national security. Last week, the attorney general ordered investigations against nine police officers for failing to act on warnings ahead of the bombings, carried out by Islamic State-backed local jihadists. All nine were senior officers in the districts where the attacks were carried out and have now been transferred from their posts pending disciplinary action and criminal investigations.

Authorities have admitted that warnings sent by India of an impending attack by a local group, the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ), were ignored. Some 45 foreign nationals were among the dead and 500 people were injured in the attacks. The tourist hotspot has been under a state of emergency since. Sri Lanka's State Intelligence Service (SIS) has also been criticized for failing to act on the Indian warnings, but no-one from the state spy service has been put under investigation.

Sirisena, who is also defense minister and law and order minister, has also faced allegations that he could have prevented the attacks. The president has objected to a parliamentary investigation into the attacks and ordered police not to cooperate. The hearings have gone ahead, however, and police have testified before legislators. Indian intelligence shared information about the targets—gleaned from a jihadist in Indian custody—as early as April 4, more than two-and-a-half weeks before the attacks. — AFP



KULAURA: Bangladeshi onlookers gather around a derailed train after a bridge collapse in Kulaura. — AFP

Bridge collapse sends Bangladesh train plunging

DHAKA: A train plunged into a canal when the bridge it was travelling across gave way, killing four people and injuring 100 more in Bangladesh yesterday. Officials said part of the bridge collapsed as the express train went over, sending five cars crashing to the ground, with one of them

landing in the water. Scores of people were trapped in the accident at Kalaura, 300 kilometers from Dhaka.

Local people joined fire and police teams in pulling the dead and injured out of the wreckage, Rashidul Hasan, a police superintendent, told AFP. Regional government administrator Tofael Islam said part of the bridge gave way as the train was crossing. Twenty-one of the injured were taken to a hospital in Sylhet, the nearest city, in serious condition.

Train services from Dhaka to the northeast were stopped because of the accident. Train accidents are common in Bangladesh because of poor signaling and rundown tracks. — AFP

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

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

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

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

With plastic straw ban, Washington turns its back on its own invention

“How do you drink a milkshake without a straw?” It is a question the city of Washington will soon face after deciding, in the interest of the environment, to ban plastic drinking straws - an almost sacrilegious act in the birthplace of this simple object, a seemingly indispensable part of daily American life. In the last century, millions of straws were produced in the Stone Straw Building, a stolid-looking structure of yellowing brick in a residential neighborhood. The building now houses the capital's transit police headquarters.

The only visible sign of its historic character comes from a discreet commemorative plaque affixed to a wall above a garbage bin that honors the memory of Marvin C Stone, “Inventor of the Paper Straw”. According to legend, Stone, who settled in Washington after being wounded while fighting for the Union side in the Civil War, had the inspiration one evening while sipping on his favorite cocktail, a mint julep. At that time, people sometimes used actual straws - dried lengths of ryegrass - for drinking, but Stone was put off by the inescapable rye-flavored residue they imparted.

So he adapted a machine already in use for making paper cigarette holders, instead wrapping spirals of paper around a pencil-like cylinder, attaching the ends with wax and then removing the cylinder. He filed for a patent in 1888 - the objective, he said in his application, was to create a “cheap, durable and unobjectionable substitute for natural straws commonly used for the administration of medicines, beverages, &c.” - and the rest is history.

But almost a century and a half later, his ungrateful adoptive home became the second large US city, after Seattle, to ban the plastic descendants of Stone's popular invention. The ban technically took effect Jan 1 but it came with a grace period, meant to ease the transition for restaurants and businesses, that ends July 1.

Everything ‘to go’

“A lot of businesses are still using plastic straws and don't have a strategy,” said Kirk Francis, who manages the Tastemakers food hall in a former mayonnaise factory adjoining the Stone Straw Building. The young, environmentally minded entrepreneur faced the same existential question years ago when he launched “Captain Cookie and the Milk Man”, a food truck selling baked treats and dairy products: “How do you drink a milkshake without a straw?”

He considered straws of metal, of biodegradable paper or of vegetable-based material - many of them more expensive or flimsier than those of plastic - and says he has yet to find a “good solution”. The youthful “Captain” Kirk, who wears a Cookie Monster cap over his curly brown hair, knows that most of his customers don't really care that much: “Customers want a straw that works well.”

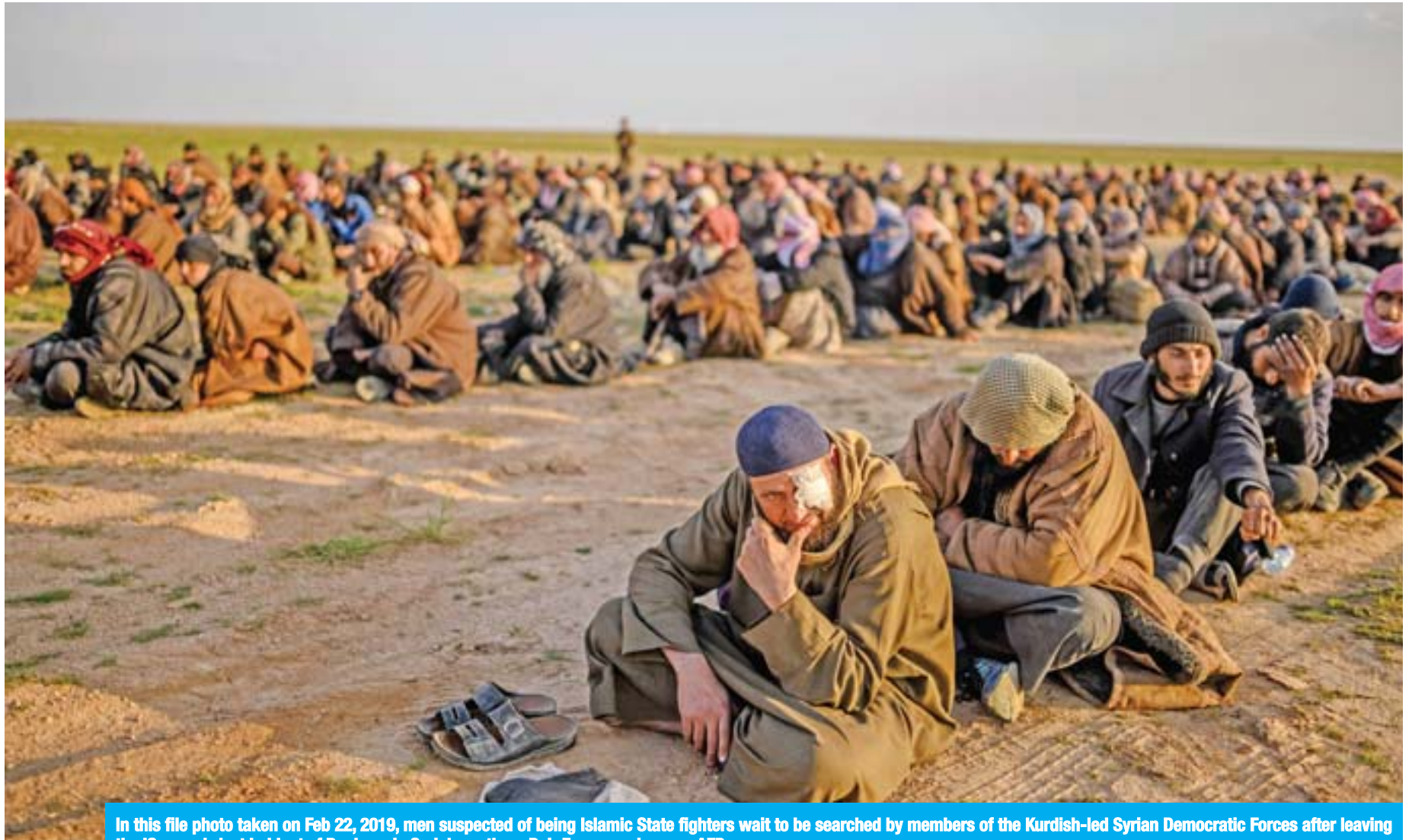
So getting people to give up their straws will not be easy. They have been an inextricable part of American culture since they were first promoted as a way to curb the spread of disease at a time when people would share a common cup when drinking from public fountains. Another American, Joseph Friedman, elaborated on Stone's invention in the 1930s after watching his daughter struggle with a milkshake. His modification, the flexible straw, has grown in popularity alongside other mainstays of Americans' consumer culture: soda fountains, carry-out food, iced drinks with lots of ice.

The ban on plastic straws is really just a symbolic beginning, said Sarah Perrin, a Tastemakers customer, who was with her young daughter. Five-year-old Lily was using a plastic straw to sip fruit juice from a plastic cup topped with a plastic lid. “Without a straw, she would spill it all over,” her mother said. “The straw ban comes from a good intention, but what about disabled people and kids?” Perrin asked. “It can help us feeling better about ourselves, but does it really make a difference for the environment if we don't target the corporations first?” — AFP



Plastic straws wrapped in paper and plastic forks are seen at a food hall in Washington DC on June 20, 2019. — AFP

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



In this file photo taken on Feb 22, 2019, men suspected of being Islamic State fighters wait to be searched by members of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces after leaving the IS group's last holdout of Baghouz in Syria's northern Deir Ezzor province. — AFP

Landless IS still a threat in Syria

The Islamic State group may have lost its “caliphate”, but three months later, experts have warned the militants are still attacking fighters and fields in Syria to show they remain relevant. The Syrian Democratic Forces announced they had expelled the extremists from their last patch of land in eastern Syria on March 23, after a months-long campaign backed by air strikes of a US-led coalition. The Kurdish-Arab alliance taking control of the riverside village of Baghouz spelt the end of the militant proto-state declared in 2014 in large parts of Syria and neighboring Iraq.

But even as the Kurdish-led force fights to quash sleeper cells in northeast Syria, IS continues to claim regular attacks there and in other parts of the war-torn country. “ISIS has never stopped being a threat in northern and eastern Syria,” says Syria expert Nicholas Heras, using an alternative acronym for IS. Over the past three months, they have claimed regular attacks in SDF-held areas, including targeted killings and setting fire to vital wheat crops.

The deadliest include a car bombing on June 1 that took the lives of 10 civilians and seven SDF fighters in the northern city of Raqqa, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says. On April 9, another suicide blast killed 13 people, mostly civilians, also in the group's former de-facto Syrian capital. “At its core, the ISIS strategy in the SDF-controlled areas, the areas that ISIS once ruled, is to frustrate any designs to replace” it, Heras said.

Palestinians shun US prosperity pledges despite financial woes

Boxes of unsold biscuits are piled up in a West Bank warehouse, a sign of tough economic times faced by Palestinians who are determined not to be wooed by Washington's economic pledges. “Money does not replace the dignity of our people and the justness of our cause,” said Mazen Sinokrot, whose company produces foodstuffs and a range of other goods. A former Palestinian finance minister, Sinokrot said he had been invited to a US-sponsored economic conference in Bahrain this week but declined.

The United States aims to showcase its vision of the potential economic benefits to the Palestinians if - after decades of hostilities and failed peace initiatives - they were to agree a deal with Israel. But when the White House unveiled the financial details of the plan on Saturday, it was immediately rejected by the Palestinian government. “The economic situation should not be discussed before the political one. And as long as there is no political (solution), we do not deal with any economic issues,” said Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas, giving his reason for not attending the Manama meeting.

Nearly all Palestinian business leaders are set to also boycott the conference, despite the hard financial conditions at home. At the Sinokrot company's factory near Ramallah, in the occupied West Bank, two of the three biscuit production lines have been switched off for the past month. “(People) who were able to buy two packets a day are now buying one or none at all,” said production head Majd Sinokrot.

The economy in the Palestinian territories is flagging, with only minor growth in the West Bank last year and gross domestic product in the Gaza Strip declining by eight percent. The World Bank recently described an “unsustainable economic situation”, with unemployment topping 30 percent across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In the strip, which has been under a crippling Israeli blockade for more than a decade, the jobless rate last year stood at 52 percent.

Palestinians reject deal

The Manama conference is intended to “unlock the incredible potential of the Palestinian and regional economy”, according to Washington's Middle East envoy Jason Greenblatt. But, writing for CNN, he admitted that “our economic plan cannot be successful without a political agreement.” The political elements of the peace plan are expected to be delayed until after an Israeli elec-

‘Hearts and minds’

“ISIS is locked in a tug-of-war with the United States and the SDF to win the hearts and minds of the local Arab population,” the analyst at the Center for a New American Security said. The SDF is led by Kurdish fighters, but areas recently taken from IS in eastern Syria are largely Arab-majority. Both the Damascus regime and the SDF are competing for the favor of these tribes in the oil-rich Deir Ezzor province. Tactics such as crop burning and assassinations are making it difficult for the SDF to build new order, and help persuade residents that no viable alternative to IS exists, Heras said.

Elsewhere in the country, the militants also continue to be a headache. In Syria's vast desert, they continue to hit regime forces with deadly attacks and ambushes, years into a Russia-backed campaign to eliminate them. The Britain-based Observatory says more than 150 loyalist fighters have been killed since March 24, the latest four on Sunday. Even in the northwestern anti-government stronghold of Idlib, the militants are present. Online, IS loyalists have revved up their propaganda machine to big up alleged feats in other parts of the world. “What matters the most now is to convince people that they're here to stay,” Syrian analyst Hassan Hassan said. They want to persuade “potential recruits that they have a long term project that goes beyond holding territory”. Suicide bombings in Sri Lanka that killed 258 people on April 21, and elusive IS supremo Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi's first appearance in five years in video footage posted on April 29, likely did just this.

‘Include locals’

The US-led coalition has said it is backing the SDF in northeast Syria to quash thousands of remaining loyalists. “The so-called physical caliphate is defeated, but Daesh as an organization is not,” coalition spokesman James Rawlinson said, using an Arabic acronym for IS. Last week, the SDF detained several IS loyalists in two operations in Deir Ezzor and the northeastern province of Hasakah, it has said. In areas now under SDF control, US-backed forces are also helping to clear landmines, Rawlinson said.

And they are working to set up military councils “to assume all security functions for their communities, provide stability, and work toward normalcy”, he told AFP. Last week, the SDF announced the formation of such a council in Raqqa. “These local and regional initiatives are important to ensuring the enduring defeat of Daesh,” Rawlinson said. Hassan warned the coalition and its Kurdish-led allies should act fast while IS is still “on the run and defeated”.

“The fear is that, as time goes by, IS will be able to reorganize itself and then the coalition will lose that window of opportunity where they can make a big difference,” he said. Including members of local Arab communities with real influence in decision-making was key, Hassan said. “Locals have to be included in the process, in security and in politics, and running their own areas without feeling they are governed by out-of-towners,” he said. — AFP

Raw, fried or on a bun: Many ways Japan eats whale

Whale cutlets, sliced raw whale, deep-fried whale nuggets, whale bacon and whale jerky feature on the menu at the restaurant Yoko Ichihara runs - and that's just a small sample of the ways Japan eats whale. Though Japan's government maintains that eating whale is a cherished part of its food culture, nationwide consumption didn't really take off until after World War Two and peaked in the early 1960s before falling as other protein sources became cheaply available.

A 1986 global whaling moratorium made whale a pricey food that rarely appears on family tables or in ordinary supermarkets, with vendors relying on Japan's scientific research whaling for their supply. Japan resumes commercial whaling on July 1. “A lot of people came in after hearing that the research whaling had ended, worried that they couldn't get whale anymore,” Ichihara said. “They were surprised to hear whale is taken in Japan too.”

True aficionados have endured, sating their whale cravings largely through specialty restaurants such as the one Ichihara, 42, operates in Minamiboso, just east of Tokyo. Traditional recipes include blubber with vinegar-miso sauce, thinly sliced whale tongue, whale steak, a hotpot where slices of whale meat are simmered with mizuna greens and, the simplest, raw whale dipped in soy sauce. Several restaurants have come up with whaleburgers, a patty of whale meat sandwiched between buns or pressed rice.

Ichihara's restaurant offers many of these, as well as a unique take on traditional whale treats: fried whale dressed with slivered vegetables and vinegar, grilled marinated whale steak, and raw whale chopped with miso and scallions.

Aficionados say whale tastes somewhat like beef, but with a

stronger flavor. Whaling advocates point to its high protein content and low carbon footprint compared with other meats. Ichihara's mother-in-law, Yachiyo, praises it as an ideal food. “When it's in your mouth, it's meat, but when it's in your stomach it's like fish, it's light,” she said. Whale represents only 0.1 percent of Japan's meat consumption, so proponents say getting the next generation to eat it is essential.

Schools occasionally serve it for lunch, including some - like those in Chigasaki, a city west of Tokyo that is not a traditional whaling area - as a way of teaching children what people ate in the past. To make it appealing to students, whale is usually served as fried nuggets, often with a soy-ginger sauce or ketchup, said Emi Yamaguchi, at the Chigasaki Board of Education. “Since it's such a rare thing, it'd be too bad to have lots left over,” she said. “It's a special event so the kids are excited, and we make it in ways that appeal to them.”

The Ichiharas have taken part in whale-cooking contests to develop new dishes, with prizes going to items such as whale-filled spring rolls. A Minamiboso roadside store stocks whale-stuffed Chinese buns and whale ham along with more traditional items and cookies sold in boxes decorated with whales.

Yoko Ichihara wishes more people ate whale at home, but is reassured by the restart of commercial whaling. “I'd be concerned if I heard we couldn't eat whale in Japan, but since we'll be able to take them here, I have no worries,” she said. But she also noted wryly that the restaurant's most popular menu items are things like whale cutlets and croquettes. “They like the things that don't taste much like whale, which seems like a bit of a waste,” she added. — Reuters



Palestinian industrial workers wrap freshly-produced chocolate wafer biscuits before packing at a factory in the West Bank city of Ramallah on June 17, 2019. — AFP

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2019

13 G20 nerves hit Europe stocks as dollar slips to three-month low



13 Coca-Cola, China dairy giant sign Olympic sponsorship deal



14 Porsche Centre Kuwait welcomes the new 911



An Indian worker dries "fryums", a finger shaped food made from seasoned dough, on the outskirts of Agartala. —AFP

US-India trade to top Pompeo's agenda

NEW DELHI: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will visit India today for talks with government leaders over a growing list of trade and investment issues that has cast a shadow over ties between the two big democracies. Pompeo is expected to lay the ground for a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi later in the week at a G20 meeting in Japan.

Both countries are trying to promote domestic manufacturing. Under a "Make in India" campaign, Modi has been courting foreign investors. Trump has pushed for US manufacturing to return home as part of his "Make America Great Again" campaign. The two countries also have differ-

ences over Russian arms sales to India and US sanctions on China's Huawei Technologies Co Ltd.

Tariffs, closed markets

India this month imposed higher tariffs on 28 US products including almonds, apples and walnuts, following the US withdrawal of certain trade privileges for India. Last year, India had announced tariffs in retaliation to higher U.S. import duties on steel and aluminum. Trump has called India "tariff king", and pointed to 50% duties on Harley Davidson motorbikes as an example. The Trump administration has also asked India to remove price caps on imported US medical

devices, open up its dairy market and cut duties on IT products.

Data localization, e-commerce

India has mandated foreign firms to store their payments data locally, hurting companies such as Mastercard and Visa. The United States has been pushing for data flow across borders in several countries including India. This week, India has been alarmed at the possibility of caps on H-1B work visas that allow thousands of skilled Indians to work in the United States, as retaliation for its data localization drive. The State Department, though, has said there were no such plans. India outlined a new draft policy for its e-com-

merce sector this year, focusing on data localization, improved privacy safeguards and measures to combat the sale of counterfeit products. Tighter e-commerce foreign investment rules implemented in India in February have forced Amazon.com Inc and Walmart Inc to rework their business strategies in the country. Walmart last year invested \$16 billion in Indian online retailer Flipkart.

Huawei

The United States has put China's Huawei on an export blacklist citing national security issues, barring US suppliers from selling to the world's largest telecommunications equipment maker and second-

biggest maker of smartphones, without special approval. It is asking its allies to adopt shared security and policy measures that will make it more difficult for Huawei to dominate 5G telecommunications networks. India has not decided whether to invite the Chinese firm for 5G trials.

Russia's S-400 missile system

The United States has said that India's plan to buy S-400 surface-to-air missile systems from Russia would draw sanctions under its Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions law. India, which signed the deal last year, says the weapons are necessary to bolster defenses against China. —Reuters

Bitcoin surges above \$11,000 thanks to Facebook currency

LONDON: Bitcoin surged to a near 16-month high above \$11,000 yesterday, overshadowing showings across stock, foreign exchange and commodity markets, with investors looking ahead to the week's G20 summit. Bitcoin reached \$11,251.21, surpassing \$10,000 for the first time since March last year, as the cryptocurrency sector got a huge boost from Facebook's unveiling of its own digital unit Libra, analysts said.

"The strong resurgence in the bitcoin price is mainly due to the renewed mainstreaming interest in cryptocurrencies and the technology which underlines them," Naeem Aslam, analyst at trading group ThinkMarkets, said. Projects like Facebook's Libra have provided much needed tailwind for this space." The social network plans to launch Libra next year, with the backing by a basket of real-world currencies and a consortium of companies including Visa, MasterCard, PayPal and Uber.

"Bitcoin volatility is likely to persist, with \$12,000 and \$15,000 as the next two critical resistance levels," said OANDA senior market analyst Edward Moya. Bitcoin has risen about



WASHINGTON: In this file photo taken on June 17, 2014 in Washington, DC shows bitcoin medals. — AFP

20 percent this month alone but is still well off record levels near \$20,000 seen at the end of 2017. Elsewhere yesterday, oil prices nudged higher as rising US-Iran tensions continued to fuel supply concerns. Stock markets were largely steady ahead of a crunch meeting between US President Donald Trump and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping at the week-end summit of 20 major economies. Markets are waiting to see if Trump and Xi can break an impasse in their trade war when they meet on the sidelines of the event in Japan.

Global equities last week rallied after Trump hailed positive telephone talks

between the pair, fuelling hopes of a possible end to their long-running tariffs battle. "No one thinks the US and China will do a deal in Osaka, but there is some hope that we will have a positive development that marks a shift in the rhetoric and a re-energizing of talks following the breakdown in the recent discussions," said Neil Wilson, chief market analyst at Markets.com. The dollar meanwhile dropped Monday, continuing to face pressure from expectations that the Federal Reserve could lower US interest rates as soon as July as the economy shows signs of softening amid the trade war with China. — AFP

German business confidence ebbs further in June

FRANKFURT: Confidence among German business leaders fell slightly in June, a regular survey showed yesterday, continuing a months-long trend analysts blame largely on global trade uncertainty. The Munich-based Ifo institute's monthly barometer fell 0.5 points, to 97.4, in line with forecasts from analysts surveyed by Factset and its lowest level since November 2014.

"Companies are looking at the coming months with growing pessimism. On the other hand, they judge their present situation minimally improved," Ifo chief Clemens Fuest said in a statement. "Germany's economic situation is stagnating further." Looking to different areas of the economy, manufacturing firms reported the lowest confidence levels.

German producers have suffered from trade conflicts launched by Washington against China and the European Union, as well as other sources of uncertainty dogging international business. The mood among services firms also fell but remained more positive, cushioned by a strong domestic economy and low unemployment levels.

In June, "the list of global negative risks has become even longer," noted economist Klaus Borge of public development bank KfW. He highlighted tensions between the US and Iran and President Donald Trump's threats to slap tariffs on Mexico if it did not stop migrants reaching the American border — "using punitive tariffs as a means of exerting pressure beyond trade policy."

