

Friday Times

ISSUE NO: 17770

JAMADA ALTHANI 24, 1440 AH | FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2019

3 Life under the occupation: One man's story of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait



11 Trump 'walks' as North Korea's talks end abruptly without deal



45 Wade's buzzer-beater lifts Heat past Warriors



Kuwait marks Fireman's Day

See Pages 6 & 7



Local

Water waste



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

Earlier this week, Kuwait marked its 58th National Day and the 28th Liberation Day. The national celebration was closer to a water festival and ended with much grumbling and damage - without solutions or alternatives for the coming years or a call to launch awareness campaigns for families that encourage their children to hurt the country and individuals' properties under the pretext of celebrating.

The celebrations are now over, but I wonder what the youth learned from the experience of the Iraqi invasion and what lessons should we convey to children, which they will need in the future. I believe this week was a difficult time for many people in the country who did not travel during the long holiday and had to bear the disturbing scenes created by many youngsters with water guns, who used them against pedestrians and motorists.

If someone decides to leave the house, they will expose themselves to the risk of being hurt; if not from the water, then from stones that could crash their cars! I don't see any connection between hurling rocks hidden inside water balloons at cars under the excuse of celebrations. A friend said playing with water is justifiable here - what else can people do? There is no activity that attracts young people and they are the majority, so some families with children can either choose to go out on the streets or stay at home.

What has this generation learned about those two important occasions? Nothing, except the joy of harming people - and for what? Nothing, except a complete waste of money and harming innocent people with dirt. In 2016, during a seminar held on the occasion of World Water Day, the undersecretary of the ministry of electricity and water said Kuwait is classified as one of the poorest countries in water resources in the GCC and has one of the highest consumptions of water - the average per capita consumption in GCC countries is the highest in the world.

So, we are one of the poorest countries in the world, yet we play with water. Of course, it is no secret that water production costs are constantly increasing. I think if this waste continues, there might be a day when we will only dream of water. There is no doubt that water is a global problem, and in order to draw attention to it, the United Nations General Assembly declared March 22 as "World Water Day" in 1993, and called for the conservation of water resources.

Dr Mohamed Ghazal, an expert in economic science, published a scientific report in May 2018 on the problem of water in the world, and identified some reasons. He said the world's water problem is due to overexploitation of water resources and the uncontrolled consumption of water in cities. He also mentioned that the Middle East region is facing acute water shortages, and nearly 700 million people in 43 countries have water resources below the minimum human requirement.

Some may think that these observations are not relevant to the national days of Kuwait, but I see otherwise. I believe the celebration of a nation is by protecting its sources of wealth, and water is a great wealth that we must preserve. I think there is a moral and national obligation to rationalize the usage of water.



NEW YORK: This archive photo shows Kuwait's late Amir His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah delivering a speech at the United Nations on December 27, 1990, nearly five months after the start of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. — KUNA

Remembering the diplomatic efforts a key to honoring the Liberation

IN MY VIEW

By Ahmad Jabr

a.jabr@kuwaittimes.net

The national holidays are over. People have celebrated the occasion in their own ways. Those who traveled have either returned or are on their way back home. Students and employees eventually have to return back to their schools and jobs, and soon enough business will be back to usual.

A lot has been said about the way national holidays are celebrated in Kuwait, with many criticizing the 'negatives' seen during celebrations in recent years, namely the rampant use of water guns and water balloons among revelers. Meanwhile, there have been calls for measures to adopt 'higher standards' in celebration deemed 'more befitting' the important occasions of the National and Liberation days, and more respectful to the sacrifices of those who died fighting for Kuwait.

February 25th and 26th of 2019 marked the 58th anniversary of Independence and 28th anniversary of Liberation, respectively. Many feel that the state should do more to spread awareness about the importance of those two occasions, and perhaps in particular the anniversary of Kuwait's liberation from an invasion that threatened the country's very existence.

Criticizers see the irony between an anniversary marking the freedom of Kuwait from what appeared as certain doom at the time, and the way revelers have celebrated this occasion in recent years, mostly in the form of wasting tons of gallons of water. There have been debates and a lot of questions raised about the younger generation's level of awareness regarding the Gulf War and its impact.