Furthermore, former foreign minister Boris Johnson appears set to become the next British prime minister. The bombastic Conservative has promised to quit the European Union on October 31, with or without a deal to cushion the impact on the massive trade flows between Britain and the Continent. "It is the never-ending external risks and uncertainties, mainly related to the trade conflict but also Brexit, which are spoiling the party" for German business, agreed ING bank economist Carsten Brzeski. However, "despite the sharp slowdown in confidence indicators, economic growth has actually been holding up quite well," he added. —AFP

ALAFCO closes \$470m 5-year unsecured Murabaha facility

KUWAIT: ALAFCO closed a USD 470 million 5-year unsecured Murabaha facility yesterday. The financing facility was led by Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait - DIFC Branch, which is regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority, and HSBC Bank Middle East Limited in the capacity of Initial Mandated Lead Arranger and Joint Bookrunners.

HSBC has also played the role of Coordinator in this transaction. Whilst Commercial Bank of Kuwait and National Bank of Bahrain acted as Joint Lead Arrangers; Warba Bank acted as Joint Lead Arranger, Joint Bookrunner and Investment Agent and First Abu Dhabi Bank PJSC acted as Global Agent and Facility Agent. The deal had participants from Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE and Korea. The facility was structured through an SPV formed in Abu Dhabi Global Market. Initially, there are eight banks participating in the deal and more banks are expected to join in the second tranche, which could increase the facility size up to USD 650 million, as the facility has an accordion feature.

Michel Accad, Group CEO of Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, Initial Mandated Lead Arranger and Joint Bookrunner, said: "We congratulate Alafco and the participating banks on achieving this strategic mile-

stone, and for the timebound execution of this landmark transaction. For ABK it also underscores our regional capability in leading and arranging syndications in the regional structured loan market."

Roger Winfield, CEO of HSBC in Kuwait said: "HSBC is pleased to have acted as Sole Coordinator, Initial Mandated Lead Arranger and Joint Bookrunner for ALAFCO's landmark USD 470 million Murabaha facility. We look forward to continue supporting the company's growth, which is underpinned by its strong business model, management team and shareholders. Throughout Kuwait and the wider region, we are seeing an increasing demand for Islamic financing solutions, which we are well-placed to help meet given our regional heritage and international network."

Adel Ahmad Albanwan, Chief Executive Officer ALAFCO, said "We are delighted to have secured and concluded this landmark transaction and would like to thank all parties involved. This transaction demonstrates the belief and confidence our partners have in ALAFCO, and we welcome them as we seek to develop long-term strategic partnerships going forward.

Whilst we wholeheartedly appreciate the roles played by all the parties as part of this transaction,

Warba Bank has continued to demonstrate their commitment to ALAFCO and we would like to extend our gratitude to them for their ongoing support. Warba Bank remains a strong partner for ALAFCO over recent times, notably the Bank was instrumental in closing our debut Unsecured Murabaha facility in 2017.

This deal marks the forging of new relationships and consolidation of existing ones. We thank our existing international partners;

Korean Development Bank, HSBC and Mashreq Bank for their continued support. Additionally, the role played by Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, Commercial Bank of Kuwait, National Bank of Bahrain, Gulf Bank and First Abu Dhabi Bank has been pivotal. These institu-



Adel Ahmad Albanwan, Chief Executive Officer ALAFCO



Roger Winfield - CEO HSBC (Kuwait)



Michel Accad, Group CEO - ABK

tions represent the establishment of new partnerships for our firm and we would like to thank them for the confidence they have shown in ALAFCO. We look forward to working closely with all our partners, seeking to further strengthen our working relationships into the future".

Warba Bank unveils its new digital factory - Al-Wateen

KUWAIT: Warba Bank is steadily moving into a new era of development and innovation in enhancing its digital structure. This is the result of a number of achievements that the Bank has accomplished over the past years, by injecting investments to keep abreast of the technological era in order to cater for the growing customers' demand on the digital banking services in a time where smart phones have become virtual banks for customers enabling them undertake several banking transactions smoothly, safely and easily.

Today, Warba Bank tops its efforts by launching the digital factory "Al-Wateen", through which the Bank's team will develop and innovate exclusive digital products and services that will pave the way for a revolutionary new era in the digital banking sector. Al-Wateen is the output of the Bank's strategy which aims, amongst other targets, to position the Bank as a champion in the digital banking services and increase its market share in this framework.

Speaking at Al-Wateen launch press conference, Mr Shaheen Hamad Alghanem, Chief Executive Officer of Warba Bank, said: "Al-Wateen is the result of long journey of relentless efforts and perseverance that witnessed many challenges and difficulties, as well as achievements and success stories. "In 2009, the Kuwaiti government granted Kuwaiti citizens shares by establishing Islamic Warba Bank distributing 76% of its shares to citizens; it was the first bank in which all Kuwaiti people participate without exception as a grant to all Kuwaiti people, hence the bank has become a unique economic and financial initiative in both regional and global levels. "He elaborated:

Under the Slogan "One of You," Warba Bank emerged from Kuwait to serve every Kuwaiti on homeland and embarked on its journey facing all the challenges and economic difficulties that plagued the region at that time. It went on with determination and perseverance driven by its responsibility towards shareholders and clients whose confidence and trust formed the solid base and motivation for the bank to launch innovative services, products and solutions, which have become exemplary for Islamic banking industry in Kuwait, The Bank could and define the leading position the Bank enjoys nowadays in the Islamic Banking sector despite the fierce competition.

Warba Bank also unveiled the digital "Jam3eya" feature, which enables customers to create their own Jam3eya online through the application, and invite up to 11 persons from friends or family to participate. Under this unique digital service, the application of Warba Bank eliminates the traditional concept and all burdens resulting from it; while replacing it with a modern, easy and flexible digital concept. The customer creates Jam3eya through the application, accordingly a text message will be sent to participants for acceptance or rejection; through the Jam3eya, customer can follow up settlements and timing of the payment as well as determine which month to receive his /her turn of the Jam3eya funds.

Alghanem concluded that Warba Bank's journey has witnessed many success stories across all operations. Today Warba Bank is firmly determined in its approach enhancing and driving digital transformation into the banking sector in accordance with the highest international standards, paving the way for its leading position in this sector.

Huawei wins the 'best 5G core network technology' award

DUBAI: Huawei announced that it has won "Best 5G Core Network Technology" award at the 5G World Summit 2019 held in London and five Best of Show awards at Interop Tokyo 2019, the largest annual ICT exhibition in Japan. The awards recognize Huawei as a provider of new industry applications, business models, and high-performing IT infrastructure solutions to facilitate digital transformation of enterprises. The company also ranked 47th in BrandZ's annual Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands study.

"Best 5G Core Network Technology" award

Huawei's 5G intelligent and simplified core network supports all-cloud-based key technologies, such as three-layer decoupling, stateless design, cross-DC deployment, microservices, and A/B test. This network is built on leading cloud native, connectivity+, and edge computing technologies. Huawei's 5G intelligent and simplified core network is the industry's first core network that supports 2G/3G/4G/5G NSA/5G SA in-depth convergence. It provides the Single Voice Core simplified voice solution and CUPS-based distributed architecture. Based on CUPS, it supports one-stop user plane plug and play, on-demand scheduling of heterogeneous edge computing resources, fast integration of third-party applications, and building of an open edge ecosys-

ABK-Egypt sustains strong growth in first quarter

KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait - Egypt (ABK-Egypt), one of Egypt's fastest growing banks, has reported strong results for the first three months of 2019. Net Operating Profit increased 41% to EGP 213 million in comparison with the first quarter last year, while Net Interest income increased 40% to EGP 313 million.

Customer Deposits grew by 8% to over EGP 25.95 billion, and Total Assets by 6%, to exceed EGP 29.93 billion. During the same period, the Bank's gross loans portfolio grew 6% to over EGP 17.34 billion, and the Bank's gross loans portfolio grew 8% to over EGP 25.95 billion, with the non-performing loan (NPL) ratio continuing to be strong at 2.86% and Shareholder Equity stable at EGP 2.74 billion.

Mr Ali Ibrahim Marafi, Chairman of ABK Egypt,

tem, providing differentiated services and enabling thousands of industries.

AirEngine Wi-Fi 6 AP7060DN

Huawei's AirEngine AP7060DN, the industry's first commercial Wi-Fi 6 product, won Grand Prize for Best of Show Award on the back of its ultra-large bandwidth, ultra-high capacity, ultra-low latency, and flexible IoT expansion. The judging panel recognized the solution's capabilities in implementing fast service recovery and intelligent network O&M. Such capabilities include millisecond-level in-band flow measurement, real-time monitoring of network service quality to meet service level agreement (SLA) requirements, and second-level silent fault locating.

Huawei Campus Insight

Huawei's Campus Insight, a network analyzer that uses AI, data analytics and telemetry technology to visualize WI-FI network activity in real time to identify fault risk and cut O&M costs, has won the Best of Show Award - Runners-up at Interop Tokyo 2019. Huawei's Campus Insight leverages the power of AI to lead network administrators to a future where networks will be autonomous and self-healing, and huge volumes of network O&M data can be analyzed to improve service operations efficiency and deliver a previously unimaginable user experience.

Huawei Atlas 500 AI Edge Station

Huawei's Atlas 500 AI edge station won the Best of Show Award Runners-up at Interop Tokyo 2019, after stringent review by a professional IT jury panel. The Atlas 500 AI edge station was recognized by the jury for its superior computing power, cloud-edge collaboration, and edge deployment features. Atlas 500 leads the way to enable intelligent transformation for edge computing.

said: "I believe we have made a strong start to 2019. These results reflect the consistent hard work by the Bank and its focus on delivering our long-term promise of a 'Simpler Banking' experience for our clients. Although the banking and business environment in Egypt is rapidly evolving, we are determined to sustain the progress we have achieved to date, investing in the future of our business and the future of the Egyptian economy and continuing to invest in our employees at ABK."

Mr Khaled El Salawy, CEO and Managing Director of ABK-Egypt, said: "These results underline the robustness of ABK-Egypt's approach and reflect our deep commitment to sustainable growth. The increases in Net Operating Profit and Net Interest are underpinned by real growth in customer deposits and the strength of our loan portfolio. Our strategy of service excellence, focus on product development, and attention to customer needs will help us to continue to grow and provide the banking products and services our customers require."

In keeping with its commitment to making life easier and simpler for its customers, as well as providing an enjoyable banking experience,



Huawei's iFIT Solution

Huawei's In-situ Flow Information Telemetry (iFIT) solution created a buzz at Interop Tokyo 2019, winning the Best of Show Award Special Prize. The judging panel, comprised of experts in the industry, recognized the solution's capabilities in implementing fast service recovery and intelligent network O&M. Such capabilities include millisecond-level in-band flow measurement, real-time monitoring of network service quality to meet service level agreement (SLA) requirements, and second-level silent fault locating.

Huawei's Intelligent Metro Router NetEngine 8000

Huawei's NetEngine 8000 scooped up the Best of Show Award Grand Prize in network infrastructure at Interop Tokyo 2019 thanks to its competitive advantages, including a large capacity of 14.4 Tbit/s per slot, one platform for all scenarios, SRv6 for intelligent connectivity, and full lifecycle automation. Winning this award demonstrates that Huawei's NetEngine 8000 is highly regarded by experts throughout the industry.

ABK-Egypt has continued to extend its network during 2019, opening new branches in Abbas El Akkad, Nasr City and the Obour City, increasing the Bank's network to 41 strategically located branches across Egypt.

ABK-Egypt was also heavily involved in activities to mark this year's Arab Financial Inclusion Day on 27 April. As part of its program, ABK-Egypt has reached out to several rural communities beyond its traditional branch network to offer banking facilities, often providing people with their first opportunity to access banking services and products. In January 2019, ABK-Egypt was recognized by International Finance Magazine as the "Most Innovative Bank in Egypt" in recognition of the Bank's consistently strong results and its commitment towards its vision of simpler banking.



Ali Ibrahim Marafi

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	303.950
Euro	348.630
Sterling Pound	390.420
Canadian dollar	231.670
Turkish lira	53.510
Swiss Franc	314.650
US Dollar Buying	296.600
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.833
Indian Rupees	4.375
Pakistani Rupees	2.022
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.717
Nepali Rupees	2.728
Singapore Dollar	225.900
Hongkong Dollar	38.916
Bangladesh Taka	3.585
Philippine Peso	5.918
Thai Baht	9.889
Malaysian ringgit	77.737
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.107
Qatari Riyal	83.537
Omani Riyal	789.994
Bahraini Dinar	807.630
UAE Dirham	82.809
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.750
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.216

Yemen Rival/for 1000	1.221
Tunisian Dinar	107.020
Jordanian Dinar	429.460
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.232

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.590
Canadian Dollar	230.080
Sterling Pound	388.065
Euro	346.750
Swiss Frank	297.770
Bahrain Dinar	807.360
UAE Dirhams	83.060
Qatari Riyals	84.295
Saudi Riyals	81.855
Jordanian Dinar	429.480
Egyptian Pound	18.185
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.718
Indian Rupees	4.362
Pakistani Rupees	1.934
Bangladesh Taka	3.596
Philippines Pessio	5.895
Cyprus pound	18.065
Japanese Yen	3.825
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.731
Malaysian Ringgit	74.235
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.635
Thai Bhat	10.875

Turkish Lira	52.595
Singapore dollars	221.307

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.380144	0.394044
Czech Korune	0.005476	0.014776
Danish Krone	0.042206	0.047206
Euro	0.338038	0.351738
Georgian Lari	0.131848	0.131848
Hungarian Lari	0.001164	
Norwegian Krone	0.031734	0.036934
Romanian Leu	0.056138	0.072988
Russian ruble	0.004805	0.004805
Slovakia	0.009078	0.019078
Swedish Kroma	0.028460	0.033460
Swiss Franc	0.304262	0.315262
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.202971	0.214971
New Zealand Dollar	0.194145	0.203645
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.224874	0.233874
US Dollars	0.299850	0.305150
US Dollars Mint	0.300350	0.305150
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003002	0.003803
Chinese Yuan	0.042770	0.046270

Hong Kong Dollar	0.038815	0.039565
Indian Rupee	0.003775	0.004547
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002742	0.002922
Korean Won	0.000252	0.000267
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069873	0.075873
Nepalese Rupee	0.002674	0.003014
Pakistan Rupee	0.001398	0.002168
Philippine Peso	0.005782	0.006082
Singapore Dollar	0.216941	0.228941
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001349	0.001929
Taiwan	0.009677	0.009857
Thai Baht	0.009524	0.010074
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.791663	0.808163
Egyptian Pound	0.018197	0.021557
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000209	0.000269
Jordanian Dinar	0.423796	0.432796
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021324	0.045324
Omani Riyal	0.783162	0.788842
Qatar Riyal	0.079220	0.084160
Saudi Riyal	0.079967	0.081267
Syrian Pound	0.001288	0.001508
Tunisian Dinar	0.099389	0.107389
Turkish Lira	0.046202	0.056047
UAE Dirhams	0.081329	0.083029
Yemeni Riyal	0.000988	0.001068

Business

G20 nerves hit Europe stocks as dollar slips to three-month low

Investors doubtful over meaningful US-China deal at summit

LONDON: European stocks stumbled and the dollar hit three-month lows yesterday as hopes waned for progress in Sino-US trade talks at this week's G20 meeting and fears of an escalation in Iran tensions flared up. Investors are waiting to see if Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping can de-escalate a trade war that is damaging the global economy and souring business confidence. The leaders will meet during a G20 summit in Japan.

Pan-European STOXX 600 fell 0.2%, reflecting similar losses in Paris. Stocks in London were little changed. Germany's export-sensitive DAX index fell 0.6% after a profit warning from Daimler sent the Mercedes-Benz maker's shares some 4.2% lower. In addition, data showed that German business morale in June fell to its lowest since November 2014, adding weight to expectations that Europe's largest economy shrank in the second quarter.

Nonetheless, gains in Asia saw the MSCI regional as well as the broader global stocks gauges rise again towards last week's six-week highs hit last week. Wall Street also looked in line for more gains after closing lower on Friday. S&P 500 e-minis pointed to a 0.2% rise at the open. "G20 is turning into a high-stakes poker game for risk and if the sideline talks between Trump and Xi fail and trigger an escalation in tariffs, the odds of a full-blown global recession increase exponentially," said Stephen Innes, managing partner at Vanguard Markets.

Positive signs

Yesterday, Chinese Vice Commerce Minister Wang Shouwen said China and the US should be willing to compromise in trade talks and not insist only on what each side wants. US Vice President Mike Pence's decision on Friday to call off a planned China speech was also considered a positive sign. Pence had upset China with a fierce speech in October that laid out a litany of complaints ranging from state surveillance to human-rights abuses.

Still, most analysts doubt the two sides will come to any meaningful agreement. Tensions are reaching beyond tariffs, particularly after Washington blacklisted Huawei, the world's biggest telecoms gear maker, effectively banning US compa-

nies from doing business with it.

"Any high hopes ahead of the G20 meeting may be disappointed," said Benjamin Schroeder, senior rates strategist at ING in Amsterdam. "In the end uncertainty will persist and central banks could still be pushed closer to invoking their contingency plans."

The US Commerce Department said on Friday it was adding several Chinese companies and a government-owned institute involved in supercomputing with military applications to its national security "entity list" that bars them from buying U.S. parts and components without government approval.

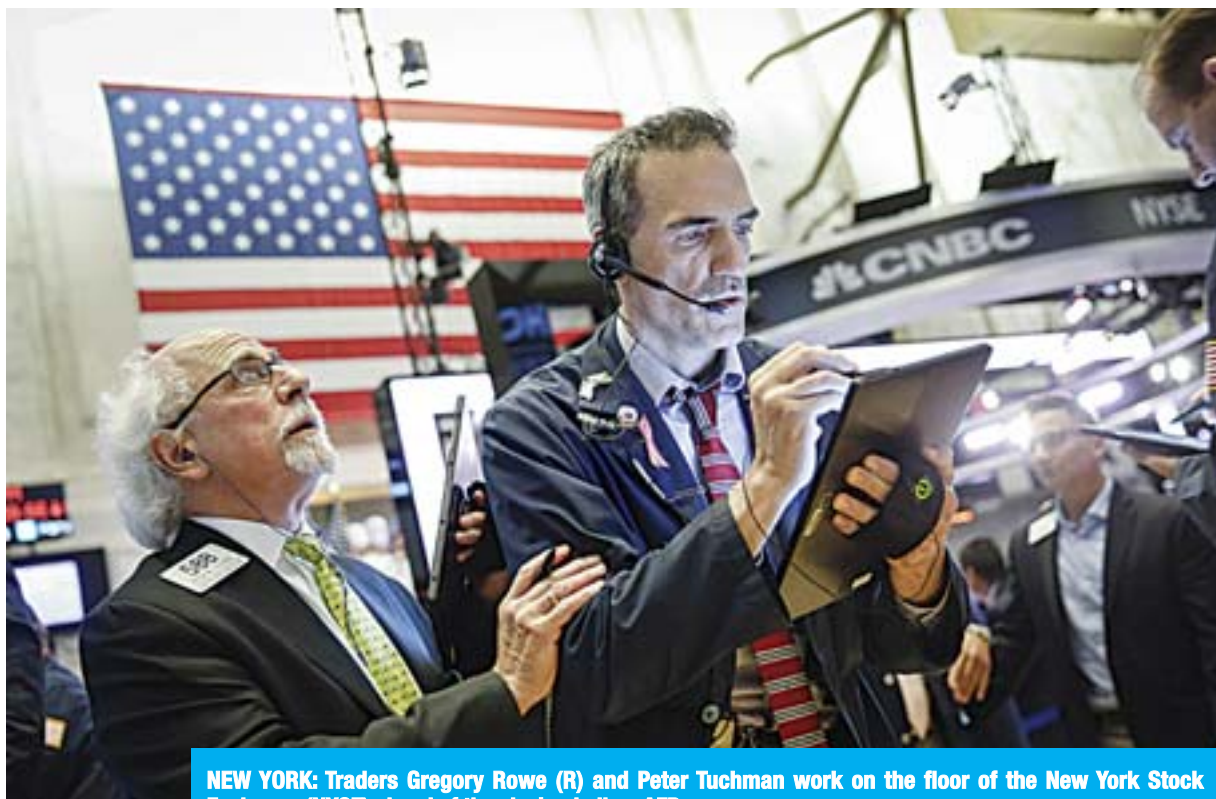
Fed rate cuts

A Chinese newspaper said FedEx Corp was likely to be added to Beijing's "unreliable entities list". US markets had reached record highs after last week's signals by the Federal Reserve that it may cut interest rates soon to bolster the US economy. However, that weakened US currency, causing a dollar index to slip 0.1% lower to 96.11 after its biggest weekly drop in four months last week. The dollar has led a broad selloff in major currencies as global central banks signaled a dovish outlook on monetary policy amid growing signs of a weak global economy.

The dollar fetched 107.29 yen, having slipped to as low as 107.045 on Friday, the lowest level since its flash crash on Jan 3. "The market is not expecting more Fed rate cuts than it had so far but that the reasoning behind them is being interpreted in a different manner," Commerzbank's head of FX and Commodity Research Ulrich Leuchtmann wrote in a note to clients.

"While for a long time the expected weakening of growth, fears of a recession and low inflation were used as reasons for rate cuts, another reason has now been added to the list: the Fed caving in to the White House." The euro rose to a three-month high of \$1.1393 against the dollar. In developing markets, the Turkish lira strengthened as much as 2% after Turkey's main opposition won a re-run election in Istanbul for mayor on Sunday, a blow to President Tayyip Erdogan.

Bitcoin pulled back from 15-month highs after jumping



NEW YORK: Traders Gregory Rowe (R) and Peter Tuchman work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) ahead of the closing bell. —AFP

more than 10% over the weekend. Analysts said the gains came amid growing optimism over the adoption of cryptocurrencies after Facebook announced its Libra digital coin. The glum German data pushed bond yields across the euro zone lower, reinforcing ECB rate-cut expectations. Economic woes, looming US interest rate cuts and flaring tensions between Tehran and Washington drove safe-haven gold higher. It stood at \$1,407.9 per ounce, not far from Friday's six-year high of \$1,410.78.

The rising tensions between Iran and the United States, after Iran shot down an American drone, also pushed oil prices higher. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo — who met with Saudi Arabia's king and crown prince yesterday — warned "significant" sanctions on Tehran would be announced. Brent crude futures stood at \$65.16 per barrel, near Friday's three-week high of \$65.76. US crude futures were up 0.7% at \$57.84, its highest in over three weeks. —Reuters

Coca-Cola, China dairy giant sign Olympic sponsorship deal

LAUSANNE: Coca-Cola and Chinese dairy firm Mengniu have signed a deal to become joint sponsors of the Olympic Games from 2021 to 2032. IOC chief Thomas Bach announced yesterday. Neither the International Olympic Committee nor the two companies involved disclosed the size of the deal but the agreement is the first ever joint partnership under the Olympic TOP program, the highest level of Olympic sponsorship, Bach added.

"Having our longest-standing partner, Coca-Cola, an iconic American brand, together with a young Chinese company, Mengniu, joining hands under the roof of our Worldwide TOP Program is a great example of the unifying power of the Olympic spirit," said Bach. "This partnership will give another dimension to the promotion of the Olympic values around the world."

The agreement was unveiled in Lausanne ahead of the opening of the IOC session yesterday in which the IOC will choose the host city for the 2026 Winter Olympics, with two candidates in the running, Milan/Cortina of Italy and Sweden's Stockholm/Åre.

The Financial Times reported the deal was worth \$3 billion, but did not offer details about the amounts contributed by each company.

A sources close to the deal told AFP it was the biggest IOC sponsorship ever with the oldest Olympics sponsor, Coca-Cola, which first backed the Games in 2028, and newcomer Mengniu. James Quincey, Coca-Cola CEO, described the deal as 'substantial'. The TOP program of Olympic sponsors, an elite band of IOC partners, already includes one Chinese firm, multinational on-line and high-tech outlet Alibaba.

Mengniu, which was also a sponsor of the 2018 men's football World Cup in Russia, has been eyeing global expansion. Jeffrey Lu, Mengniu CEO, said the IOC deal would be a "catalyst" to overseas growth. "This is a vital step in our international strategy, and we are honored to have the opportunity to build the positive reputation of Chinese food and beverage brands among consumers globally," he said in a statement.

'Misled'

But the company's attempts to have its brand recognized outside China have already hit trouble. The firm that was embroiled in a damaging milk contamination scandal in China in 2008 has been under attack at home from Yili, its biggest domestic rival. Yili has threatened to pull out its own sponsorship of Beijing



BEIJING: A customer and child are seen past a refrigerator displaying Mengniu milk products at a store. —AFP

winter Olympics in 2022 in response to the new deal.

In an open letter published on its official WeChat account Thursday Yili alleged that Mengniu's partnership was infringing upon its rights as the exclusive sponsor for dairy products at the winter Games. In the letter, that has since been removed from Yili's official social media accounts, the company said Chinese consumers will be "misled" into believing Mengniu was also an "official dairy sponsor" if its ads appeared alongside that of Yili at the Beijing event.

Mengniu and Yili control nearly half of China's dairy market, according to Euromonitor. Yili lashed out at Mengniu for attempting to "stage the biggest scandal in Olympic history" by listing itself as a beverage sponsor, and threatened to stop sponsoring the IOC for future events. The IOC's Bach, asked to comment on the feud, said there were no grounds for complaint about the sponsorship arrangements. "This agreement (with Mengniu) fully respects the rights of everybody," said Bach. Mengniu is yet to respond to its rival's complaints. —AFP

US firm to power stadiums with old car batteries

OSLO: US industrial conglomerate Eaton, which uses second-hand Nissan electric vehicle batteries to power buildings, is in talks with up to six European football stadiums to help power their facilities, according to a senior executive. Eaton, a New York-listed firm that makes hydraulics, truck transmissions and other industrial

products, says the market is niche but expects it to grow up to 20 times between now and 2022.

In Europe, Middle East, and Africa, Eaton estimates the potential market value to be \$2.3 billion by 2025. What to do with the used batteries of electric vehicles is becoming a growing concern as their use expands with that of electric cars, which accounted for 1.5% of the 86 million cars sold globally last year, according to researchers JATO Dynamics. Eaton takes the cells from the batteries of Japanese carmaker Nissan's returned Leaf electric vehicles and repackages them into

new units, a product it calls xStorage, to store power in buildings, both industrial and residential.

It has already equipped the Netherlands' Johan Cruyff Arena, the legendary home of the Ajax football team, among other buildings, with what it calls "second-life batteries". Its latest project was in Oslo's Bislett athletics stadium in Norway, which is partly powered by solar panels. "The football stadium community is interested. From significant ones, (we are talking) with 5-6 stadiums in Europe," Eaton's senior vice president Craig McDonnell said in an interview on the sidelines of

a presentation at Bislett stadium.

With the exception of Tesla which it sees as a competitor in the storage business, the firm is also talking with other automakers to expand its offering. McDonnell declined to give names. Eaton says its xStorage solution is 20% cheaper than a new battery and every Nissan Leaf car can produce four such units. It is among the large-scale commercial ones in the developing market, with other projects run by German automaker BMW which supplies second-hand batteries from its i3 electric vehicles to store wind-farm produced electricity. —Reuters

Zimbabwe wants ivory ban lifted to sell \$600m stockpile

HARARE: Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa opened a UN wildlife summit yesterday with a call to lift the global ivory trade ban so that the country can sell \$600 million of stockpiled tusks. Mnangagwa said selling the elephant tusks and rhino horns would enable the impoverished nation to fund conservation efforts for 20 years.

Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and Zambia have all cited the growing number of elephants in some areas in their bid to have the ban relaxed, angering many conservationists. Opening the UNEP wildlife economy

summit in Victoria Falls, Mnangagwa called "for the free trade in hunting products as these can have an important impact on national and local economies." "Currently Zimbabwe has about \$600 million dollars worth of ivory and rhino horns stocked — most of which is from natural attrition of those animals.

"The revenue would suffice to finance our operational conservation efforts for the next two decades." The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which prohibits the sale of ivory, is under pressure from southern African countries that have seen growing elephant numbers. But over the past decade, the population of elephants across Africa has fallen by about 111,000 to 415,000, largely due to poaching, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Botswana recently sparked controversy by lifting its ban on hunting, saying the move would help control a booming elephant population that was damaging farmers' livelihoods. —AFP



HARARE: In this file photo taken on August 26, 2018, Zambia's President Edgar Lungu gestures as he arrives for the official inauguration ceremony of Emmerson Mnangagwa of ZANU PF as the President of Zimbabwe at The National Sports Stadium. —AFP

Risks faced by SMEs

The number of SMEs has increased in Kuwait since the establishment of the National Fund for SME Development (the "SME Fund") in 2013. The SME Fund accepted 245 project applications in 2017, 44% of which were commercial business ideas. The amount of financing approved that year was KD 50,125,458 and resulted in the creation of 850 jobs for Kuwaitis. Since its establishment until the end of 2018, the SME Fund spent a total of KD 167 million.

There are certain risks that SMEs are exposed to in Kuwait's market, and to manage them and mitigate their outcomes, firms need to be able to identify, analyze, treat, and monitor these risks. For the sustainability of a project, it is helpful to know what the kind of risks an SME might face, which is further discussed in this article.

One of the main risks to monitor for is Operating Risk, which is uncertainty from associated core operations of a business and is linked with the variability of product demand and prices of supplies. There is also the risk of changes in human resources or the hiring of incompetent or fraudulent employees and failed processes for the internal operations of the business.

Another key aspect of Operating Risk is spending over budget, which a lot of new business may face if there was a deficiency in the planning and financial forecasting phases of the business plan. One way to mitigate what this risk is by ensuring the right staff for the job is hired, and this can be done through running a background check on applicants. Another recommendation would be to test out several scenarios during the financial planning phase and to plan according to the one that presents the highest possible amount of costs while still delivering the expected Return on Investment (ROI) for the business type.

Inventory Risk is another common risk for a small business, and this involves the potential loss that results from inventory planning. SMEs tend to hold more inventory than the market demands, which increases storage costs, and this is because there is a belief that the business should have all the products in-stock all the time. Additionally, poor vendor selection escalates other risks as a business may choose to prioritize paying vendors whose supplies are generating higher sales; however, this causes the company's accounts payable to increase. This risk can be lessened by knowing the demand in the market for each inventory item and maintaining good supplier relationships to ensure that the product can be supplied to the company on a schedule. Therefore inventory management can be done in a timely fashion and reduces the additional costs of storage.

Knowing the consumer is necessary so that the product can be designed to attract them, and entering the market with a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) and a unique selling point will streamline targeting the business's market segment. Sales Risk arises when you are unable to sell your product, and that is why the business needs good sales and business development team to help the products penetrate the market. A good marketing strategy also helps push the business forward, and this includes advertising, videography, and maintaining a social media presence.

By considering these SME risks, the founders will be able to identify and rate them according to the likelihood of their occurrence and rank them based on the size of the impact they might have on their business. They will enable business owners to consider mitigating factors to treat any threats to the startup's development and growth.

—Holistic Development and Consulting

Business

Porsche Centre Kuwait welcomes the new 911



KUWAIT: Faster, more powerful and, more efficient than ever before, the eighth generation of the Porsche 911 has arrived in Kuwait. Revealed at a special event held by Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company, at the showroom, two variants, the rear-wheel drive 911 Carrera S and the all-wheel drive 911 Carrera 4S, highlighted the design and performance evolution of the brand's most iconic sports car. The rear-engine model range has been redesigned and now showcases a more muscular look that pays tribute to its past, while also embracing the future with technology woven into its DNA.

Speaking during the launch event, Callum Bottomley, General Manager of Porsche Centre Kuwait said: "Just like the first generation, the latest 911 is a sports car for the new era. Our icon has once again evolved and is now more powerful, more emotional, and more efficient than its predecessors. It is the best 911 Porsche has ever produced and this eighth generation maintains the 911's status as a pure driver's car that also offers everyday usability and unique design. As such, I am delighted to announce that the 911 Carrera S and the 911 Carrera 4S are now available here in Kuwait."

911 Carrera S and 911 Carrera 4S deliver 450 hp

The turbocharged flat-six engine of both models now produces 450 hp. This corresponds to an increase of 30 hp compared with the previous generation. The two 911 variants beat the four-second mark for acceleration from zero to 100 km/h: the

rear-wheeldrive 911 Carrera S needs 3.7 seconds and the 911 Carrera 4S, with all-wheel drive, just 3.6 seconds. This makes both models 0.4 seconds faster than their predecessors. The optional Sport Chrono Package reduces the sprint by a further 0.2 seconds. Power in the new models is delivered by a newly developed eight-speed Porsche Doppelkupplung (PDK) dual-clutch transmission. Top speeds are now measured at 308 km/h for the 911 Carrera S and 306 km/h for the all-wheeldrive version. The fuel consumption (NEDC-correlated) of the 911 Carrera S is 8.9 l/100 km, while the 911 Carrera 4S records this figure as 9.0 l/100 km.

Porsche design DNA

The new 911's silhouette remains iconic with an exterior design that draws on its earlier generations, making it familiar and yet undoubtedly new. This eighth incarnation is more assertive, with significantly wider wheel housings arch over the 20-inch front wheels and 21-inch rear wheels. The rear end is now the same width across all models, highlighting the slimline centre section. At the front, the body is 45 mm wider. Electrical pop-out handles in the doors emphasize the tapered and smooth side contour, while a bonnet with a pronounced recess evokes the design of the first 911 generations. At the rear, all models feature a rear significantly wider, variable-position rear spoiler and the seamless, elegant light strip. Apart from the front and rear sections, the entire outer shell is now made from aluminum.

Redesigned interior with clear lines

The completely new interior is characterized by the clear and straight lines of the dashboard with recessed instruments, inspired by the 911 models from the 1970s. Alongside the central rev counter - typical for Porsche - two thin, frameless displays supply information to the driver. The centre screen of the Porsche Communication Management (PCM) is now 10.9 inches and can be operated easily and without distraction thanks to the new interior design. Located underneath this there is a compact switch unit with five buttons for direct access to important vehicle functions. The seats have also been fundamentally modified.

Improved driving dynamics

The new 911 advances driving dynamics with the new mixed size tyre configuration, with 20-inch wheels on the front axle and 21-inch wheels on the rear axle. At the same time, the tyres on the rear drive-axle are significantly wider than on the front wheels. The combination results in increased stability, traction and balance while reduced understeer and over steer improve safety. The refined chassis design is completed by the next generation of Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM), which has been extensively developed for the new 911.

New assistance systems increase safety and comfort

In a world first, Porsche has developed the Wet mode, included as standard. This function detects water on the road, preconditions the control systems



accordingly and warns the driver, who can then set up the vehicle for enhanced safety, by simply pushing a button or using the mode switch on the steering wheel (Sport Chrono Package).

Brighter and smarter

The new optional LED matrix headlights with PDL S Plus are an eye-catching development. The energy centre of the Porsche Dynamic Lighting System matrix headlights is made up of 84 individual LEDs. The generated light beam corresponds in range and intensity to laser light. This is distributed so that the driver always benefits from maximum illumination of the road, without dazzling or disturbing other road users. The new Porsche 911 Carrera S and 911 Carrera 4S are now available at Porsche CentreKuwait.

Journalists worldwide trust earned media coverage to drive brand reputation

KUWAIT: Ogilvy announced the findings of its 2019 Global Media Influence Survey at the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity, which revealed that corporate announcements such as financial reporting, CSR initiatives and strategic business decisions are most influential in shaping earned media coverage and driving brand reputation worldwide. The survey of more than 300 journalists found that these tactics in isolation significantly outweigh the power of third-party endorsements such as social media influencers, highlighting the continued importance of sound earned strategies in an increasingly diversified media landscape. The survey also found that Twitter is the social media platform that most often informs reporters' coverage, ranked first by an average of 48% of reporters worldwide compared to 29% of those who cited Facebook or Instagram.

"We continually see brands looking for ways to break through in a media landscape that is constantly in motion and increasingly noisy, but once again we see that earned media is at the core of establishing longstanding, trusted reputation," said Tara Mullins, Senior Vice President of Ogilvy's Media Influence offering. "What's interesting this year is that on average, earned coverage appears to live longest on Twitter, likely due to Twitter's ability to compile major headlines of the day and streamlining the discovery process with users never having to leave the platform."

The survey also found that an overwhelming majority of journalists (89%) research past coverage in their reporting, a reminder that both positive and negative stories live forever online and emphasizing the lasting impact of earned media strategies. To that end, a plurality of reporters (46%) believe a balanced combination of earned, owned and paid media is necessary to successfully manage corporate reputation and influence their coverage. An average of only 10% of journalists worldwide cited third-party social media influencers alone as the most impactful contributor to brand reputation.

- Additional key findings include:**
- In North America, EMEA and Latin America, Twitter is the platform that most often informs reporters' coverage. In Asia Pacific (APAC), Facebook and its Instagram platform are the most impactful (41%), followed by WhatsApp (34%) with Twitter a distant third at 20%.
 - Overall, Facebook ranks second to Twitter in social media influence worldwide (29% to 48%, respectively). WhatsApp ranks third overall with an average of 17%. Snapchat is the social media platform least likely to inform coverage, trailing not only Twitter and Facebook but also WhatsApp, WeChat, LinkedIn and Glassdoor.
 - Latin American journalists consider government policies and regulations more influential on coverage (71%), ranking social media dead last among influencing factors. Latin American journalists are also more likely to consider industry developments such as stock market performance in their coverage of brands and companies.
 - North American journalists are more circumspect toward the influence their coverage has on a company or brand's reputation. A majority of North American reporters believe their coverage has only "Some" impact on shaping reputation (61%), while their counterparts in APAC, EMEA and Latin America all say they have "A lot" of influence (53%, 61% and 79%, respectively). Now in its sixth year, Ogilvy's Global Media Influence Survey has quickly become an indispensable industry resource, surveying hundreds of reporters and editors around the globe from 22 offices across North America, EMEA, APAC and, for the first time, Latin America.

Samsung announces Kuwait's first QLED 8K TV

KUWAIT: Samsung Gulf Electronics in collaboration with Andalus Trading Establishment Company, yesterday announced the launch of the first QLED 8K television in Kuwait during an immersive launch event held in JW Marriott Kuwait City. The introduction of QLED 8K breaks new ground for Samsung's ultra-premium TV and home entertainment offering, delivering beautiful design and supported with the most advanced picture quality in its portfolio.

The QLED 8K TV will be offered in 98-inch, 82-inch, 75-inch and 65-inch screen sizes, designed to meet Kuwait's demand for larger screen formats that also provide the incredible performance customers have come to expect from Samsung. To achieve 8K resolution, the Samsung 8K QLED produces four times more pixels than a 4K UHD TV and 16 times more pixels than a full HD TV.

"With Real 8K Resolution features embedded with Samsung's proprietary 8K AI Upscaling technology, Samsung is pushing the boundaries of TV technology for consumers around the world," said Mustafa Sadick, Head of Visual Display Division at Samsung Gulf Electronics. "We are excited to bring our first QLED 8K TV lineup to Kuwait with stunning 8K resolution for a new level of immersion, demonstrated in an interactive manner at today's event."

Ismael Horani, CEO of Andalus Trading Establishment Company mentioned: "The part-

nership between Samsung & Andalus has been over four decades and this will be the start of yet another journey. We are excited to showcase and provide to our esteemed channel partners, the latest innovation in QLED TVs from Samsung. With the breathtaking QLED 8K TVs, consumers will experience exceptional depth and detail, transporting them into a new dimension of groundbreaking picture quality."

8K AI Upscaling

Samsung QLED 8K comes with AI Upscaling that uses the power of machine learning to analyze and upscale content to 8K resolution, to help optimize the viewing experience. 8K AI Upscaling results in more detailed and natural videos as it upscales not just one aspect, but a whole variety of features such as light, color and line differentiation.

Despite the limited native 8K content currently available, the Quantum Processor 8K can recognize and upscale all content whether through a streaming service, set-top box, HDMI, USB or even mobile mirroring to appear in 8K resolution. In addition, the QLED 8K range features Direct Full Array Elite for enhanced contrast and precise back-lighting control.

Not only can you watch content developed in 8K on the QLED's 33-million-pixel screen, but with the 8K AI Upscaling feature, you can also watch your favorite videos from any resolution - from SD to 4K - transformed to as close to 8K quality as possible, depending on the source. 8K AI Upscaling is based on artificial intelligence smart learning, so through usage, it will develop and adapt with each video upscale as more video data becomes available to the system to be analyzed. But even from the first usage, the QLED 8K provides the most comfortable color, light and texture balances to provide the optimum viewing experience for each user.



Vivid details and outstanding realism

The Samsung QLED 8K integrates HDR10+ and Ultra Bright III to manage the TV's contrast and color. Brightness levels are optimized to help ensure content is displayed beautifully and consistently in almost any lighting conditions. HDR10+ also minimizes the impact of glare and reflection in many of Kuwait's sun-filled rooms. As Samsung's flagship TV, the QLED 8K will also include the unique lifestyle features available across the QLED range that enable consumers to get the most from their TV, while maintaining our highest quality in picture and sound. Additional features include:

- One Invisible Connection, an all-in-one clear cable that frees TV space from unsightly cords. Combining the optical cable and power into one thin five-meter cord, offering more freedom to decide where and how to place the TV.
- Ambient Mode, integrate the TV screen to suit a rooms interior dEcor and design. Display art or photos, or time and weather or take a picture of the wall and set it onscreen, so the



TV seamlessly blends in while it is not on.

- Smart TV enhancements, Samsung TV's work with Smart Things or Bixby, offering choice to control the connected home.
- One Remote, control a range compatible devices with One Remote Control and get quick access to things like Netflix, YouTube, Xbox or a compatible Soundbar.

Samsung's QLED 8K TVs are available across all major retail stores and Samsung brand stores in Kuwait.

Turkish Airlines, LOT Polish Airlines expanded their codeshare network

KUWAIT: Turkish Airlines and LOT Polish Airlines, the largest airlines and flag carriers of their countries, Turkey and Poland, announced yesterday the enhancement of their current codeshare agreement with additional destinations both from Turkish Airlines' and LOT's flight network. "As the airline that flies to most countries in the world, we are glad to include new destinations into our codeshare agreement with LOT Polish Airlines. For a long time, we have been in mutually beneficial relationship and close cooperation with LOT Polish Airlines. We believe that, this enhancement will improve our already good relations and take our commercial cooperation to the next level.

With the introduction of joint flights on several destinations in Poland, Turkey, Middle East and Africa, passengers would enjoy more travel alternatives through the combined flights. By this chance, I would like to thank Mr Milczarski, his team and our team for their efforts in making this agreement possible. Without a

doubt, this agreement will help increasing the commercial and tourism ties of our countries," said Bilal Eksi, Turkish Airlines' Deputy Chairman & CEO. Joint flights will offer fast and convenient connections for customers leaving Istanbul, the biggest Turkish city and also an important flight hub in the world, to Warsaw and beyond.

"We are very pleased about the enhanced code-share agreement signed with Turkish Airlines that, as we hope, will strengthen our mutually beneficial cooperation even further. LOT Polish Airlines is one of the most dynamically developing carriers in Central and Eastern Europe. Over the recent years, we have recorded robust performance and a steady growth in our business.

The enhanced partnership with Turkish Airlines will help us not only expand LOT route network and offer many new attractive destinations to our passengers but also improve connectivity and travel experience on existing codeshare routes beyond Istanbul, such as Ankara, Cairo or Amman. Considering this, I would like to express my gratitude to Mr Bilal Eksi, Turkish Airlines' Deputy Chairman & CEO and his team for effective and successful cooperation," said Rafal Milczarski, CEO & President of the Management Board of LOT Polish Airlines.

Passengers will also enjoy both domestic and international connections from Istanbul. Moreover, taking into account the complementary structure of timetables of both carriers and agreement working reciprocally, it



will allow both airlines' customers to enjoy seamless connectivity in their respective hubs. LOT Polish Airlines and Turkish Airlines passengers have also benefit of accruing and redeeming miles in their respective loyalty programs, Miles & More and Miles & Smiles on all flights of both carriers.

Turkish Airlines, flies to more countries and international destinations than any other airline in the world, currently operates to more than 300 international passenger and cargo destinations in total, in 124 countries. Having carried a record nearly 9 million passengers in 2018, LOT Polish Airlines currently offers convenient travel on its 111 routes worldwide, including long-haul direct connections to the USA, Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, India and Sri Lanka.

What's On



LOYAC participates in 'Industry Knights' program; KCCI honors students



LOYAC recently participated in the 'Industry Knights' program held in collaboration with the Kuwaiti Industries Union with the aim of developing the industrial sector and boosting high school students of its significance. 22 students took part in the program and were recently honored at KCCI.

Speaking on the occasion, LOYAC's board member Fetouh Al-Dalali stressed that more and more youth are now interested in taking part in programs that boost and develop their talents. She added that participants between the age of 12-17 were a part of the summer programs.

On his part, manager of the Kuwaiti Industries Union, Hoda Al-Baqshi expressed her pride in the continuation of the program for the ninth year noting that it mainly aims at boosting public awareness of the significance of national products, gaining special skills and developing human resources as well as making the best use of students' free time during the summer.



ACK receives ISO certification renewal

As part of Australian College of Kuwait's (ACK) commitment to providing quality higher education and training, the College is proud to announce that it has been awarded ISO 9001:2015 Certification Renewal, the most updated version of the Quality Management System Standard.

ACK is the first and only private higher education institution in Kuwait that has received the ISO 9001:2015 certification, under its quality policy of adopting a continual improvement approach to ensure quality service to its students, alumni, trainees, and stakeholders while delivering ACK services through effective management of its resources and operations.

This standard is based on a number of quality management principles including a leadership focus, risk based thinking, process approach and continual improvement. Applying ISO 9001:2015 helps ACK to ensure that pertinent stakeholders get consistent and good quality services.



Exceptional well-being retreat at Six Senses Spa at Symphony Style Kuwait



It's no secret that the Six Senses Spa, with its massive array of wellness, massage, fitness, and facial packages, is one of the best places in the State of Kuwait to visit during summer season.

Between the cleansing Hammam Maghrabi, Candle Massage, spa treatments, and fitness and yoga sessions, there is something for those who are seeking an adventure of wellness that will ensure you will escape, unplug, and start fresh.

Six Senses Spa is conveniently situated in the hotel's 2nd floor and features 11 treatment rooms and two hammams offering you immersive spa treatments, signature facials, and distinctive traditional Hammam, which is guaranteed to send you home feeling rejuvenated and healed. The spa also offers separate areas for male and female guests, a yoga studio, sauna, steam rooms and enlivening relaxation areas.

Treat yourself to a splurge-worthy stay at Symphony Style Kuwait, A Radisson Collection Hotel, and enjoy a 40 percent discount on all Six Senses Spa treatments

during weekdays from 10 am until 4 pm. The offer is valid until August 31, 2019 and is not applicable during public holidays.

Day Spa Package

This is a perfect top-to-toe spa experience starting with the cleansing Hammam Maghrabi. Your journey continues with a relaxing full body massage and concludes with a nourishing Six Senses facial. Your experience concludes with our Pink Paloma antioxidant rich tea.

Mini Spa Package

Start your experience with a coconut scrub which will leave your body clean and smooth. Continue with the blissful Marma massage to release muscle tension and conclude with our fresh juice.

Candle Massage

Experience our new candle massage that will take you on a journey of senses. It combines warm essences and

expert movements that will leave you rejuvenated and concludes with our 100-mystery anti-inflammatory tea.



Health

US records 33 new measles cases, raising total to 1,077

US risks 'losing its measles elimination status'

NEW YORK: The United States recorded 33 new measles cases last week, bringing the number of confirmed cases this year to 1,077 in the worst outbreak of the virus since 1992, federal health officials said yesterday. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the cases of the highly contagious and sometimes deadly disease rose 3% in the week ended June 20 from the prior week.

The 2019 outbreak, which has spread to 28 states, is the worst since 1992, when 2,126 cases were recorded. Health experts say the virus has spread among school-age children whose parents declined to give them the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine, which confers immunity to the disease. A vocal fringe of US parents, some in New York's ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, cite concerns that the vaccine may

cause autism, despite scientific studies that have debunked such claims.

The disease has mostly affected children who have not received the vaccine. Measles was declared eliminated in the United States in 2000, meaning there was no continuous transmission of the disease for a year. Still, cases of the virus occur and spread via travelers coming from countries where measles is common.

CDC officials have warned that the country risks losing its measles elimination status if the ongoing outbreak, which began in October 2018 in New York, continues until October 2019. The outbreak has escalated since 82 people in 2018 and more than 40 people in 2019 brought measles to the United States from other countries, most frequently Ukraine, Israel and the Philippines, federal officials said. — Reuters

Ebola death toll breaks the 1,500 mark in DR Congo

KINSHASA: More than 1,500 people have died in a nearly 10-month-old outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the health ministry said yesterday. As of Sunday, 1,506 people have died out of 2,239 recorded cases, it said. Earlier this month, the virus claimed two lives in neighboring Uganda among a family who had travelled to the DRC. Nearly 141,000 people have been vaccinated in the affected eastern DRC provinces of Ituri and North Kivu, the epicenter of the outbreak.

Ebola spreads among humans through close contact with the blood, body fluids, secretions or organs of an infected person, or objects contaminated by such fluids. The current outbreak in the DRC is the worst on record after an epidemic that struck mainly in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone between 2014-2016, killing more than 11,300 people. Chronic violence and militia activity in Ituri and North Kivu as well as hostility to medical teams among locals have hampered the response.

Yesterday, a crowd of people opposed to the burial of two Ebola victims in the Beni area burnt the vehicle of a health team, local police chief Colonel

Safari Kazingufu told AFP. He said a member of the medical team had been injured in the attack and taken to hospital. The United Nations in May nominated an emergency coordinator to deal with the crisis. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) said this month the outbreak currently did not represent a global threat. — AFP



NAIROBI: Travelers at the arrival terminal head to be screened by port health service, at the Jomo Kenyatta International airport in Nairobi. Kenya sought to reassure the public and foreign visitors after a suspected Ebola case. — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

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.

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

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

saharpolyclinic Dr.saharghannasmclinic Email: drsgderma@gmail.com

To advertise on this Page
Call: 24833199 ext:101,102 or Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617
or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

WELCOME

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

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

1 888 883
www.qmc-kuwait.com

qmc Kuwait

Dr. Abdullah Hadi

Cardiology Department
Consultant - Internal Medicine
Interventional Cardiology & Adult Cardiology

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

We bring you the best expertise
Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088 @TaibaHospital

Dr. Husain Alenezi

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

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

Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088 94449452 Twitter: @DrHusain_Urol

Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family

Book your appointments today!

Dr. Kiran Taraka Ophthalmologist
Dr. Zarana Zahir Ophthalmologist
Dr. Hasan Khan Senior Cardiologist
Dr. P. Seshendra Nath Orthopedic Consultant (AUSTRALIA) Specialized in Neck, Shoulder Hip and Knee

EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER
Block No.4 Jahra - Kuwait

50721507 24551555
Tel: 24568857 / 24568859 info@exircenterku.com www.exircenterku.com

WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR INSURANCES

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

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

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

Salmiya, Belajat Street, Tel: 1881122

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

ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

SPECIALIZED IN:

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

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

To advertise on this Page

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

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

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

مسشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

daralshifa

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

Specialized in:

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

alsalam.int.hospital

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

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

Specialized in:

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

alsalam.int.hospital

IC INTERNATIONAL CLINIC
بستشفى السلام الدولي
Al Salam International Hospital
Telephone: 1830003 Ext: 2400

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

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

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

Scope of Clinical Practice:

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

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

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

مسشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

daralshifa
Email: aalhadad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

Consultant Pediatrician-Canadian & American
Board in Pediatrics-Canadian
Board in Pediatric Emergency

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368
Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St.1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B

DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED
Consultant of General Surgery
Laparoscopic and Bariatric Surgery

Academic Certificates - Training

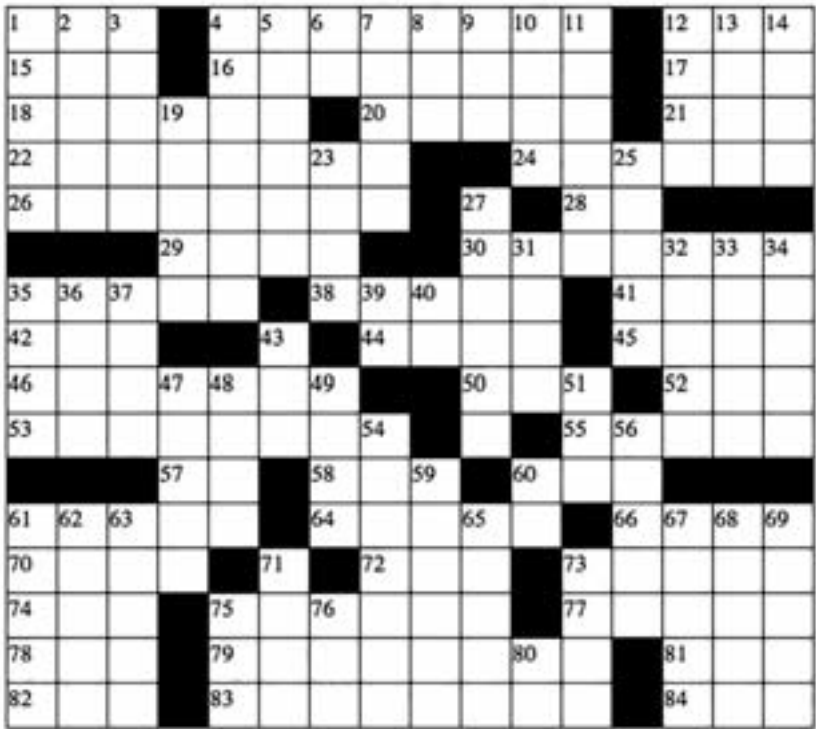
- Kuwait Board of General Surgery.
- (IFSO) member .
- Faculty member of (BEST).
- Member of Kuwait Surgical Association.

Scope of clinical Practice.

- Bariatric surgeries.
- Gallbladder stones surgeries.
- Abdominal wall and hernia surgeries.
- G.I. surgeries.
- Thyroid and para - thyroid surgeries.
- Anal surgeries.

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228
Jabriya, 4th Ring Road,Block 1A Floor 9 -Closer Center Mazaya Building

CROSSWORD 2240



ACROSS

- 1. A person's brother or sister.
- 4. A district in southwestern Scotland.
- 12. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- 15. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
- 16. Shrubby lichens of the family Usneaceae having a flattened thallus.
- 17. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
- 18. Involving the mind or an intellectual process.
- 20. (Phoenician and Philistine) God of agriculture and the earth.
- 21. 10 grams.
- 22. Colorless soluble flammable liquid ketone used as a solvent for resins and as a paint remover and in lacquers and cements and adhesives and cleaning fluids and celluloid.
- 24. Remote city of Kazakhstan that (ostensibly for security reasons) was made the capital in 1998.
- 26. Norwegian explorer who was the first to traverse the Northwest Passage and in 1911 the first to reach the South Pole (1872-1928).
- 28. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- 29. A door-like movable barrier in a fence or wall.
- 30. Lasting through all time.
- 35. Treated with some kind of application.
- 38. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
- 41. (Roman mythology) God of love.
- 44. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- 44. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
- 45. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
- 46. Long pinkish sour leafstalks usually eaten cooked and sweetened.
- 50. Tag the base runner to get him out.
- 52. (informal) Informed about the latest trends.
- 53. A famous waterfall in Venezuela.
- 55. Lower in esteem.
- 57. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- 58. (in Scotland or Ireland) A mountain or tall hill.
- 61. An ancient city in southeastern Greece.
- 64. A line spoken by an actor to the audience but not intended for others on the stage.
- 66. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
- 70. Minute floating marine tunicate having a transparent body with an opening at each end.
- 72. Any of various dark heavy viscid substances obtained as a residue.
- 74. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
- 77. Jordan's port.
- 78. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
- 79. An island in the Indian Ocean off the east coast of Africa.
- 81. Cooking utensil consisting of a wide metal vessel.
- 82. A sign of assent or salutation or command.
- 83. Speak carefully, with rising and falling pitch.
- 84. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- 1. Large west African tree having large palmately lobed leaves and axillary cymose panicles of small white flowers and one-winged seeds.
- 2. The part of the small intestine between the jejunum and the cecum.
- 3. Of or relating to the African people who speak one of the Bantoid languages or to their culture.
- 4. The father of your father or mother.
- 5. A town in central Belgium.
- 6. A unit of luminous flux equal to the amount of light given out through a solid angle of 1 steradian by a point source of 1 candela intensity radiating uniformly in all directions.
- 7. Filled with a great quantity.
- 8. Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
- 9. Hairpiece covering the head and made of human or synthetic hair.
- 10. Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
- 11. Used by southerners for an inhabitant of a northern state in the United States (especially a Union soldier).
- 12. Edible starchy tuberous root of taro plants.
- 13. An official language of the Republic of South Africa.
- 14. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
- 19. Japanese architect (born in 1913).
- 23. A condition requiring relief.
- 25. Of or relating to or characteristic of the people or language of Malaysia and the N Malay Peninsula and parts of the W Malay Archipelago.
- 27. Void of thought or knowledge.
- 31. Offering fun and gaiety.
- 32. A member of the Sioutan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- 33. The fifth of the seven canonical hours.
- 34. Any of various juicy purple- or green-skinned fruit of the genus Vitis.
- 36. An island of central Hawaii (between Molokai and Kauai).
- 37. A member of the Algonquian people living in Wisconsin the Fox River valley and the shores of Green Bay.
- 39. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- 40. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
- 43. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
- 47. An early form of modern jazz (originating around 1940).
- 48. Type genus of the Anatidae.
- 49. A small cake leavened with yeast.
- 51. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
- 54. A person of mixed racial ancestry (especially mixed European and Native American ancestry).
- 56. A dyed fabric.
- 59. A B vitamin essential for the normal function of the nervous system and the gastrointestinal tract.
- 60. A heavy ductile magnetic metallic element.
- 62. (combining form) Indicating radiation or radioactivity.
- 63. Any of various organs that synthesize substances needed by the body and release it through ducts or directly into the bloodstream.
- 65. Any of numerous low-growing cushion-forming plants of the genus Draba having rosette-forming leaves and terminal racemes of small flowers with scape or leafy stems.
- 67. (BabyIonian) A demigod or first man.
- 68. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- 69. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
- 71. Broken husks of the seeds of cereal grains that are separated from the flour by sifting.
- 73. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 75. A type of submachine gun that is designed and manufactured in Israel.
- 76. Explosive consisting of a yellow crystalline compound that is a flammable toxic derivative of toluene.
- 80. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is not a great time to make changes nor decisions regarding your career. These issues are better being dealt with at a later date. This is a time of nostalgia for you. A sense of roots and where you actually came from seems to be on your mind. You desire to know more about your family history: Who were your ancestors and what adversity did they face in their lives? This is something that is on your mind and you may find yourself starting to research this. You want to feel as if you belong on an intimate and private level with those close to you. You may feel as if your actions of today could affect the future of family members yet to come. You are determined to leave a positive impression on this world.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have friends of all ages, all walks of life, all cultures, and different races. You may find this to be a very healthy environment. It is always beneficial to try to see things from others perspectives. This evening could find you exchanging ideas and obtaining other's outlooks on life. This is a very enlightening time for you. Always keep an open mind. Knowledge is power and you can gain much seeing things through other's eyes. Enjoy your evening with friends. You may find this to be a great time and a wonderful learning experience for you.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

A great time to reflect and understand your situation and your position in life. You may find you feel good about who you are. You have come a long way. There have been obstacles and road blocks in your path. You have successfully been able to turn the stumbling blocks into stepping stones, along the way. This seems to be a time you long to surround yourself with friends and may feel as if this is where you are more comfortable. A need for change may arise. Make sure the decisions you make now are positive, and well thought out.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may feel secure in your position in life. You may find a career opportunity comes your way. Status and stability are two things you need to take into consideration when making this decision. You have to find a comfortable balance between family and work life. You may find this opportunity is a great one, but at what cost? This is a time to rethink your finances and investments. Put deep thought into your decision and always keep your family first. Family will be your support long after a job has come and gone. Remember money can not buy happiness.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

When your friends think about the one person they can always depend on, they think of you. When there is a problem you are the "go to" friend to all. You are very solution oriented. You are always willing to lend a helping hand. You may find someone is very sympathetic of the situation this puts you in and reaches out to assist you today. Accept the help. No one person can do it all, nor does anyone expect them to.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Today finds you ready to take care of business. You crave organization and practicality. You have set your goals, made your list, and are ready to set out to conquer the world. There is a place for everything and everything has a place as far as you are concerned. You will not stop until you have things just where you want them. You find yourself focused on your health, also. This is a time you know you cannot achieve your goals unless you are at your best. Eat your Wheaties, Virgo. You have mountains to climb.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Today may bring an opportunity to have a special time with a love one. This may you lead to emotion on a deeper level with this person. Feelings and emotions, you have been craving will be met and satisfied by this interaction. You have been feeling a need for an emotional connection and strong support from someone near to you. As independent as you are there has been a desire to know someone has your back and will be there to support you for the long haul. Your timing is perfect, and others are drawn to your mood as today you are spontaneous and full of life.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It is ok to be different. Others seem to find you witty and eccentric. It seems many answers to problems you have been facing may come to you easily today. You grow to appreciate your responsibilities. You know you have been assigned duties because you are trusted. Your hard work is paying off. You may find the harder you work the more responsibility is placed on you. This may be a blessing and a curse in a way. Is your reward for hard work, more hard work? This will pay off in the end. You will be admired for your dedication and may be offered a new position.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You have a lot of energy today. You may be tempted to turn it on yourself with negative conversations about you. That's counter-productive. Focus your energy on someone else you have positive feelings about, and both of you will benefit. Every encounter is an opportunity to affirm and encourage. The results may surprise you.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Resist the urge to act on just a hunch. This could lead to big trouble if you do not take the time to do research and find out all of the facts. Acting with research on this one could leave you in quite a mess. You had rather be safe than sorry. You may find yourself in a situation you could be in over your head before you even realize it. If it seems to good to be true, it usually is. That is the case with something you will face today. You may feel a great desire for travel and adventure. If you stop and take time to think about this, it is really not a great time in your life right now. Sit back and take a deep breath and try to slow down a bit.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Today finds you a wizard of words. Through your words you may be able to bring a group together. You are persuasive and captivating. Poetry and art would be wonderful outlets for self-expression now. You may feel as you are walking in a dream. An almost trance-like feeling comes over you. This is a good evening to find an escape, a good book or staying in and watching a movie would be a great way to spend your evening. Even if a long bath is the route you choose find a way to have a relaxing evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

If it can go wrong, it will. That seems to be the way things are going today. You may feel like going back home and crawl back in bed. Today finds you very sensitive. Old habits die hard and you seem to be struggling with some bad ones today. You feel a lack of support and may find yourself clashing with someone younger. You will have to gather your strength and face each problem as they come. Find a way to relieve stress this evening. You need to relax and rejuvenate.

Wordsearch Puzzle

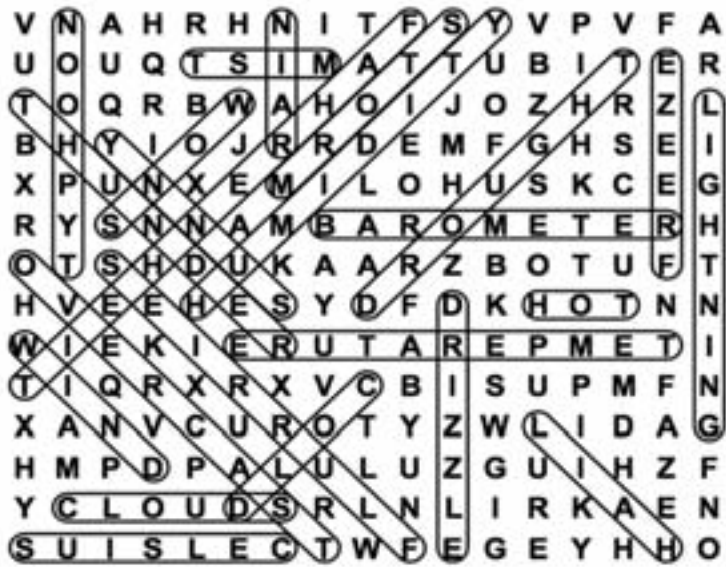
Weather 2 - Word Search



- | | | |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| BLIZZARD | HEAT WAVE | THERMOMETER |
| CLIMATE | HUMID | TORNADO |
| COLD FRONT | HURRICANE | TSUNAMI |
| CYCLONE | ICE | VISIBILITY |
| DOWNGRADE | METEOROLOGY | WIND CHILL |
| FLOOD | MONSOON | |
| FOG | SHOWER | |
| FORECAST | SLEET | |

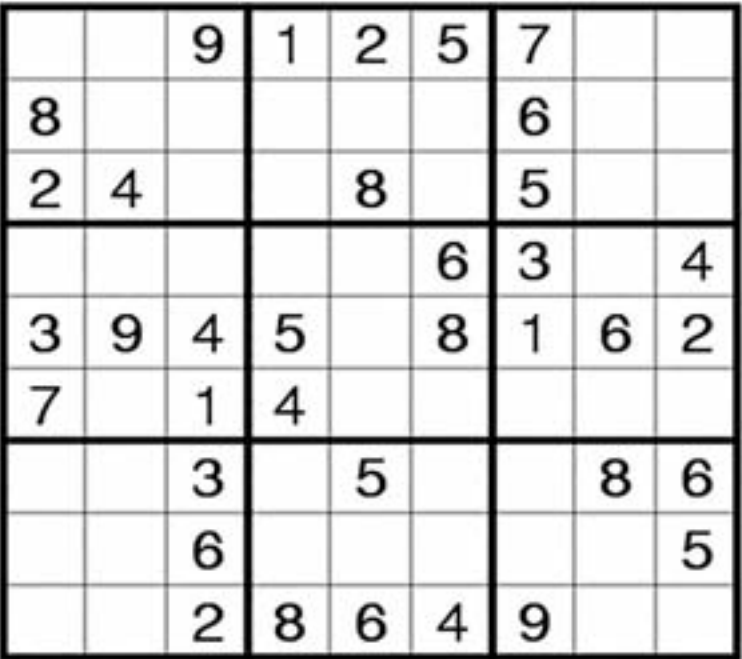
Yesterday's Solution

Weather 1 - Solution

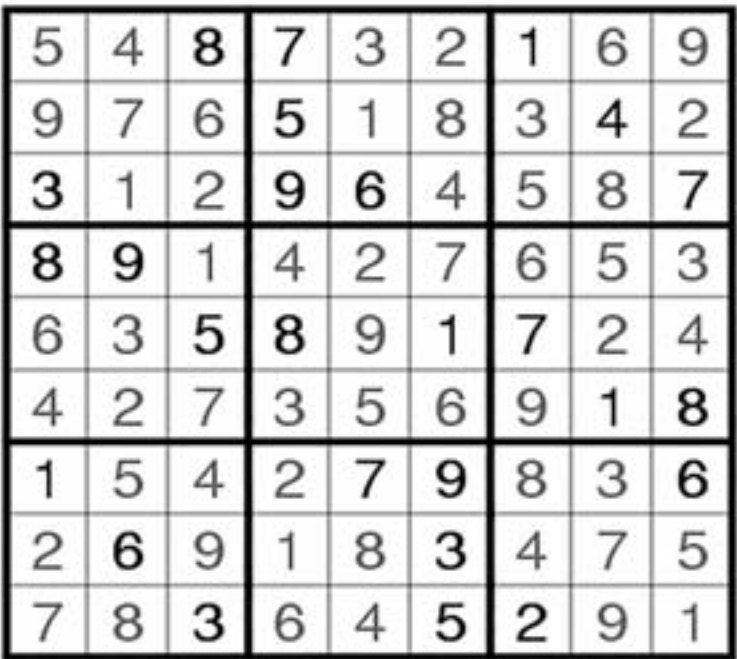


- | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------|
| BAROMETER | HAIL | SUNNY |
| CELSIUS | HOT | TEMPERATURE |
| CLOUDS | HUMIDITY | THUNDER |
| COLD | LIGHTNING | TYPHOON |
| DRIZZLE | MIST | WIND |
| DROUGHT | OVERCAST | |
| FAHRENHEIT | RAIN | |
| FLURRIES | SNOW | |

Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2019



People attend the 'Karl For Ever' event to honor late German fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld at the Grand Palais in Paris. — AFP

FARM FIGHTS STIGMA IN RUSSIA FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES



Natasha, 21, who has Down syndrome, serves lunch to residents of the Svetlana farm outside the settlement of Aleksino, some 130 kilometers (80 miles) from Saint Petersburg.



Yelena Aleneva, 51, director of the Svetlana farm, works in the farm dairy outside the settlement of Aleksino.



Natasha, 21, who has Down syndrome, serves lunch to residents of the Svetlana farm outside the settlement of Aleksino.



Tolik, 21, poses in front of a cowshed at the Svetlana farm outside the settlement of Aleksino. — AFP photos

On a warm sunny day, 37-year-old Vika walked through a farmyard carrying a compost bin, saying to AFP with pride: "This is my job." She's one of 18 Russians with learning disabilities to live and work on the Svetlana farm which has a dairy and bakery where residents do daily chores and therapy. It's a rare example in Russia of people with special needs being integrated into the local community, as most remain hidden from view in outdated state institutions left over from Soviet times. The farm opened more than 25 years ago in a village, 130 kilometers (80 miles) from Russia's second city, Saint Petersburg.

It is part of an international residential communities movement founded by an Austrian paediatrician in 1939. The Camphill Movement provides educational and employment support for adults with learning disabilities and other special needs around the world. At Svetlana, residents with various types of learning disabilities including Down syndrome lead an outdoorsy life on the farm, with help from five teachers and three volunteers. In sharp contrast to conditions in state-run homes, they live together in spacious houses, where they have separate bedrooms and share living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens.

'Integrate into ordinary life'

Most Svetlana residents are sent to live on the farm for long periods by their families or guardians and contribute towards their costs which are mostly met by charity and state donations. For Vika, the farm has been home for the last 19 years during which time she has "changed a lot", director Yelena Aleneva, 51, said. "She has become an independent person," she told AFP. "The goal of the farm is to integrate the residents into ordinary life as much as possible," she added. Vika and her fellow farm hands work in the morning before moving on to their hobbies.

On the day AFP visited, art therapy teacher Irina Andreyeva was rehearsing a play with them based on the French classic "The Little Prince" that included dance, music and their drawings. Watching Natasha, a young girl with Down syndrome, dance in the show, Andreyeva said: "They are very talented, each in their own way."

Soviet-era isolation

According to official figures, 160,000 people with learning difficulties still live in state institutions in Russia that have a dire reputation. Under communism, authorities encouraged isolating people with learning disabilities, who were considered unfit for

work, to such places. Living conditions in the facilities sharply deteriorated during the economic crisis following the fall of the USSR in 1990. Despite significant improvements since then, they continue to be a matter of concern for human rights activists.

In 2015, a fire killed 23 mostly elderly patients at a residential home in southwest Russia. Two years earlier, two other fires in the same type of institution killed almost 80 people. Standard state residential centers have hundreds of people crammed together in dormitories, often under-supervised and with limited opportunities to train for employment, according to campaigners for reforms and rights groups.

"For a child with learning disabilities, it is a difficult scenario," Anna Klepikova, an anthropologist at Saint Petersburg's European University, told AFP. "In Russia, there is practically no chance of socialization after someone reaches 18 years of age," she said. She noted however "real trends towards Russian society becoming more humane" towards those with learning disabilities. Programs to help people integrate are appearing, she said. "But these only cater for the needs of a few dozen people."

Reforms?

Reform proposals have been drawn up for Russia's more than 500 state institutions for people with learning disabilities but have so far not led to concrete measures. They aim to reduce the number of old-style state homes and develop therapies like those provided by the Svetlana community. "The government is ready to work on this with us, but a change in legislation is needed," Pravmir website quoted Anna Bitova, head of an educational NGO for children with learning disabilities and a government committee member on social policy, as saying.

Russian law, she said, currently does not allow the state to provide individually tailored support for people with learning disabilities outside traditional residential facilities. "Without federal financing to solve this problem, the regions will not do anything," the website, which writes about social problems, rights issues and religious matters, quoted her as saying. Svetlana's director said that staff there were on hand to help authorities create new programs. Currently though, she added, "no one is interested in our 20 years of experience." — AFP

Thai 'Wild Boars' pay respects to hero diver who died in rescue

The "Wild Boars" youth football team, whose plight captivated the world a year ago when they were trapped for nearly three weeks in a flooded Thai cave, paid their respects yesterday to a diver who died trying to save them. During their rescue, the 12 boys and their coach were fitted-out in full-face breathing masks and sedated before being pulled to safety through a hazardous underwater labyrinth.

Thai Navy SEAL diver Saman Gunan died during the operation, the only fatality of the three-week ordeal at the Tham Luang cave in northern Thailand. Yesterday the boys gave alms to Buddhist monks at a ceremony in Gunan's honor, also offering a feast to cave spirits. Adul Sam-on, aged 14 at the time of the cave drama, described Saman as "a second father to us". "The incident is in my mind every day."

Saman Gunan's widow broke down in tears as her husband's heroism was remembered. "I want to tell [Saman] not to worry, I will be strong and look after myself and the family and parents always," Valepon Gunan said. The day's events marked a solemn end to a weekend marking the first anniversary of the saga. On Sunday the

team joined a charity race of 5,000 joggers and cyclists—many in fancy dress—on a course that took them past a statue of Gunan.

The cave entrance has been transformed into a shrine to last year's events for the droves of selfie-snapping tourists, both local and foreign, who now visit the site. The team became global celebrities and have since toured the world, meeting footballing giants at Manchester United and LA Galaxy, headlining Ellen Degeneres's US talk show, and signing a film deal with Netflix. Exclusivity contracts mean they are no longer free to speak to the press. Three of the team and their coach, Ekkapol Chantawong, were stateless at the time of the incident, but have all been granted Thai citizenship. One of the boys to receive a passport for the first time was Adul, now 15, who shot to fame after thanking in English the British divers who found the group nine days after they went missing. The boys are still avid footballers, and the coach has been able to realize his dream of running his own football academy. — AFP



Ekkapol "Coach Ek" Chantawong (back center) of the "Wild Boars" football team speaks during an interview at the Tham Luang cave center as they mark the first anniversary of their rescue from the cave in the Mae Sai district of Chiang Rai province yesterday. — AFP



A member of the "Wild Boars" football team places flowers in front of a statue of Saman Gunan.

SINGERS SOLANGE AND LISA STAR IN PARIS FASHION WEEK'S FINALE



Models present creations by Kenzo during the men's spring/summer 2020 fashion collection shows in Paris.

Models present creations for Celine during the men's spring/summer 2020 collection fashion shows in Paris.

Kenzo's designers Humberto Leon and Carol Lim, and singer Solange Knowles, acknowledge the audience at the end of presentation of Kenzo's creations during the men's spring/summer 2020 fashion collection in Paris. — AFP photos

The curtain came down on Paris men's fashion Sunday with two high-concept shows that had walk-on roles for Solange and K-pop sensation Lisa. Kenzo's design duo Carol Lim and Humberto Leon said goodbye to the French label with Solange as the surprise performer in the same Paris stadium which Elton John had packed to the rafters a few nights previously. The Californians' ended their eight-year reign with a bang as the American star appeared on a platform to sing "I'm a Witness" in between the men's and womenswear lines. The brilliantly choreographed event had started with a similar wow moment when a huge curtain was pulled away in front of 600 or so fashionistas to reveal several thousand more people on the other side.

Having conducted her 11-piece black-clad brass band, Beyonce's younger sister then walked arm-in-arm with the designers to acknowledge the ovation at the end, with the feminist English rapper M.I.A in the front row. Balmain's Olivier Rousteing got the weekend rocking late on Friday night by making the hot French DJ Kiddy Smile the center of his show-cum-concert.

Real-life Japanese mermaids

The young French creator—who often dresses big music stars for their tours—also threw open the doors by giving away 2,000 tickets. "Everyone is talking about inclusivity from behind their screens but no one is actually doing something," he told reporters. Inclusion has been one of Lim and Leon's watchwords, and their final Kenzo collection was inspired by Japanese Ama divers, the "sea women" who have been diving for pearls for 2,000 years. Traditionally, the divers only wore a loincloth and the pair picked up that motif with rippling, silkily aquatic clothes that weren't obviously sexy but were utterly sensual at the same time.

Men's and women's lines were peppered with gorgeously original fishing and mermaid metaphors, with a fluidity and a dreaminess about the clothes, particularly in the play with pearls, urchins and little touches of foaming silk and organza. While Lim and Leon went out on a high, you could be forgiven for feeling that Hedi Slimane, Mr Rock Chic himself, was treading water somewhat. The style superstar who is credited with the skinny look has taken a terrible kicking from critics since unseating the beloved feminist creator Phoebe Philo at Celine.



Fashion designer Olivier Rousteing, acknowledges the audience at the end of the Balmain Men's spring/summer 2020 fashion collection in Paris.



Slimane's retro flares

He closed fashion week with another no-expense-spared show that began with an awesome theatrical device. As for the clothes, the big news is that the "Sultan of Slim" has jettisoned his trademark drainpipes, the trousers the late Karl Lagerfeld once lost nearly 42 kilos (92 pounds) to fit into, for flares worn long over heeled boots. Skinny though lives on in the rake-thin male models, every one wearing black aviator shades. In fact, Slimane's "Celine 04" collection was very much like a male version of "Celine 03"—a walk down memory lane.

This time it was a sometimes literalist re-creation of what American West Coast rock star types were wearing circa 1973, with a sharp couture sheen and added sparkles. Tight leather jackets and flares, unbuttoned shirts and three-piece double breasted suits with white cowboy boots, red carnation button holes and long thin scarves.

Fans scream for Lisa

Some tops carried downbeat slogans from New York artist David Kramer's paintings such as "Yesterday was better", "My own worst enemy" and "Downhill from here". You could not help but wonder if Slimane—whose army of loyal free-spending fans are known as "Slimaniacs"—was teasing his critics, with one of Kramer's images carrying the caption, "...There is no irony here." Fans did scream at the end but it was more for Lisa, the Thai-born rapper of Blackpink fame who is Slimane's new "official muse" and who was in the front row.

There was much joy to be had elsewhere with the reinvigorated British brand Dunhill and Paul Smith, the doyen of English tailoring, showing there is plenty of creative life left in variations on the suit. But the big breath of fresh air was the young French designer Bruno Sialleli confirming the promise of his debut collection for Lanvin with a show held at a swimming pool. Quirky, cool, cute and a lot of fun to look at—and clearly to wear—Sialleli turned out a collection that played with

every cliché of the French summer and seaside and somehow made them look new.

It was hard not to smile at his tricorne straw hats. Not for him the pasty, androgynous models that often dominate the Paris catwalk. "I wanted the boys to eat well and to look healthy and strong," he told AFP. "Now I need a holiday, he added. "I mean, I love my work but holidays are the best things in life, no?" — AFP



Models present creations for Balmain during the Men's spring/summer 2020 fashion collection.



In this file photo Michael Jackson's children, Prince Jackson (left), Blanket Jackson (center) and Paris Jackson (right) speak on stage during the 'Michael Forever' concert in memory of the late Michael Jackson at The Millenium Stadium in Cardiff, Wales. — AFP photos



In this file photo (from left) Defense attorney J Michael Flanagan, Dr Conrad Murray and defense attorney Ed Chernoff look on prior to the start of the morning's court proceedings during the final stage of Conrad Murray's defense in his involuntary manslaughter trial in the death of singer Michael Jackson at the Los Angeles Superior Court.



In this file photo Paris Jackson arrives for the 2018 LACMA Art+Film Gala at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in Los Angeles, California.

Michael Jackson fans defiant as abuse claims loom over anniversary

Defiant fans are preparing to mark 10 years since Michael Jackson's death as fascination with the King of Pop remains undimmed despite lurid claims of child sex abuse. On Hollywood's Walk of Fame, the singer's star continues to draw a constant scrum of selfie-snapping tourists, while nearby souvenir shops, street performers and even tattoo parlors report a brisk trade in all things Jackson. Across the street at Ripley's Believe It Or Not museum, a statue of the singer is strategically perched above the box office to entice tourists. Staff at Madame Tussauds say Jackson's wax-work remains a top draw.

Yet according to the groundbreaking HBO documentary "Leaving Neverland," released earlier this year, it was just a few hours' drive from the heart of Hollywood that Jackson used his celebrity and glamor to molest young boys at his fairytale-themed ranch. While most fans who spoke to AFP were aware of the documentary, the adoration fostered from growing up with the "Thriller" megastar's many hits supersedes all else.

"I came here actually only for him. I don't take pictures with any other star," said Dutch tourist Hooman Nazemi. "Some stuff that they were saying in the doc was kind of hard, but you cannot say 100 percent it's true ... I just love him. I love him and I think everybody does." Antoine Baynes, 31, a Jackson impersonator who moon-walks along Hollywood Boulevard for tourists' tips, said the allegations had done nothing to diminish his performances' appeal-in fact, the opposite. "After the HBO special came out I received just as much if not more attention than before. It kinda gave it publicity," he said. "Honestly I've married people as Michael Jackson. I have two weddings to do this Sunday, to do as Michael Jackson!"

'Love Rally'

The claims in the HBO documentary by two men who say Jackson sexually abused them for years as minors were not the first, but reignited the scandal after the star's fatal overdose at age 50 in 2009. In his lifetime, Jackson denied all child sex allegations and his estate filed a \$100 million lawsuit against HBO for "posthumous character assassination." On Tuesday, the anniversary of Jackson's passing, die-hard fans from around the world have planned an "MJ Innocent Love Rally" through Hollywood to gather at his star on the sidewalk. Other events include a "zombie dance" on Venice Beach and screenings of fan-made tribute films.

Those who cannot attend are invited to donate money for an annual ceremony placing roses by Jackson's grave in the nearby Forest Lawn cemetery. Organizers did not

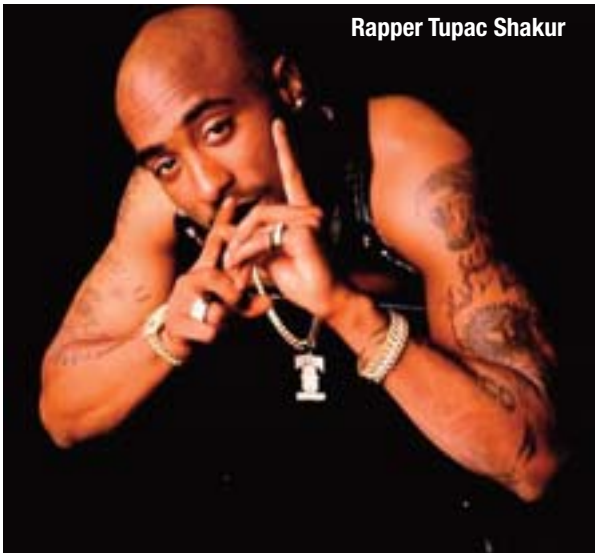


People pose for pictures with Michael Jackson's Hollywood Walk of Fame star in Hollywood.



respond to a request for comment, but claim on Twitter that a record of more than 18,000 roses have been bought this year. Yet numbers signing up to the events' Facebook pages are conspicuously low, and pro-Jackson messageboards are rife with complaints about the lack of mainstream enthusiasm for anniversary events this year. If the controversy has dampened commemorations-with Variety reporting that TV networks and producers have pulled the plug on long-planned anniversary programs-Jackson's commercial clout remains substantial.

T-shirts, keyrings and coasters bearing the singer's likeness remain on prominent display at Hollywood tourist stores lining the boulevard, outnumbered only by images of Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe. Of a dozen such shops visited by AFP, only one had removed Jackson memorabilia from its shelves, citing a decline in interest. And for some die-hard fans, a throwaway souvenir just won't cut it. "We get people asking for the silhouette, with the hat, sometimes his signature," said tattoo artist John Lopez. "Maybe five or six each year. It's no different this year." — AFP



Tupac, Tom Petty estates among group suing Universal over fire

Estates of rapper Tupac Shakur and rocker Tom Petty are among a group seeking at least \$100 million in damages from Universal Music Group after revelations that a 2008 fire allegedly torched precious master recordings. The class action lawsuit filed just before the weekend is the first legal action lobbied at UMG since The New York Times published a bombshell investigation saying that a trove of some 500,000 recordings including masters were destroyed in the June 1, 2008 blaze.

Three law firms filed the suit in US Central District Court in Los Angeles on behalf of artists including Tupac and Petty's estates along with members of the band Soundgarden, alt rock group Hole and folk-rocker Steve Earle. "UMG stored the Master Recordings embodying Plaintiffs' musical works in an inadequate, substandard storage warehouse located on the backlot of Universal Studios that was a known firetrap," reads the filing. The suit also alleges UMG "concealed the loss with false public statements" while pursuing a confidential settlement with its sister company, Universal Studios.

Citing the terms of their recording contracts the artists say they are entitled to at least half of that settlement, estimated to be worth at least \$150 million, according to court documents. "UMG concealed its massive recovery from plaintiffs, apparently hoping it could keep it all to itself by burying the truth in sealed court filings and a confidential settlement agreement," the suit says. The work of stars including Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong,

Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, Sonny and Cher, Joni Mitchell, Eric Clapton, Elton John, Janet Jackson and Nirvana was reportedly engulfed in the flames.

Master recordings are one-of-a-kind source material used to create vinyls, CDs and digital copies, the loss of which would be particularly devastating for posthumous releases and lucrative reissues. The head of Universal Lucian Grainge said the company owes artists "transparency" over the devastating fire, but in the wake of the Times expose the conglomerate has largely downplayed the losses. "It happened 11 years ago and [recent] headlines are just noise," Arnaud de Puyfontaine, the CEO of Vivendi, Universal's parent company, told Variety. French media titan Vivendi is currently seeking to sell 50 percent of Universal, by far the world's largest music company, a closely watched deal that de Puyfontaine said remains on track. — AFP

Michael Jackson's orbit, 10 years later

In the months following pop icon Michael Jackson's shock death on June 25, 2009, his inner circle found themselves thrust into the spotlight. Ten years on, as the late King of Pop faces lurid allegations of pedophilia from men he kept close as youths, here's a look at what's become of the rest of the eccentric bunch surrounding MJ:

Children

Jackson went to great lengths to shield his three children-Michael Joseph "Prince" Jr (22), Paris (21) and Prince Michael II, better known as "Blanket" (17) — from the paparazzi, often putting masks on them in public. Since his death the two older children have slowly started embracing the limelight, and are active on social media. The eldest son has said he neither sings nor dances but still entertains hopes of a show-biz career, founding King's Son Productions in 2016.

Paris has made several awards show appearances, modeled for labels including Calvin Klein and Chanel, and along with her boyfriend forms the folk-rock duo The Soundflowers. She has struggled with mental health and admitted trying to kill herself in 2013. But she slammed reports she attempted suicide again earlier this year-shortly after the release of the bombshell documentary accusing her father of child sex abuse. Blanket, who was born to an unnamed surrogate and now prefers to go by "Bigi," is still in high school and has mostly laid low as he comes of age. Perhaps his most famous world appearance was in 2002 when he was still an infant-and his father dangled him over the balcony of a chic Berlin hotel.

Parents

Joe Jackson-known as the demanding patriarch of the Jackson clan, with whom Michael had a strained relationship-died on June 27, 2018 at age 89. He launched his family's dynasty as manager of The Jackson 5 sibling group, steering at times the careers of Michael and daughter Janet. Often criticized as a stringent taskmaster, Joe was left out of Michael's will and failed to win bids for compensation. Katherine Jackson, Michael's now 89-year-old mother, gained custody of his three children following his death and is a beneficiary of the family trust.

Siblings

Michael's sister Janet, 53, is a pop icon in her own right and earlier this year nabbed a spot in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. An artist whose synth-driven sound came to define the cutting edge of New York's club scene in the late 1980s, Janet in recent years has continued to tour and focus on charity efforts.

She gave birth to a son in January 2017. Michael's brothers-Jackie, Tito, Marlon, Jermaine and Randy-

have been among the most vocal backers of his legacy despite the troubling allegations against him. They have continued to tour and record in various combinations. Sisters La Toya, 63, and Maureen, 69, have had minor singing careers, with the former taking a turn on a number of reality television shows. The siblings were left out of Michael's will-a subject of much legal wrangling-with the estate divvied out to charity, his mother and his children.

Exes

Debbie Rowe-a nurse and Michael's second wife, with the pair marrying in 1996 — is the mother of the singer's eldest children but was largely absent while Michael was alive. Since his death she struck a deal with his mother for some visits with the kids. Lisa Marie Presley-the daughter of Elvis, who wed Michael in 1994 — has long denied that her short-lived marriage to the popstar was a cover-up to revive his image following pedophilia accusations, as many reports suggested. A musician, she has married and divorced four times, including to actor Nicolas Cage and guitarist Michael Lockwood, and is a mother of four. "I do believe he loved me as much as he could love anyone and I loved him very much," she wrote on MySpace after Michael's death.

Doctors

Conrad Murray, 66, administered the anesthetic propofol to Jackson in a dose that ultimately triggered the singer's cardiac arrest and untimely death. He was found guilty in 2011 of involuntary manslaughter after a highly publicized trial. Murray was released from California prison two years before his four-year sentence finished on good behavior. He has since maintained his innocence but lost medical licenses in several states, and maintains a low profile. Arnold Klein, Jackson's longtime dermatologist and friend, died in 2015 at age 70. The "King of Collagen" popular among A-listers treated Jackson for the skin disorder vitiligo. Rumors swirled that donated sperm was used to father Jackson's eldest children-their mother Rowe worked in his clinic-but were never confirmed.

Lawyers

Jackson's siblings have complained of the management of his estate, which was entrusted to entertainment lawyer John Branca and the late superstar's lawyer, John McClain. The co-executors are nevertheless credited with transforming Michael's hundreds of millions of dollars in debt into assets worth more than \$1 billion.—AFP

Classifieds

Tuesday, June 25, 2019



STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



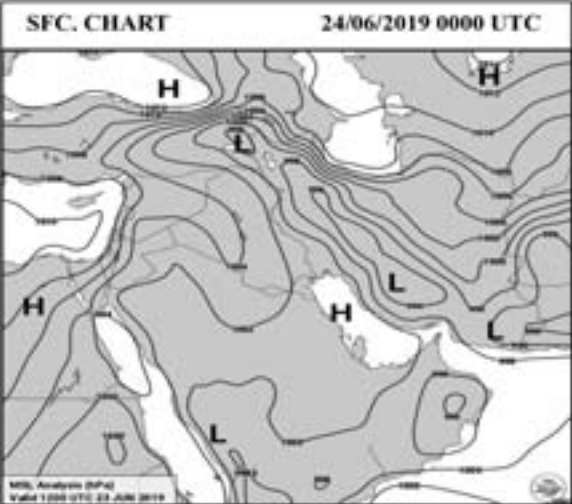
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot and with light to moderate north westerly wind changing to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h .

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	<div>SFC. CHART24/06/2019 0000 UTC</div>	
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	35 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	47 °C	29 °C		
ABDALY	48 °C	27 °C		
BUBYAN	+ °C	+ °C		
JAHRA	47 °C	35 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	42 °C	29 °C		
SALMIYAH	39 °C	31 °C		
AHMADI	37 °C	34 °C		
NUWAISIB	40 °C	28 °C		
WAFRA	44 °C	27 °C		
SALMY	45 °C	28 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST					
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.	
Tuesday	06/25	Very hot	50 °C	30 °C	NW 12 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	06/26	Very hot with a chance for rising dust	50 °C	32 °C	NW 15 - 50 km/h
Thursday	06/27	Very hot with a chance for rising dust	49 °C	34 °C	NW 20 - 50 km/h
Friday	06/28	Very hot	47 °C	32 °C	NW-VRB 08 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:14
Sunrise	04:50
Zuhr	11:50
Asr	15:24
Sunset	18:51
Isha	20:23

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	46 °C
MIN. Temp.	30 °C
MAX. RH	36 %
MIN. RH	09 %
MAX. Wind	N 36 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Durairaj** Murugaiyan, holder of Indian Passport No: L4907492, Salmiya, Block 9, Al Mugera St, building No. 84, first floor, flat No. 06, issued in Kuwait hereby change name as it appears in my passport from given name: MURUGAIYAN DURAIRAJ to sur-name: MURUGAIYAN and given name: DURAIRAJ for all future

purposes. (C 5554)
21-6-2019

I, **RAPHAEL** JASON, holder of Indian Passport No. M6102415, Hawally, Block-6, Building-2601, Flat Number-10 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare the name change as Surname Rajan Babu (RAJAN BABU) and given name Raphael Jason (RAPHAEL JASON). (C 5551)
19-6-2019

Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	
22418064/5/6	
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22456700
Air India EXPRESS	22438185/4
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9



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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 25/6/2019					Departure Flights on Tuesday 25/6/2019				
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	
FEG	241	Alexandria	00:05	THY 766	Istanbul	12:30			
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	KAC 614	Bahrain	12:30			
KAC	122	AGP	00:20	UAE 871	Dubai	12:45			
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	MSR 610	Cairo	12:45			
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	AXB 393	Kozhikode	13:10			
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZR 222	Riyadh	13:30			
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	FBS 118	Sarajevo	13:30			
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	JZR 212	Jeddah	13:45			
KAC	182	Paris/NCE	01:10	FDB 8191	Dubai	13:50			
RJA	642	Amman	01:20	UAE 877	Dubai	14:00			
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC 672	Riyadh	14:00			
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KNE 231	Bahrain	14:15			
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:50	GFA 221	Doha	14:20			
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	FDB 059	Doha	14:25			
KKK	1268	Istanbul	01:55	QTR 1078	Dhaka	14:35			
JZR	262	Beirut	02:05	KAC 286	Jeddah	14:45			
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	SVA 500	Mumbai	14:45			
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:25	KAC 304	Amman	14:50			
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC 562	Doha	14:50			
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	KAC 618	Jeddah	14:55			
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	KAC 788	Baku	15:00			
THY	768	Istanbul	02:55	JZR 602	Muscat	15:00			
JZR	406	Kochi	03:05	KAC 692	New York	15:00			
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KNE 529	Jeddah	15:05			
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ETD 303	Abu Dhabi	15:15			
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	OMA 645	Muscat	15:20			
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	ABY 127	Sharjah	15:35			
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	UAE 857	Dubai	15:45			
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	KAC 546	Cairo	15:50			
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	FEG 341	Sohag	16:00			
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	FDB 051	Dubai	16:10			
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	MSR 575	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:10			
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	JZR 732	Cairo	16:10			
KAC	382	Delhi	04:40	QTR 1072	Doha	16:15			
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	KAC 502	Beirut	16:15			
THY	1414	Trabzon	05:05	FEG 241	Alexandria	16:45			
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	JZR 116	Doha	17:05			
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	SVA 510	Riyadh	17:10			
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	GFA 215	Bahrain	17:30			
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	JZR 214	Jeddah	17:35			
UAE	873	Dubai	05:40	KAC 158	Dubai	17:40			
KAC	552	Cairo	05:50	JZR 104	Bahrain	18:00			
KAC	112	Doha	05:50	QTR 1080	Doha	18:10			
KAC	362	Colombo	06:05	JZR 612	Tbilisi	18:15			
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR 302	Istanbul	18:20			
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	MSR 620	Cairo	18:30			
THY	6376	Istanbul	06:30	UAE 875	Dubai	19:05			
KAC	106	London	06:40	FDB 063	Dubai	19:05			
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	RJA 640	Amman	19:05			
KAC	204	Lahore	06:45	GFA 217	Bahrain	19:05			
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	ABY 123	Sharjah	19:20			
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	KAC 744	Dammam	19:25			
JZR	408	Ahmedabad	07:05	NIA 0161	Cairo	19:30			
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	KAC 616	Bahrain	19:40			
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	RBG 555	Alexandria	19:40			
KAC	354	Bengaluru	08:00	KAC 674	Riyadh	19:45			
IRA	675	Lar	08:00	KAC 776	Vienna	19:50			
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	FDB 057	Dubai	19:50			
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC 166	Rome	20:00			
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	OMA 647	Muscat	20:05			
JZR	708	Luxor	08:45	DLH 624	Frankfurt	20:10			
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	MEA 402	Beirut	20:15			
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	KAC 620	Doha	20:30			
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	RBG 213	Sohag	20:30			
GFA	209	Bahrain	09:05	KAC 542	Cairo	20:35			
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	QTR 1088	Doha	20:40			
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KLM 445	Amsterdam	21:00			
KAC	384	Delhi	09:55	KAC 172	Frankfurt	21:00			
SAW	703	Damascus	10:00	ETD 307	Abu Dhabi	21:10			
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	UAE 859	Dubai	21:15			
OMS	223	Muscat	10:35	ALK 168	Colombo	21:15			
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC 764	Paris	21:20			
KAC	624	Doha	10:55	THY 764	Istanbul	21:30			
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	GFA 219	Bahrain	21:50			
QTR	1074	Doha	11:55	KAC 564	Amman	21:55			
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	ETD 1082	Doha	22:05			
JZR	1736	Cairo	11:05	QTR 309	Abu Dhabi	22:15			
KIS	6032	Mashhad	11:30	KAC 786	Jeddah	22:20			
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	AIC 987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25			
JZR	252	Amman	12:20	JZR 128	Dubai	22:50			
JZR	746	Sharm el-Sheikh	12:25	MSC 405	Sohag	23:15			
				MSR 614	Cairo	23:30			
				FDB 071	Dubai	23:35			

Outrage bubbles as detergent ad promotes women’s rights

ISLAMABAD: An international detergent brand has come under fire for an advertisement questioning gender stereotypes in the conservative patriarchal country, with critics denouncing the company for allegedly insulting Islam. The commercial for Ariel soap, owned by US-based Procter & Gamble, calls for women to break free of conservatives norms and pursue careers. In the ad, several women representing different professions - including a journalist and doctor - are seen pushing dirty sheets hanging on a clothesline off the screen.

The sheets are printed with common refrains used to reinforce the oppression of women in Pakistan, including the question “What will people say?” which heralds scandal every time a woman chooses to challenge gender norms. The commercial ends with a close-up shot of the Pakistan women's cricket team captain Bismah Maroof saying: “Stay within the house... these are not only sentences but stains”. Social media was abuzz on the issue, with conservatives lambasting its message using the hashtag “#BoycottAriel” on Twitter.

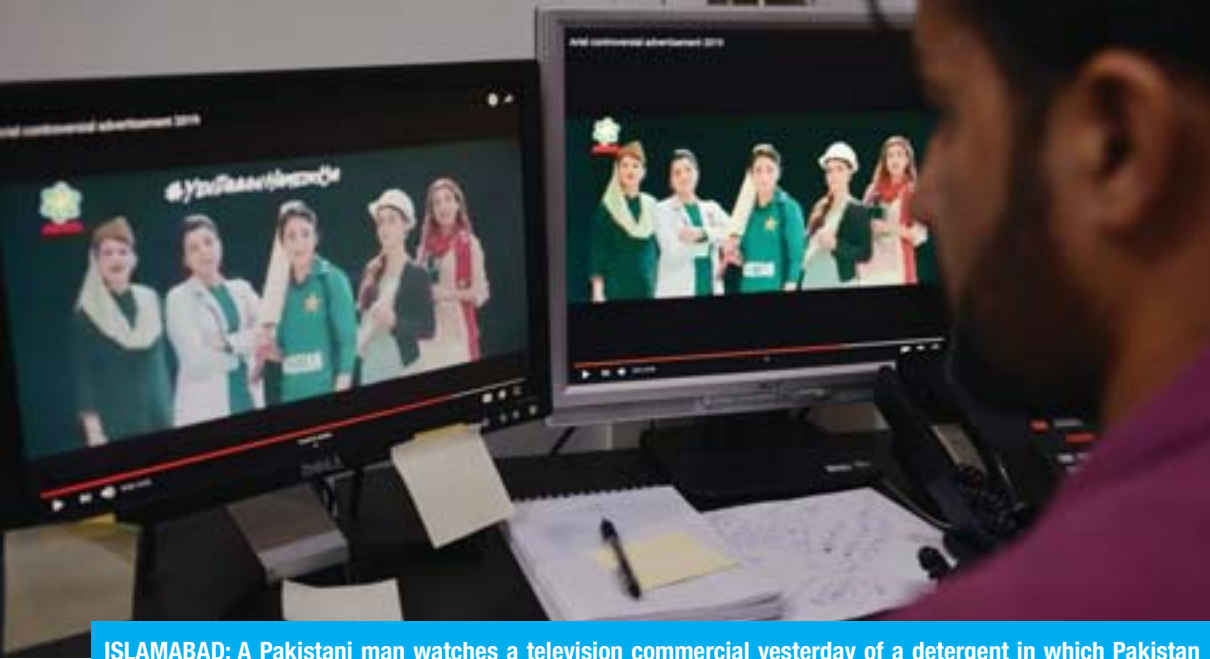
“They (are) insulting Islamic teaching in their advertising,” wrote Binte Suleman on Twitter, while Raja Moazzam added: “Please take action against these liberals, who (are) prompting liberalism in Pakistan”. Others called for Pakistani regulators to have the commercial officially censored and removed. The company did not

immediately respond to requests for comment by AFP. Women in Pakistan have fought for decades to secure their rights.

Much of society lives under a patriarchal, outdated code of so-called “honour” that systemises the oppression of women who defy tradition by, for example, choosing their own husband or working outside the home. Women also face what activists have called pervasive violence against them by men, routine discrimination in the workplace, and public harassment, with few women daring to walk alone outside of their homes.

The Ariel advert is not the first time a major company has faced backlash in the country over its stance on women's rights. Ride-sharing app Careem came in for its share when it released a lighthearted ad earlier this year showing a runaway bride, the caption reading: “If you want to run away from your wedding, book a Careem bike!” Critics filed a legal petition against the ad, calling it an “unethical promotional campaign”.

And in 2016 Pakistani mobile company QMobile was criticized after an ad which showed a female cricketer defying her father's wishes and leaving home to pursue her dreams of playing internationally. The ad was branded a conspiracy against Pakistani values, with some commentators taking particular exception to “vulgar” footage of the cricketer running up to bowl. — AFP



ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani man watches a television commercial yesterday of a detergent in which Pakistan women's cricket team captain Bismah Maroof (center) is seen. — AFP

Qatar library defies boycott...

Continued from Page 1

deputy executive director Stuart James Hamilton. “Unlike many of the national libraries, we have a public library function that goes alongside the national and research library functions.” With over one million books and 500,000 digital editions, the library, located in Doha's Education City, is the largest in the Middle East. But the United Arab Emirates is shooting to outdo Qatar with its Dubai-based Mohammed bin Rashid Library, hoping to house 1.5 million volumes when it opens. Tensions between the UAE and Qatar erupted in June 2017 when the Emirates joined a Saudi-led alliance that imposed an economic and diplomatic boycott on Doha, accusing it of supporting Iran and Islamist movements - charges Qatar denies.

“We’re in an intriguing situation here politically, but from the library’s perspective it just makes us more keen to make sure that our profile is raised and connections are made with other countries,” said Hamilton. The library has also brought forward plans to collaborate and reach out to libraries outside the region in response to the embargo, Hamilton added. “We’re accelerating outreach,” he said. Since opening, the institution has also staged more than 1,000 public events, many featuring authors and scholars from Europe and North America - a symbolic milestone in the face of the regional boycott.

Opened on April 16, 2018, the library is part of gas-rich Qatar's drive to reduce dependence on hydrocarbons and

pivot to a knowledge-based economy. The building is designed to look like folded sheets of paper and employs more than 39 nationalities, has 144,000 members and has loaned more than one million items. Experts estimate the combined public, university and national library to have cost around \$300 million.

Inside, rows of pristine white shelves rise up a gently banked incline and architect Koolhaas has previously said he wanted readers to be able to “see all the books in a panorama”. An open-topped subterranean reading room clad in marble holds heritage materials and artefacts related to Qatari and regional history. Qatar, host of the 2022 World Cup, has faced increased scrutiny over freedom of speech since becoming a host nation, and questions have previously been raised about the freedom of libraries in the conservative Gulf region.

Hamilton said that while there was no censorship of material in the library, books had to comply with a set of standards. “The collection we have started has to be there for its users - we’re not holding anything back,” he said, adding that all new additions must meet collection development guidelines and cannot promote “hate speech”. “The ones we don't have in the collection are the ones that don't meet the standard - we don't buy everything.”

Volumes on LGBT health are freely available despite homosexuality being illegal in Qatar, as are critical works on the country's recent political past. “Any library like the Qatar National Library, (for example) the New York Public Library, needs to reflect the needs and interests of its users and its population so our collection develops in response to what our users want,” he added. “Certainly there is no censorship of any materials here.” Delighted readers from Qatar and around the world have described the collection as “spectacular” and “a paradise for book-lovers”. — AFP

absence of Palestinian political leaders... makes any difference to the US administration's desire to deepen the nascent but undeclared alliance between itself, Israel and some Gulf Arab states against Iran,” said Middle East analyst Neil Partrick. “In terms of the individual national security priorities of Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain, Iran has long been of greater importance to them than the almost extinct ideological pressure that Palestine once placed on the policies and behavior of all Arab state leaders,” he added.

In recent years Israel has been courting Arab nations which do not recognize the Jewish state, and in October last year Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held surprise talks in Muscat with the ruler of Oman. These efforts at rapprochement came as Iran - the arch-foe of Israel and regional rival of Gulf kingpin Saudi Arabia - was bolstering its influence in several Arab countries.

Analysts say improved ties between Israel and Arab countries cannot take place in the absence of a tangible progress to defuse the decades-long Palestinian-Israeli conflict. “If you want to unite everyone against Iran, you need to do something in the (Mideast) peace process,” Yoel Guzansky, a former head of the Gulf department at Israel's National Security Council, told AFP. Ibish agreed. “A real, open and meaningful rapprochement in not on the cards,” he said, pointing to the dispute over the city of Jerusalem - which both Palestinians and Israeli claim as their own.

Meanwhile, a handful of Israeli journalists were making their way to Bahrain yesterday after getting special permission to attend the US-led economic conference. Their apparently unprecedented visit is facilitated by the involvement of the US, an ally of both countries, which do not have diplomatic relations. Israelis are normally barred from most Arab countries, except when they enter on second passports.

“I've been travelling the world to cover events for 13 years, but this one is the most exciting,” tweeted Barak Ravid, correspondent for Israel's Channel 13 private TV. “This is the first time Israeli journalists will be allowed to enter Bahrain,” he wrote in a post that included a selfie of himself on a plane he said was heading from Jordan to the Gulf kingdom. “Not a usual flight route for an Israeli journalist... Proud to enter with an Israeli passport,” journalist Ariel Kahana from the Israel Hayom daily tweeted when he arrived in Bahrain.

Diplomatic correspondents from six Israeli media outlets - the newspapers Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post and Israel Hayom, Channel 12 and Channel 13 and the website The Times of Israel - were invited. However, Channel 12 said it would not send a correspondent after the US refused to accredit its journalist Dana Weiss, for reasons that were not immediately clear. The Trump administration has running feuds with several American news organizations it views as hostile.

Jason Greenblatt, adviser to Trump and one of the architects of the conference, played up the significance of their presence. “There are those working to improve the lives of Israelis, Palestinians & others in the region, and to see if peace can be achieved. Bahrain is one such country,” he tweeted. But one of the invited journalists played down the significance of their participation. “It is very exciting on a personal level, but we must not overstate the scope of our participation as Israeli journalists,” he said on condition of anonymity. “This is not a normalization of relations between Israel and Bahrain, only an invitation by the White House to a conference, organized in Bahrain by the United States.” — Agencies

Saudi women use wedding contracts...

Continued from Page 1

to documents seen by AFP and interviews with wedding clerics. Majd, 29, who is due to marry this month in his native Dammam in eastern Saudi Arabia, signed off on two demands from his 21-year-old fiancée - the right to drive and to work after marriage, according to the contract he shared with AFP. “She said she (would) like to be independent,” explained Majd, who requested his last name be withheld as the discussion was a private family matter. “I replied: ‘sure, why not?’”

Overtuning the world's only ban on women drivers is the most palpable social change in the ultra-conservative kingdom, which is pursuing a wide-ranging liberalization drive. To drive, women do not require the explicit approval of their male “guardians” - husbands, fathers and other male relatives, whose permission is needed by women to study, get married and even leave prison. But it remains unclear whether women have any legal recourse should their guardians prevent them from taking the wheel.

And many in the kingdom appear to be trapped in this troubling scenario. “Some women prefer to include the driving condition in their contract to avoid any marital conflicts” over the issue, said Abdulmohsen Al-Ajemi, a Riyadh wedding cleric who received his first such enquiry from the family of an engaged woman last week. “It's a way to guarantee the husband will keep his promise.” A breach of wedding conditions can be used by women as grounds for divorce, clerics say.

There are no official statistics on the number of such

contracts. Saudi Arabia's justice and media ministries did not respond to AFP's request for comment. But Munirah Al-Sinani, a 72-year-old housewife in Dhahran, a city in the kingdom's east, said she had come across two such cases recently among her acquaintances. “If you don't let me drive, if you say ‘no’, then khallas (finished) - I don't want you,” Sinani quoted one of the women as telling her potential spouse.

The trend underscores how women appear to be using the contracts to side-step patriarchy - and the conditions appear to be getting bolder. A man in eastern Al-Ahsa city told AFP that during a marriage within his extended family, the bride demanded that her husband-to-be give up smoking. Another woman asked that her husband have no access to her salary and another stipulated that she should not fall pregnant in the first year of marriage, according to cleric Ajemi.

A Saudi woman took social media by storm recently when she posted her wedding contract online. The document prohibited her husband from taking a second wife, even though polygamy is legal in Islam. Angry online trolls rebuked her husband as “unmanly” for accepting the condition. Men also sometimes use wedding contracts to stipulate that the “wife will never work” or that she must agree to live with his mother, senior cleric Adel Al-Kalbani told AFP.

The new conditions are a sign of the kingdom's social transformation that appears to be granting women more rights, Kalbani and Ajemi said. But they could also cause strains in marriages in a traditional society where such conditions may be deemed insulting or signify a lack of trust in the husband, typically the head of a household. Saudi media has already reported a spike in divorce cases in recent years. “In the past, society did not listen to women. Husbands would turn around and firmly say ‘No’,” cleric Ajemi said. “But now they are listening to the aspirations of women, adapting to their demands.” — AFP

Assembly urges Kuwait govt...

Continued from Page 1

“I ask: What's wrong with Palestinian surrender?” he wrote in an opinion piece in The New York Times. “Surrender is the recognition that in a contest, staying the course will prove costlier than submission,” he said. Denouncing both the “corrupt” Palestinian Authority and Hamas militants who control the Gaza Strip, Danon noted that Palestinian unemployment remained stubbornly high despite years of international assistance.

“Given this woeful state of affairs, it is self-evident that the Palestinian people need a new course of action,” Danon wrote, charging that Palestinian national identity was “motivated not by building a better life for its people but by destroying Israel”. Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat “misleadingly suggests that a ‘surrender’ will lead to an end of the Palestinian people,” he added. “But nothing could be farther from the truth. Instead, surrendering will create the opportunity to transform Palestinian society, thereby leading to his people's liberation.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has spoken of annexing parts of the West Bank, also took the Palestinians to task. “I don't understand how the Palestinians rejected the plan even before knowing what it contained,” Netanyahu said Sunday as he hosted Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton. “That's not how you move forward,” Netanyahu said.

The Trump administration says it will later release political proposals - perhaps as late as November once Israel holds new elections and forms a government. But Trump officials have hinted their approach will not mention the creation of an independent Palestinian state, a goal of US diplomacy for decades. Saudi minister of state for foreign affairs Adel Al-Jubeir said the Bahrain workshop “is not about buying peace”. “In no way is this about forcing the Palestinians to accept an agreement that they don't like and to draw a connection - you accept this and you'll get that,” he told Le Monde on a visit to France.

Aaron David Miller, a veteran US negotiator on the Middle East, said the idea of a major economic plan for the Palestinians was not new. “Had Trump administration not spent the last two years waging an economic/political pressure campaign against the Palestinians and undermined their aspirations on statehood/Jerusalem, the plan would have made sense,” he said.

The US-led peace conference could also present Washington with a new opportunity to push Gulf allies and Israel closer together as tensions with common foe Iran rise. Gulf countries are “well aware a Palestinian investment conference without Palestinians and even without official Israeli participation is ridiculous”, said Hussein Ibish of the Arab Gulf States Institute. “I think the Gulf countries are simply trying to win brownie points with the Trump administration, particularly at a time of heightened confrontation with Iran,” he said.

The Trump administration is keen to use the conference to push for closer ties between the oil-rich Gulf Arabs states and Israel to bolster an anti-Iran coalition. “I don't think the...

US slaps sanctions on Khamenei...

Continued from Page 1

The escalation of attacks by Iran-aligned Houthi rebels on Saudi cities threatens a hard-won UN-sponsored ceasefire deal for the Red Sea port city of Hodeida, war-ravaged Yemen's main conduit for humanitarian aid. “A terrorist attack by the Iran-backed Houthi militia on Abha airport... killed a Syrian resident and wounded 21 civilians,” the coalition said in a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency. The wounded - from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, India and Bangladesh - also included three women and two children who had been taken to hospital for treatment, the coalition said. Earlier on Sunday, the rebels' Al-Masirah TV said they had targeted Abha and Jizan airports in the south of the kingdom with drones. The coalition did not confirm the attack on Jizan airport.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable yesterday to King Salman bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, expressing Kuwait's strong condemnation of the attack. In the cable, the Amir stressed that such a terrorist act was a blatant violation of international laws and a perilous escalation that threatens security and stability in the region. He stressed Kuwait's stand alongside Saudi Arabia and its full support for whatever necessary measures it takes to ensure the security and stability of the kingdom, expressing sincere condolences to the family of the victim, and wishing a speedy recovery to those injured in the attack. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Saudi monarch.

Tensions are running high after Iran shot down a US spy drone last week and Trump considered, then canceled, a retaliatory strike. Iran, crippled by existing US sanctions that include the blocking of most of its crucial oil exports, sought to play down the US move. “Are there really any sanctions left that the United States has not imposed on our country recently or in the past 40 years?” Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said shortly before Trump signed his order. “We... do not consider them to have any impact,” he said.

Amid a flurry of diplomatic activity, the United States, Britain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates urged “diplomatic solutions” in the standoff, which is playing out in a region crucial to the global economy's oil supplies. French President Emmanuel Macron said he would use a meeting with Trump at the G20 summit in Japan to urge “a constructive solution with the aim of ensuring collective regional

security.” The Kremlin, which has longstanding links to Iran's government, earlier called yesterday's sanctions “illegal”.

At home, Trump has taken criticism for sending mixed messages to Iran. However, the US president insists he has a clear strategy that breaks firmly with past US policy in the tinderbox Middle East. In a pair of tweets yesterday, Trump said US aims regarding Iran boil down to “No Nuclear Weapons and No Further Sponsoring of Terror.”

While some in Washington see the White House's ultimate goal as regime change in Tehran, Trump says he wants to avoid war and that he's open to negotiations with Iran's leaders. He also insists that Washington's hands are freer than in the past because its own energy production frees it of dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

This means the United States should no longer be seen as the guarantor of open sea lanes in the Gulf region, which saw two mysterious attacks in mid-June on non-US tankers that Washington claims were carried out by Tehran. “All of these countries should be protecting their own ships,” Trump tweeted yesterday. “We don't even need to be there.”

So far, Trump's carrot-and-stick message does not seem to be getting through to Tehran. “America's claim of readiness for unconditional negotiation is not acceptable with the continuation of threats and sanctions,” Hesamodin Ashna, an advisor to Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, said yesterday on Twitter.

The dispute is bound up in a complex web of regional rivalries, with US allies Saudi Arabia and Israel long pushing Washington to act aggressively against Iran. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned his country, which is widely believed to have an undeclared nuclear arsenal, would do “everything” to stop Iran getting such a weapon.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo travelled yesterday to meet with Saudi leaders to build what he called a “global coalition” against the Islamic republic. Pompeo met Saudi King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the Red Sea city of Jeddah and was later due to hold talks in the United Arab Emirates.

The sultanate of Oman, meanwhile, said reports that it had served as a back channel for the United States to Iran in the aftermath of last week's drone shooting were “not true”. The foreign ministry called on Iran and the United States via Twitter “to show self-control and to resolve the pending issues through dialogue.”

Although Trump backed away from a bombing strike in retaliation for last week's drone downing, US media reports said a US cyber attack took place against Iranian missile control systems and a spy network. Yesterday, Iranian Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi said no cyber attack against his country had ever succeeded. — Agencies

Sports

Pinch-hit HR lifts Braves over Nats in 10 as Camargo shines

Angels stave off Cardinals in 9th, avoid series sweep

WASHINGTON: Johan Camargo hit a two-run, pinch-hit homer in the top of the 10th inning to give the Atlanta Braves a 4-3 win over the host Washington Nationals on Sunday. The Braves took two of three from the Nats to win the series. Luke Jackson pitched the 10th inning for his 11th save despite giving up a run, two hits and a walk. Trea Turner drove in a run with a fielder's choice, but the Nats could not plate the tying run. Tanner Rainey (1-2) gave up a walk to Ozzie Albies with one out in the 10th and then Camargo smashed his second pinch-hit homer of the year into the bleachers in right for a 4-2 lead. A.J. Minter (2-4) pitched one inning to earn the win, fanning Gerardo Parra for the last out of the ninth with the winning run on second.

Dodgers 6, Rockies 3

Will Smith gave Los Angeles its third game-ending home run in three days, all from rookies, with a three-run shot in the ninth inning for a spectacular three-game sweep of visiting Colorado. Smith, who was called back up to the major leagues earlier in the day, crushed his pinch-hit shot to right-center off Rockies right-hander Scott Oberg (5-1). The Rockies elected to walk veteran Russell Martin to face Smith. It was the third home run of the season for Smith, two of which gave the Dodgers a walk-off victory. It was the first time since 2010 the Dodgers put together three consecutive walk-off victories.

Astros 9, Yankees 4

Justin Verlander pitched seven innings and Tyler White hit his first career grand slam as Houston snapped a season-high seven-game losing streak with a victory over host New York. The Astros hit four homers to halt their longest losing streak since June 4-10, 2015. Houston avoided losing eight straight for the first time since a 15-game skid in September 2013. Verlander (10-3) helped the Astros get their first win since June 15 by allowing three runs on four hits. Verlander struck out nine and walked two.

Cubs 5, Mets 3

On a day for noteworthy home runs, Javier Baez made the 100th of his career one to savor, rallying Chicago to victory over visiting New York. Baez's three-run shot in the eighth inning off right-hander Seth Lugo helped prevent Chicago's first three-game losing streak at home this season. It was just the second home run for the Cubs in a four-game series against the Mets, while New York hit nine. The Mets' Pete Alonso also went deep, setting the club record for rookie home runs with 27 a day after tying Darryl Strawberry's rookie mark, set in 1983. Alonso hit his home run to center field against Cole Hamels in the fourth.

Pirates 11, Padres 10 (11)

Kevin Newman's two-out, bases-loaded walk brought in the fourth run of the 11th inning as Pittsburgh completed a three-game sweep of visiting San Diego. San Diego took a 10-7 lead in the top of the 11th against Francisco Liriano (2-1) for its second three-run lead. In the bottom of the inning, Phil Maton walked

Bryan Reynolds, struck out Starling Marte and gave up a single to Josh Bell. Melky Cabrera's RBI double made it 10-8. Matt Wisler (2-2) relieved and gave up a tying two-run single to Jacob Stallings. A single and walk loaded the bases before Wisler walked Newman.

Marlins 6, Phillies 4

Jordan Yamamoto allowed the first runs of his career but made franchise history by winning his third start in as many tries as Miami completed a three-game sweep at Philadelphia. The Marlins, who have the worst record in the National League at 30-46, completed their third series sweep of the season. The Phillies, who have dropped seven straight, were swept for the third time. Yamamoto (3-0), who opened his career by throwing seven scoreless innings in back-to-back starts against the St. Louis Cardinals, saw his shutout streak end in the first inning Sunday. He walked the first three batters before Jean Segura gave the Phillies a 2-1 lead with a two-run, one-out single.

Blue Jays 6, Red Sox 1

Marcus Stroman pitched six scoreless innings, Lourdes Gurriel Jr. had three hits and an outfield assist and visiting Toronto defeated Boston. Eric Sogard added a home run and Danny Jansen won a two-run single for the Blue Jays. The Blue Jays had the three-game series-their fourth series win on the road this season-despite losing the opener. They have six wins in their past 12 games after going 2-11.

Indians 8, Tigers 3

Bobby Bradley belted an RBI double in his first major league at-bat to ignite a five-run second inning as host Cleveland completed their second straight sweep of Detroit. Carlos Santana launched his team-leading 17th homer and rookie Zach Plesac (3-2) tossed seven strong innings for the Indians, who have won eight of nine against Detroit this season. Jason Kipnis ripped a two-run single and Francisco Lindor, Kevin Plawecki and rookie Oscar Mercado each drove in a run as Cleveland cruised to its eighth victory in 10 games.

Angels 6, Cardinals 4

Tommy La Stella and David Fletcher each had two hits and two RBIs as visiting Los Angeles held on for a win against St Louis to avoid getting swept in the three-game series. Albert Pujols started his third straight game at first base and went 2-for-5 for the Angels, who ended a three-game losing streak. Pujols played 11 seasons in St Louis and won two World Series titles and three National League Most Valuable Player awards for the Cardinals before signing with the Angels following the 2011 season.

Brewers 7, Reds 5

Milwaukee scored five runs in the third inning, and Brandon Woodruff earned his team-high ninth win in a victory over visiting Cincinnati. The five-run inning helped Milwaukee earn a split in the four-game series, taking the last two games against their National League Central rivals. Woodruff (9-2) worked seven strong



WASHINGTON: Ozzie Albies #1 of the Atlanta Braves beats the throw to first against the Washington Nationals during the tenth inning at Nationals Park on June 23, 2019. — AFP

innings, allowing three runs on seven hits with a career-high 12 strikeouts and one walk.

Royals 6, Twins 1

Hunter Dozier had two extra-base hits, including a three-run home run, and Alex Gordon had two run-scoring doubles as Kansas City defeated visiting Minnesota. Homer Bailey (7-6) picked up the win for Kansas City. He allowed just one run on five hits in 5 1/3 innings. He threw 108 pitches, one outing after a season-high 121 pitches against Seattle. His final batter was Eddie Rosario, who struck out after a 14-pitch at-bat. Kevin McCarthy pitched the final 2 1/3 innings for his first career save.

Rays 8, A's 2

Travis d'Arnaud contributed a key hit to each of two big early uprisings and left-hander Ryan Yarbrough pitched six strong innings, allowing visiting Tampa Bay to earn a split of its four-game series against Oakland. Avisail Garcia and Joey Wendle collected three hits apiece, while Austin Meadows matched d'Arnaud with three RBIs, helping the Rays win for just the second time in seven games on their 10-game trip. After the A's had taken a 1-0 lead in the second on a Rays error, the visitors grabbed the lead for good in the third off Oakland starter Brett Anderson (7-5). With one out, Mike Zunino walked and d'Arnaud belted his fourth home run of the season.

Mariners 13, Orioles 3

JP Crawford went 4-for-4 with a home run and four RBIs as Seattle defeated visiting Baltimore. Mac

Williamson also homered for the Mariners, who took three of four games in the series. Trey Mancini homered for Baltimore, which was trying to win back-to-back games for the first time since May 6 after snapping a 10-game losing streak Saturday with an 8-4 victory.

Rangers 7, White Sox 4

Adrian Sampson allowed just one run in seven innings as Texas held on to win the rubber game of its three-game series over visiting Chicago. Sampson (6-4) scattered seven hits with one walk and four strikeouts in winning for the sixth time in his past seven decisions. The Rangers turned three double plays. Tim Federowicz and Danny Santana both hit homers in the Rangers' four-run second inning against White Sox starter Ivan Nova (3-6), who allowed another run in the fifth. In six innings, he gave up eight hits and a walk, striking out six. Only three of the five runs were earned.

Diamondbacks 3, Giants 2 (10)

Tim Lincecum lined a bases-loaded single over third base with one out in the 10th inning as Arizona ended a season-high six-game losing streak with a victory over San Francisco in Phoenix. Christian Walker singled to open the 10th inning off Mark Melancon (3-2), and Jarrod Dyson walked with one out. The runners advanced on a wild pitch, and Carson Kelly was intentionally walked to load the bases for Lincecum, who delivered his second walk-off hit this season. Walker had three hits and an RBI, Lincecum had two singles and two RBIs and Eduardo Escobar had two hits for the Diamondbacks, who were in danger of falling three games below .500 for the first time since April 13.— Reuters



KAC sponsors Kuwait National Shooting Team

KUWAIT: In an effort to support youth and creativity, Kuwait Airways Corporation (KAC) sponsored Kuwait National Shooting Team on its recent participation in IHH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed 5th Open Shooting Championship held in Italy. KAC arranged a special reception for the team on arrival at Kuwait airport (T4). The team won two gold medals, two silver and bronze medal after competing with over 450 international shooters.

In this regard, KAC's PR and media manager Fayez Al-Enezi said the sponsorship comes as part of KAC's social responsibility in activities supporting sport and youth. On his part, chairman of Kuwait and the Arab Shooting Unions Duaij Al-Otaibi thanked KAC and stressed that Kuwait team had just competed with international shooters in a championship that gains its significance by carrying IHH the Amir's name. He also noted that this participation is considered good - in preparation for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.



Online abuse only makes us stronger, Mercedes boss says

LE CASTELLET: Mercedes have endured a torrent of online abuse in the two weeks since the Canadian Grand Prix but team boss Toto Wolff says the 'haters' have only strengthened the Formula One champions' resolve. The race in Montreal blew up into a major controversy when Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel crossed the line first but was demoted to second behind Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton after a penalty. Hamilton, a five-times world champion who has a greater social

media presence than any driver, alluded to the situation in post on Instagram last Friday at 0300 local time, ahead of the French Grand Prix.

He spoke of there being "so much hate in this world" but added "No matter what, you can't hold a brother down! I will rise above it all, always." The champion went on to dominate Sunday's race from pole position, leading every lap and chalking up his fourth win in a row and sixth of the season. Wolff, whose team have now won 10 successive races, told Reuters that online trolling was "starting to get out of control".

"The trolling that happens in social media has become so bad. People hide behind anonymous, or not even anonymous, accounts and hit out, which after some of these events has been really bad. Canada was pretty bad," he said. "To polarize is good, and it can be an emotional and heat-

ed discussion. But I think it has come to a point where sometimes the heated discussion around the sport is becoming abuse and becoming personal and I don't think that has a place in sport," added the Austrian. "At first it's hard to swallow, but it's come to a point that it's making us stronger, every hit creates more desire to prove."

Hamilton has long divided fans and the 34-year-old, who has scaled the heights from a modest multi-racial background, is looking stronger than ever. "I sometimes get low and then I'm like, I'm going to get through it, I'm going to fight through it. I got a lot of real positive responses from a lot of my fans... and my friends did the same for me, lifted me up," he said of his post. Hamilton arrived late to Le Castellet, attending fashion shows in Paris and a memorial for designer Karl Lagerfeld on Thursday.—Reuters

Lopez becomes oldest Queen's title winner at 37

LONDON: Feliciano Lopez became the oldest Queen's singles champion on Sunday when the 37-year-old Spaniard defeated Frenchman Gilles Simon in a thrilling three-set clash, 6-2, 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/2). Lopez, the first wildcard to win the key Wimbledon warm-up event since Pete Sampras in 1999, is also the lowest-ranked player to claim the title at 113 since 108th-ranked Australian Scott Draper in 1998. While Lopez has had an exhausting week - he still has to play the doubles final with Andy Murray - 34-year-old Simon also played inspired tennis despite all his matches going to three sets. However, he just fell short of becoming the first Frenchman to win the title.

Lopez was the second 37-year-old to win an ATP tournament on Sunday after Roger Federer claimed his record-extending 10th Halle title. "I don't know how I did that," said Lopez after receiving the trophy. "The whole match was very exciting. I took the early set but then he (Simon) got better and better. It was tough for me to find a way to win points. He was coming up with unbelievable shots and I was a bit desperate. "I thought the best moment of my career was when I held this trophy in 2017

but it's not. It's right now."

Lopez broke Simon in the first game of the match with his second break point - quite some feat by the Spaniard given the Frenchman had come into the match having saved 30 during the week. The Spanish veteran looked to be in complete control as he broke Simon again to go 4-1 up, netting the first break point but clinched the second one with a sublime volley. Lopez took the first set with an ace but Simon was the faster of the two out of the gate in the second set, breaking the Spaniard for a 2-0 lead.

Lopez broke back immediately and it stayed with serve before a tie-break which featured a 33-stroke rally. Simon rallied and retrieved a mini-break and then broke again to hold a set point on the Lopez serve which he converted with aplomb. The third set went with serve and despite their respective ages, and the length of time they have spent on court this week, both showed remarkable agility. Lopez hoped to close out the match at 6-5 and had a match point which he dumped into the net.

However, he made no mistake in the tie-break. Simon, who has 14 titles but none on grass, took defeat in good heart. "I'm tired, of course," said the 38th-ranked Frenchman. "It was long today. It was long every day. It was tough for Feli and he has another final to play in a few minutes. "It's tough right now after such an amazing effort to try and stay in this match and come back. "Feli (Lopez) is still fit and he's a bit older than me so I hope I'll have the chance to come back again."—AFP



LONDON: Britain's Andy Murray (right) and Spain's Feliciano Lopez pose with the trophy after their win in the men's doubles final tennis match against US player Rajeev Ram and Britain's Joe Salisbury at the ATP Fever-Tree Championships tournament at Queen's Club in west London. —AFP

Sports

Martinez, Aguerro's goals send Argentina into Copa quarters

Argentina beat Qatar 2-0 to book last eight

PORTO ALEGRE: An early goal by Lautaro Martinez and Sergio Aguerro's late second gave Argentina a 2-0 win over Qatar on Sunday that qualified them for the Copa America quarter-finals. Already-qualified Colombia beat Paraguay 1-0 in the other Group B match to secure a place in the last eight for both Peru, who finished third in Group A, and Uruguay, currently second in Group C.

Argentina, who finish second in Group B behind Colombia, will play Venezuela at Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana stadium in the quarter-finals, while tournament debutants and guests Qatar are out. Paraguay, on two points, must wait and see what happens in Monday's Group C clash between Japan and Ecuador before finding out if they qualify as one of the two best third-place finishers. Peru, with four points, are sure of that while only a draw between Japan and Ecuador would see Paraguay progress.

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni recalled Manchester City forward Aguerro for the crunch tie while Martinez kept his place at the expense of Angel Di Maria. Asian champions Qatar made a calamitous start when a weak headed clearance from Tarek Salman fell to Martinez 12 yards out, but the Inter Milan forward sent his volley over the top. He didn't have to wait long for another chance though as Bassam Hisham played a ball across his box and straight to the feet of the Argentina forward, who scuffed a shot into the bottom corner after just four minutes.

"The goal came early and that allowed us to approach the game with greater calmness," said Martinez. "There was pressure, we had to win to progress and we're happy. Now we have to work hard." With the weight was lifted from Argentina's shoulders, they played with a freedom expected of a side boasting talents such as Aguerro and five-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi. Qatar played with limited

ambition but their talented forwards looked dangerous when they did venture into the final third.

Hasan Khalid Al Haydos got in behind the Argentina backline and tried to chip Franco Armani but the goalkeeper got a touch to divert the ball behind, although the linesman's flag was up and it wouldn't have counted. "We paid for inexperience, we started two matches by conceding goals from unnecessary actions," said Qatar's Spanish coach Felix Sanchez, alluding to their opening tie against Paraguay when they also conceded in the fourth minute. "We played a great team that knew they had to win, they took their first chance really well. It was our mistake."

Aguero industry rewarded

Messi burst into life with an acceleration towards Qatar's area before slipping a pass to Aguerro, who dragged his left-footed shot wide under pressure. Qatar were sporadically dangerous on the break and Portuguese-born Ro-Ro stole in at the back post to meet a Karim Boudiaf cross but couldn't direct his volley on target. Up the other end, Nicolas Otamendi headed over from close range when it looked easier to score. Argentina almost scored a second after Qatar goalkeeper Saad Al-Sheeb spilled a header by Martinez causing a scramble in the box, but neither Aguerro nor Martinez could poke the ball home. Iraq-born Hisham almost made amends for his earlier gaffe with a free-kick at the end of the half but his shot, which passed through the Argentina wall, clipped the outside of the upright.

Another direct Messi run set up Aguerro but his shot was deflected over by Algeria-born Boualem Khoukhi. Aguerro then drew a save from Al-Sheeb with a shot from outside the area. Qatar made few chances but when they did, Akram Afif snatched at his effort from distance when a smarter



PORTO ALEGRE: Qatar's Boualem Khoukhi and Argentina's Sergio Aguerro struggle for the ball during the Copa America football tournament group match at the Gremio Arena in Porto Alegre, Brazil on June 23, 2019. — AFP

move would have been to play in a runner from midfield. Aguerro finally scored the goal his industry deserved with a purposeful run past two defenders before sending a cross-shot into the far bottom corner eight minutes from time.

Already guaranteed of winning the group, Colombia's Portuguese coach Carlos Queiroz made 10 changes to his

line-up, with only Juventus forward Juan Cuadrado retaining his place. They took the lead just after the half-hour mark when Gustavo Cuellar scored through goalkeeper Roberto Fernandez's legs from a tight angle. In the second half Colombia had a goal and a penalty award chalked off by VAR.— AFP



LE HAVRE: France's midfielder Amandine Henry scores a goal during the France 2019 Women's World Cup round of sixteen football match between France and Brazil at the Oceane stadium in Le Havre. — AFP

Henry fires France into World Cup quarter finals

LE HAVRE: Women's World Cup hosts France survived a scare to beat Brazil 2-1 in extra time and reach the quarter-finals on Sunday as captain Amandine Henry scored a dramatic winner in Le Havre. Lyon midfielder Henry struck in the 107th minute after Thaisa's equalizer for Brazil, following Valerie Gauvin's opener, had forced a 1-1 draw in 90 minutes.

France will face either reigning champions the United States or Spain in the last eight in Paris on Friday. "It was tense, very tense against good opponents," French coach Corinne Diacre told TFI. "We gave everything, we did not let it go. "We came to qualify for the quarter-finals, that's what we wanted. I wish we had played a little more in the first half, it might have been less difficult in the second."

Pre-tournament favourites France will be playing in the quarter-finals for the third straight World Cup, while Brazil have now suffered back-to-back last-16 defeats after their 2015 loss to Australia. After the chaotic scenes of the earlier last-16 tie on Sunday which saw an ill-tempered Cameroon refuse to play for

several minutes during their loss to England - behavior Lionesses boss Phil Neville described as "unacceptable" - this was another hard-fought affair, but without serious controversy.

The 41-year-old Formiga returned from suspension for Brazil to replace Andressinha in midfield alongside Marta, who broke the all-time World Cup goalscoring record with her 17th strike in the previous group-stage win over Italy. The first sight of goal saw Marta create herself some space with clever footwork outside the box but fire wide, before Debinha saw an effort deflected past the post by the boot of Wendie Renard.

Although France were struggling to put Brazil under any pressure early on despite being roared on by a partisan crowd at the Stade Oceane, they thought they had taken the lead in the 23rd minute when Gauvin bundled Kadidiatou Diani's cross over the line. Both Gauvin and Brazilian goalkeeper Barbara were left needing medical attention after colliding while going for the ball, and a VAR review unsurprisingly saw the goal ruled out for a foul by the France striker.—AFP

Reavie holds off Bradley for first tour victory in eleven years

CONNECTICUT: Chez Reavie took advantage of a three-shot swing at the 17th hole to win his first PGA Tour event in 11 years by four strokes at the Travelers Championship on Sunday. Reavie birdied the penultimate hole where challenger Keegan Bradley made double-bogey to turn a one-shot Reavie lead into a winning four at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Connecticut. Making mostly pars, the 37-year-old Reavie saw much of a six-stroke overnight lead evaporate but his one-under 69 was enough to see him hang on for the victory at 17-under 263.

His only other PGA Tour victory came at the 2008 RBC Canadian Open. "It means everything," Reavie, who had undergone wrist and knee surgery since the 2008 win, told CBS Sports. "I had to stay patient today. Keegan was playing great and I kept missing putts," he said. "Finally I made one on 17 and kind of turned the corner." Bradley and compatriot Zack Sucher tied for second at 13-under after both shot 67s.

Vaughn Taylor (65) finished fourth at 12-under, while England's Paul Casey (65) shared fifth with Chile's Joaquin Niemann (66) and Kevin Tway (67) who were another stroke back. Reavie's victory came a week after he tied for third at the US Open. He putted well at Pebble Beach and most of this week, but made only two birdies on Sunday,



CROMWELL: Chez Reavie of the United States poses with the trophy after winning the Travelers Championship at TPC River Highlands on June 23, 2019. — AFP

including the big one at 17. "I felt like I was hitting good putts and they just weren't going in," Reavie said.

Meanwhile, Bradley kept making birdies on the back nine just as Reavie did on Saturday. The 2011 PGA champion birdied the 10th, 11th and 13th holes to get within two, then sank a seven-foot putt at 15 to put the pressure on. But the 17th was his downfall as his tee shot ended up in a bunker and he three-putted. "(I) hit a good drive on 17 and hit it in that bunker. Such a tough shot," said Bradley. "I ran my next putt by. It was just tough. Wish I could have had that back." Until then it had been fun, said the New England native who was cheered on by hundreds of fans. "I've

never felt that type of support ever," he said. "Maybe in a Ryder Cup. It was so fun."

Sucher, who blew a five-stroke lead on Saturday, made a big comeback on Sunday with birdies on five of his final nine holes. "The back nine was unbelievable. The whole thing was fun with the huge crowds," said Sucher who is finally pain-free after a series of injuries. Defending champion Bubba Watson finished 16 shots adrift after a one-over 71 that included two double-bogeys. World number one Brooks Koepka, after a busy stretch that included winning the PGA Championship in May and finishing second at last week's US Open, also shot 71 to finish at even par. — Reuters

Juventus, the beating heart of Italy Women's World Cup team

ROME: The goalkeeper, the captain, the playmaker, the centre-forward-Juventus are the beating heart of Italy's Women's World Cup team. In Italy, it has been coined the "Juve Block" and today in Montpellier eight players from the Turin club will face China for a place in the quarter-finals. It would have been nine but for a serious injury picked up by defender Cecilia Salvai before the tournament. Italy have been the dark horse of France 2019 having topped a group that included Australia and Brazil to reach the knockout round for the first time since 1991.

A 5-0 rout of Jamaica in Reims ended with seven Juventus players on the pitch at the Stade Auguste-Delaune in northern France. The predominance of players from the Turin club, similar to that of Lyon in the French women's team, also mirrors Italy's men's team. Italy coach Milena Bertolini concedes their success in France has been fuelled by several top clubs joining the Italian women's championship.

Juventus created their women's team in 2017 and have won the league title twice since. "The Italian federation's decision to

oblige professional clubs to have a women's section has proved a winner," Bertolini told AFP. "And the fact that Juve, Roma, AC Milan, Fiorentina and Sassuolo launched women's teams has been fundamental. "There are more resources, young Italians are now in a position to play professionally and develop their talent."

Some of the top Italian players have found "Juve" an environment that, if it still does not offer them professional status, is close to what they knew abroad. Striker Barbara Bonansea, who hit a brace in the come-from-behind 2-1 win over Australia in Italy's opening match, had refused a proposal from Lyon before opting for Turin two years ago.

Centre-back and captain Sara Gama, who has resisted stars like Marta or Samantha Kerr, played at Paris Saint-Germain from 2013 to 2015. And goalkeeper Laura Giuliani, one of the most reliable hands of the tournament with only two goals conceded, both penalties, has experience in four German clubs before returning to play for the team she has always supported.—AFP

Formidable Senegal sweep Tanzania aside in mismatch

CAIRO: Africa Cup of Nations hopefuls Senegal kicked off their quest for an elusive maiden title on Sunday with a dominant 2-0 win over a Tanzania side making a first appearance at the tournament since 1980. Senegal are tipped as leading trophy contenders alongside hosts Egypt, and the Teranga Lions proved far too strong for their opening Group C opponents despite the absence of suspended star forward Sadio Mane.

Keita Balde fired Senegal ahead on 28 minutes in front of a sparse 30 June Stadium crowd on a pleasantly breezy evening in Cairo and Krepin Diatta added a magnificent second just past the hour to seal a comfortable opening victory for the 2002 runners-up. "I'm happy with the result. We were able to get off to a good start and begin the competition very well. The first game is always important, everyone in the tournament is up for it," said Senegal coach Aliou Cisse, whose team face Algeria next before rounding out the group against Kenya on July 1.

"I have to congratulate the boys, they stuck to the gameplan and philosophy. It's good for the morale and for what comes next." Boasting a squad comprised solely of European-based players, Cisse's side made the gulf in class against a team featuring seven starters from the Tanzanian league markedly clear with an early flourish that saw Mbaye Niang draw a sharp stop from Aishi Manula and then flash another chance narrowly wide.

Tanzania forward Mbwana Samatta, whose 23



CAIRO: Tanzania's goalkeeper Aishi Manula punches the ball away during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) football match between Senegal and Tanzania at the 30 June Stadium in Cairo on June 23, 2019. — AFP

goals helped fire Genk to the Belgian championship this year, was left hopelessly isolated against a robust defense including Napoli stand-out Kalidou Koulibaly, with Cheikhou Kouyate slotting in alongside him following an injury to Salif Sane midway through the half. Senegal soon grabbed the lead as Idrissa Gueye slid the ball across to Balde after a surge forward, the Inter Milan winger lashing home low inside the near post with Manula beaten by the pace.

Ismaila Sarr presented a constant threat down the right for Senegal and the Rennes trickster laid off for Kouyate moments later only for the substitute to scoop comfortably over. Senegal appeared to have a second goal on 34 minutes

when Sarr poked home after a fumble by Manula but the referee ruled the effort out for a supposed handball. With Senegal ranked 22 in the world and Tanzania 131, this was on paper the biggest mismatch of the 36 first-round matches in Egypt, and only a matter of wasteful finishing spared Tanzania a heavier defeat.

Niang twice fluffed clear-cut openings to add to the advantage, failing to make any telling contact when Sarr squared to leave the forward with a relative tap-in. It required a flash of brilliance from Club Brugge midfielder Diatta to finally give Senegal a bit of breathing space, as he connected sweetly on the half-volley to power in a second from 20 yards after a corner was only partially cleared.—AFP

Sports

England beat Cameroon 3-0 through amid VAR mayhem

VAR in the spotlight as Cameroon rage at decisions

VALENCIENNES: England beat Cameroon 3-0 to advance to the women's World Cup quarter-finals on Sunday in a match marked by remarkable scenes as the African side twice reacted furiously to video assistant referee (VAR) decisions that went against them, initially refusing to restart the game.

After England's second goal by Ellen White at the end of the first half was initially ruled out for offside then, rightly, allowed via VAR, several Cameroon players remonstrated with the referee, furiously pointed to the screen in stadium which showed the replay and for a long time refused to restart the match. VAR replays are not shown on big screens inside the stadium though "normal" replays were, some of which clearly seemed to indicate to the Cameroon players that they were being treated unjustly.

At halftime they refused to go off and join their coach, instead staying in the centre circle in a huddle. They thought they had pulled a goal back early in the second half, only for VAR to again rule against them for a marginal offside - sparking more chaotic scenes. Players were shouting at the referee, pointing again to the big screens, substitutes were berating the fourth official and one player stood alone on the pitch jumping up and down in a furious rage.

Instead of taking firm action to force the players to restart, Chinese referee Qin Liang took an age, speaking gently to them before their coach persuaded them to kick off. The game then turned ugly with strong challenges, elbowing, an accusation of spitting and, in the final act, an horrific tackle on England's Steph Houghton that, belatedly and again via VAR, earned Alexandra Takounda a yellow card when it looked a clear red card offence.

Furious England coach Phil Neville said what he had seen was "not football. I came to this World Cup to be successful and to play a part in making women's football globally more visible. We wanted to put on a show," he said. "I sat through 90 minutes of football there and felt ashamed. I was proud of performances,

under circumstances I've never seen before. And I am completely and utterly ashamed of the opposition.

"All the young boys and girls watching... and we've had five, six and seven million people watching back at home... with that kind of behavior. That's pretty sad. At times, we probably didn't know whether the game would continue. My daughter wants to be a footballer and if she watches that she will think: 'No, I want to play netball'."

Former United States goalkeeper-turned pundit Hope Solo tried to give some balance when she suggested that the Cameroon team's lack of resources and coaching expertise put them at a disadvantage. "We have to try and understand that," she told BBC Radio 5-Live. "Perhaps they weren't even told about the rules, the laws of the game and the evolution of the game, so your heart has to go out a little bit to them."

No sympathy

Their coach Alan Djeumfam, who was remarkably restrained through the mayhem and tried hard to calm his players, said that every decision went against his side and that they suffered a "miscarriage of justice." Former England defender Neville, however, said he had no sympathy. "Rules are rules. For the second goal, White was onside - deal with it," he said.

"We're spoken to by FIFA about 350,000 times and in the end, the referee took pity on them. A team that are refusing to play... I'm proud of my players for playing a game of football." England took the lead in the 14th minute when Houghton drilled the ball low from an indirect free kick inside the penalty area, after Cameroon goalkeeper Annette Ngo Ndom collected a backpass from defender Augustine Ejangue.

White then scored her fourth goal of the tournament as she collected a clever pass from Lucy Bronze to fire home - sparking the first of the protests. Ajara Nchout then pulled one back, only to be denied by VAR on what looked another, albeit very tight, correct decision, leaving her appearing distraught and fuming and her



VALENCIENNES: England's goalkeeper Karen Bardsley (center) boxes the ball in front of Cameroon's forward Alexandra Takounda (left) and England's defender Millie Bright during the France 2019 Women's World Cup round of sixteen football match between England and Cameroon, on June 23, 2019. — AFP

team mates in a huddle and refusing to restart.

A then-dominant England added a third through Alex Greenwood following a well worked corner in the 58th minute. Alongside the VAR fallout, the game was marked by indiscipline and rash challenges throughout. England's Toni Duggan claimed she had been spat on while Cameroon captain Gabrielle Onguene somehow escaped punishment for screaming at the referee and in the face of Houghton as she was receiving treatment on

the side of the pitch.

It was hardly the glowing advertisement for the women's game that FIFA had hoped for, though there will be no shortage of publicity as a result. England will need to quickly get over the less savoury aspect of the match and turn their attention to what will be a far stiffer test when they face Norway in Le Havre in the last-eight. The Scandinavians beat Australia on penalties on Saturday. —Reuters

Folau's crowdfunding campaign shut down

MELBOURNE: Sacked Australia fullback Israel Folau's crowdfunding campaign to raise money to fight his termination has been shut down by the GoFundMe platform, with more than A\$750,000 (\$487,000) to be returned to thousands of donors. Folau launched his GoFundMe page on Friday, appealing for A\$3 million he said he needed for a potentially long legal battle against Rugby Australia (RA) and his former Super Rugby team New South Wales Waratahs.

RA and the Waratahs tore up Folau's four-year contract last month after the fundamentalist Christian was found guilty of a "high-level breach" of RA's code of conduct for posting on social media that hell awaits homosexuals and other groups. GoFundMe Australia's regional manager Nicola Britton said the crowdfunding platform was "absolutely committed to the fight for equality for LGBTIQ people" and that Folau's campaign had breached their terms of service.

"While we welcome GoFundMe's engaging in diverse civil debate, we do not tolerate the promotion of discrimination or exclusion," Britton said in a statement yesterday. "Today we will be closing Israel Folau's

campaign and issuing full refunds to all donors." A spokesman for Folau said the decision was "very disappointing." "Unfortunately, GoFundMe has buckled to demands against the freedom of Australians to donate to his cause," the spokesman said. "There appears to be a continuing campaign of discrimination against Israel and his supporters."

The spokesman added that several organizations had already expressed interest in supporting Folau's fundraising efforts. Folau's GoFundMe page raised over A\$250,000 from more than 2,500 donors within 12 hours of its launch, despite criticism raining down on the 30-year-old on social media, including from former Wallabies team mate Drew Mitchell. GoFundMe's decision drew praise from LGBT groups on social media and criticism from conservative Christians.

"The haters and Christophobes have forced Israel Folau's church into hiding and GoFundMe appears to have closed his account, in the usual illiberal way of woke corporates," Miranda Devine, a conservative columnist for Sydney's Daily Telegraph, tweeted. The controversy over Folau's page also enveloped his wife Maria Folau, a professional netballer, who was pilloried for supporting her husband's GoFundMe campaign on social media. Netball SA, the governing body of the sport in South Australia state, issued a statement on Sunday saying she had not breached their social media policy.



Israel Folau

Folau's spokesman noted the "attacks" on his wife. "While Israel does not intend to respond in detail at this time regarding the accusations thrown at him or his family he wants it known that these attacks have hardened his resolve," the spokesman said. Folau announced earlier this month that he had begun legal proceedings against RA and the Waratahs at the Fair Work Commission, an industrial tribunal, casting the action as the pursuit of his "right to religious freedom". Folau's contract, signed late last year, was worth a reported A\$5 million. — Reuters

England's World Cup nerve faces Australia test

LONDON: Are England just a bunch of "flat-track bullies"? That's the uncomfortable question facing Eoin Morgan's side as they look to get their World Cup campaign back on track against arch-rivals Australia. Today's match at Lord's was always going to be a showpiece occasion, but it has been given added spice by England's 20-run loss to Sri Lanka.

Faced with a relatively modest target of 233 on a tricky Headingley pitch, England slumped to 212 all out. Despite their second defeat of the pool phase following an earlier loss to Pakistan, the tournament hosts remained in the top four and on course for a semi-final spot. But England, bidding to win the World Cup for the first time, cannot afford many more slip-ups in their remaining pool fixtures against fellow title contenders Australia, India and New Zealand - teams they have not defeated at a World Cup since 1992.

England's rise to the top of the one-day international rankings since their woeful first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup has been based on aggressive batting. They have twice posted a world record score at this level in the intervening four years, including the current mark of 481-6 against Australia at Trent Bridge just over 12 months ago.

'Dumb cricket'

Doubts, however, persist about England's ability to bat in less than ideal conditions for shot-making. Their problems were summed up against Sri Lanka when Moeen Ali marked his 100th ODI by hitting a six, only to try to repeat the shot next ball and hole out to leave England 170-6. Former England captain Michael Vaughan was unimpressed, writing in Britain's Daily Telegraph: "He (Moeen) was there to win the game but it was dumb cricket taking on the man at long off having just hit the ball for six." According to research by cricket statisticians CricViz, on the 11 toughest one-day pitches for batting England have played on since losing to Pakistan in the 2017 semi-finals of the Champions Trophy on a slow Cardiff surface, they have lost five.

By contrast, on the 11 best pitches for batting they



LONDON: Australia's Steve Smith (left) and Alex Carey take part in fielding practice during a training session at Lord's Cricket Ground in London yesterday. — AFP

have played on since then, Morgan's men have won nine. England's problems have been compounded by the absence of Jason Roy from their past two matches, with a torn hamstring threatening to sideline the in-form opener from the Australia clash as well. Yet while former players such as Vaughan bemoaned England's lack of nous against Sri Lanka, Jos Buttler said the problem was they were not aggressive enough.

"I think we were a little bit passive as a group," said the usually big-hitting Buttler, who made just 10 before becoming the last of four wickets for veteran paceman Lasith Malinga. "That doesn't just mean hitting fours and sixes, that means showing intensity and trying to put pressure back on the bowlers," he said. By contrast, Australia have been buoyed by the productive opening partnership between captain Aaron Finch and David Warner and are second in the table after five wins from six matches.

Mitchell Starc is the joint-leading wicket-taker at the World Cup - his tally of 15 putting him level with fellow pacemen Jofra Archer (England) and Mohammad Amir (Pakistan) - but Australia's bowling in support of the left-armers has looked vulnerable. Allan Border, Australia's captain when they beat England in the 1987 World Cup final in Kolkata, believes it will be the bowlers who are decisive. "The game will be won and lost in the bowling," he wrote in an ICC column. "If Australia can hold their ground against the onslaught and put pressure back on England, that'll be key." —AFP

Briefs

Benitez to leave Newcastle

LONDON: Manager Rafa Benitez will leave Newcastle United when his contract expires on June 30, the Premier League club said yesterday. Benitez, 59, was expected to depart after failing to agree a contract extension with Newcastle owner Mike Ashley over the last few months. With the uncertainty over whether or not Ashley will sell the club ahead of the 2019-20 campaign, there appeared to be plenty of obstacles for both parties to overcome. "It is with disappointment that we announce manager Rafael Benitez will leave Newcastle United upon the expiry of his contract on 30th June 2019," the club said in a statement. "We have worked hard to extend Rafa's contract over a significant period of time, however it has not been - and will not be - possible to reach an agreement with Rafa and his representatives." — Reuters

Algeria enjoy comfortable win

CAIRO: Riyad Mahrez led Algeria to a comfortable 2-0 victory over Kenya as they opened their Africa Cup of Nations finals campaign with a competent display in their Group C match on Sunday. Captain Mahrez netted the second goal just before halftime after striker Baghdad Bounedjah had opened the scoring with a 34th minute penalty. Midfielder Dennis Odhiambo gave away the spot kick with an errant tackle on Youcef Atal, who made a run down the right wing before cutting inside and forcing the Kenyan into a clumsy attempt to stop him. Mahrez netted the second nine minutes later as he ghosted unmarked into the penalty area to lash in a pass pulled back from the byline. — Reuters



CHARLOTTE: Mexico's Fernando Navarro celebrates his goal against Martinique during their CONCACAF Gold Cup group stage football match at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte. — AFP

Mexico beat Martinique

CHARLOTTE: Mexico beat Martinique 3-2 on Sunday to reach the quarter-finals of the CONCACAF Gold Cup as winners of Group A ahead of Canada. The Canadians advanced with a 7-0 romp over winless Cuba, fueled by hat-tricks from Lucas Cavallini and 19-year-old forward Jonathan David in the first match of the day's double-header at Bank of America Stadium. Heavily favored Mexico were tested by Martinique on the way to a victory that saw them complete group play with three wins from three matches. Uriel Antuna put Mexico up in the 29th minute and they seemed comfortably in control before Kevin Parsemain curled in a superb free kick in the 56th minute to knot the score at 1-1. Goals from Raul Jimenez and Fernando Navarro put Mexico back in front and a late header from Jordy Delem wasn't enough for Martinique. — AFP

'Alive and kicking'- Pakistan eye unlikely World Cup survival

LONDON: Pakistan find themselves "alive and kicking" in the World Cup despite a disastrous start as coach Mickey Arthur warned his unpredictable team were still gunning for the semi-finals. The 1992 champions were on the brink of elimination after losing three of their first five games, including a bruising defeat to arch-rivals India.

But Sunday's 49-run win over South Africa has kept alive Pakistan's chances of qualifying for the last four. They now need to win their remaining three matches against New Zealand, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, and hope other results go their way. New Zealand are top of the 10-team table ahead of Australia, India and England, followed by Sri Lanka, Bangladesh with Pakistan in seventh place.

However, England, smarting from their upset against Sri Lanka, will be out of the running for the last four if they lose their remaining three games against Australia, India and New Zealand. Even table-toppers New Zealand can lose their last three and not qualify - a scenario that is giving Pakistan hope. "We are alive and kicking, without a doubt," said Arthur. "Yes, we are banking on other teams doing us a favor. It probably is - but we've got to win three games."

Arthur said Pakistan, who stunned England earlier in the tournament, can beat any team if they play to their potential. "When we play our best game, we can beat anybody. Whether that's New Zealand, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, our remaining games, or England, we showed. "We put our three disciplines together, we are as good as any team in this competition. We are very firmly in the World Cup. We win our next three games, we'll qualify."

Arthur said his players came out fighting after their defeat to India in Manchester last week. "Our boys hurt, all of us hurt, incredibly. Guys didn't sleep much, but they came to the training every day and put in (hard work) in order to try and turn it around, and we got some just reward against South Africa." —AFP

25 Pinch-hit HR lifts Braves over Nats in 10 as Camargo shines



26 Martinez, Aguero's goals send Argentina into Copa quarters



27 England beat Cameroon 3-0 through amid VAR mayhem



Bangladesh keep semi-final hopes alive

Bangladesh sink Afghanistan by 62 runs



SOUTHAMPTON: Afghanistan's Samiullah Shinwari (left) attempts a reverse sweep shot past Bangladesh's wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim during the 2019 Cricket World Cup group stage match between Bangladesh and Afghanistan yesterday. — AFP

SOUTHAMPTON: Bangladesh boosted their bid to reach the World Cup semi-finals as Shakib Al Hasan's superb all-round display inspired a 62-run win over Afghanistan yesterday. Shakib's 51 laid the foundations for Bangladesh to score 262-7 and made him the leading run-scorer in this year's World Cup.

The 32-year-old then ripped through the Afghan batting line-up with his career-best ODI figures of 5-29 from 10 overs. Shakib is only the second player in World Cup history to take five wickets and hit a 50 in the same match after India's Yuvraj Singh against Ireland in 2011. Bangladesh, winners against South Africa and the West Indies earlier in the tournament, are up to fifth place in the 10-team group stage.

They sit one point behind fourth-placed England, who face Australia on Tuesday, in the race to seal a semi-final berth via a top-four finish. Mashrafe Mortaza's side play

India and Pakistan in their final two group matches. Afghanistan became the first team to be eliminated after an agonising 11-run loss against India on Saturday, when Mohammed Shami's final-over hat-trick denied them a famous upset. Gulbadin Naib's team have lost all seven of their matches, leaving with two games to avoid finishing the tournament without a single point.

Rahmat Shah and Gulbadin put on 49 for the first wicket, giving Afghanistan hope of a surprise win. But Shakib's introduction brought the breakthrough as the spinner weaved his magic. Rahmat carelessly flicked a flatter delivery to Tamim Iqbal at mid-on and departed for 24. Just 10 runs came from the next five overs and Hashmatullah Shahidi perished when he tried to accelerate, stumped by Mushfiqur Rahim off Mosaddek Hossain for 11. Bangladesh had victory in their sights after Shakib

took two wickets in the space of four balls.

Gulbadin was removed for 47 after driving low to Liton Das at short extra cover before Mohammad Nabi was bowled through the gate for a duck. Shakib became the first Bangladesh player to take five wickets in the World Cup when he had Najibullah Zadran stumped. Earlier, Shakib became the leading run scorer in this year's World Cup so far as his side posted a solid score after being put into bat. Shakib's 51 took him to 476 runs in the tournament, while Mushfiqur top-scored with 83 from 87 balls.

Aggressive hitting

Liton was promoted ahead of Soumya Sarkar to open along with Tamim for Bangladesh, with the pair managing a brisk 23 from the first four overs. But Liton fell for 16 in the next over after being fooled into a miscued drive by spinner

Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who finished with 3-39. That brought Shakib to the crease and he upped the tempo even further with some aggressive hitting that maintained his fine World Cup form. When Shakib, who has two centuries already in the tournament, pulled Naib to the boundary, it moved him above Australia's David Warner's 447 runs.

Tamim and Shakib put on their fourth successive fifty partnership in one-day internationals. Shakib went on to become only the second player to hit six consecutive 40-plus scores in a World Cup. Not long after that milestone, Shakib brought up his half-century in 66 balls - his fifth score of 50 or more in this tournament - to huge cheers from the Bangladesh fans who made up the majority of the crowd. Shakib was unable to turn his solid start into another century, but he would contribute more than enough with the ball to seal the victory. — AFP

Kodjia goal hands Ivorians victory in Cup of Nations opener

CAIRO: Jonathan Kodjia struck the only goal as Ivory Coast defeated South Africa 1-0 in the steamy Cairo heat yesterday in a meeting of former Africa Cup of Nations champions. Ivory Coast won the title for the second time in 2015 but crashed out in the group stage two years ago without a victory and are trying to build a team to match that of its golden generation.

Ivory Coast coach Ibrahim Kamara sees Nicolas Pepe as one the young stars who can banish the memories of a disastrous title defense, and the in-demand Lille forward soon demonstrated his talent with a jinking run that ended with Kodjia snatching at a shot from close range. South Africa, who failed to qualify for the 2017 edition, on the other hand have arrived in Egypt as one of the most unpredictable teams. Bafana Bafana scaled the heights at the outset of 2019 qualifying by winning 2-0 in Nigeria, then sank into mediocrity by drawing 0-0 away to lowly-ranked Seychelles.

In the first half at Al Salam Stadium where temperatures again peaked around 37 Celsius (98.6 Fahrenheit) they were largely limited to counter-attacks, captain Thulani Hlatshwayo going closest with a header that brushed the roof of the net. Ivory Coast headed home early in Gabon after they were held by Togo and the Democratic Republic of Congo and lost against Morocco, but they nearly took the lead here twice in quick succession around the half-hour. After a foul on the edge of the South Africa box Pepe, the 22-goal second highest French Ligue 1 scorer last season behind Kylian Mbappe, slammed a thunderous free-kick against the crossbar with Ronwen Williams rooted to the spot. The South Africa goalkeeper then produced



CAIRO: South Africa's defender Buhle Mkhwanazi (bottom) tackles Ivory Coast's forward Jonathan Kodjia during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) football match between Ivory Coast and South Africa yesterday. — AFP

a stunning reflex save to keep Kodjia out moments later as the Aston Villa forward ran clean through before needlessly opting for power over precision. Amid the energy-sapping heat both sides made a labored start to the second half but it eventually burst into life when Kodjia atoned for his earlier miss. — AFP

Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo to host 2026 Winter Games

LAUSANNE: Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo are promising an Italian Olympics packed with style and elan after winning the right to stage the 2026 Winter Games yesterday. Milan earned 47 votes from the International Olympic Committee membership, compared to Stockholm's 34, prompting loud celebrations from the bid team, that had earlier included Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte.

"Italy, the future and sport have won," Italy's Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini said back in Italy. "Thanks to those who believed in it right away, especially in the Municipalities and Regions, and a pity for those who gave up." "There will be at least five billion (euros) in added value, 20,000 jobs, as well as many new roads and sports facilities. With the Winter Olympics we will confirm our excellence and our skills to the world."

Milan and Stockholm were the only candidates left after four other cities-Swiss city Sion, Japan's Sapporo, Austria's Graz and 1988 hosts Calgary in Canada-had dropped out of the race with concerns over the size and cost of the event. Italy last hosted the winter Olympics in 2006 in Turin while Cortina hosted the winter Games back in 1956. "Congratulations to Milan-Cortina. We can look forward to outstanding and sustainable Olympic Winter Games in a traditional winter sports country," IOC President Thomas Bach said after announcing the winner.

"The passion and knowledge of Italian fans, together



LAUSANNE: Members of the delegation of Milan/Cortina d'Ampezzo 2026 Winter Olympics candidate city react after the city was elected to host the 2026 Olympic Winter Games during the 134th session of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) yesterday. — AFP

with experienced venue operators, will create the perfect atmosphere for the best athletes in the world." Sweden, a winter sports powerhouse who hosted the summer Olympics back in 1912, have now bid eight times unsuccessfully for the winter Games. The Italian bid had gained an advantage over their opponents after a recent evaluation report by the IOC showed much stronger local support for the Olympics at over 80 percent among the population, compared to just over 50 percent for the Stockholm-Are candidacy. — Reuters