Anyone who tracks down the state's attempts to raise awareness about the plight of the invasion during the past 28 years cannot help but notice that they mostly focused on the war itself, the destruction, the aftermath. Images of thick clouds of smoke billowing over Kuwait, destroyed public facilities, and the carnage left behind by the invading troops are forever engraved in people's minds.

The general public knows exactly what happened nearly 30 years ago, including the younger generation. They have seen all the photos and footage. They have heard about all the stories of heroism and sacrifice. Kids learn about it in school from a young age; they mostly have an idea even if they did not hear stories told by those who were there and lived to tell the tale. In fact, many of those who survived the war have since preached the need to focus on the future and the development of Kuwait while learning from the past.

But there is another aspect of the Gulf War that needs greater attention and awareness: Kuwait's diplomatic efforts that helped garner international support to thwart the invaders through military action. It is common knowledge that an international coalition had formed a unified army to push the Iraqi troops out of Kuwait, but what is not often highlighted are the great efforts made behind the scenes by diplomats who played a big part in convincing the rest of the world to stand with Kuwait.

Kuwait realized that if the occupation dragged on for years, there would be more risk that international calls for liberating Kuwait would weaken and Saddam Hussain's forces would become entrenched.

Kuwait's diplomats had to act fast. The most notable of such efforts are arguably those of diplomats in the US which helped in the passing of the key 'Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution' in the US Congress ahead of a January 15, 1991 deadline issued to Iraq by the United Nations.

There are many ways by which the government can raise awareness about those efforts, perhaps the best of which is establishing a dedicated museum to showcase Kuwait's diplomatic achievements over the country's history, with special focus on the invasion era. This helps provide a fresh alternative for people who have long deserted the unchanged 'war' museums and documentaries which continue to present repetitive material for nearly three decades.

Any attempts to change people's celebratory behavior is obviously not going to bear fruit overnight, but thinking out of the ordinary could be the first step to achieving that.

Life under the occupation: One man's story of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait

By Ben Garcia

Slipping tea on a bench in a public park in Kuwait City, Yacoub Yousef Al-Qallaf, a 67-year-old Kuwaiti from Daiya, told Kuwait Times about the ordeal he faced during the Iraqi invasion and occupation of the country in 1990-91. Qallaf had two families - with his first Kuwaiti wife, he has three daughters who are all grownups and have families of their own; with his second expatriate wife, Qallaf has five children - three boys and two girls. "I consider my first marriage as my prewar family and the second as my postwar one," he quipped.

According to Qallaf, during the entire seven months of the invasion, his family was mostly confined in the basement of his family home in Daiya. He ventured out occasionally to go to the market in search of food, but his wife and children were not allowed to go out. "At that time, Iraqi money was widely circulated in Kuwait. We used it to buy groceries. We were also getting money from outside sources. I know that the money was coming from the Amir of Kuwait - he wasn't here, but he never neglected us. This money was distributed secretly house-to-house. We used it to survive the entire seven months under the Iraqi regime," he said.

Qallaf, who was then in his late 30s, has one unforgettable memory of the invasion. It was about six in the evening when an Iraqi soldier stopped his car in Kuwait City. "I thought this was the end of my life, because I resisted giving my car to them. An Iraqi soldier stopped my car and told me to leave immediately or be killed. I resisted at first, because it was the only remaining car of the family, but the soldier seemed serious. He said at the count of three, I should leave my car or be killed. Fearing for my life, I gave up the car to him. I managed to go home with the help of some expats," he recalled.

Qallaf said the Iraqi soldiers were harsher when it came to the needs and concerns of Kuwaitis. "My family trusted some Arab friends, who shared information with us. We had television and radio at that time, but these were controlled by the Iraqis, so all the news was in favor of the invaders," he said. "There was no way we could get viable information about what was going on. We didn't trust the Iraqis. I heard many sad stories about my fellow Kuwaitis, but all we could do was pray, because we wanted to survive. We always prayed that the occupation would end soon," he said.

Qallaf said sounds of bombings and explosions were heard from every direction almost every day, especially at night. "We learnt about the intervention of the US-led coalition from radio broadcasts which we sometimes got from elsewhere. During the occupation, some Kuwaiti resistance units regularly broadcast from private homes inside Kuwait, and when detected by Iraqi authorities, they would transfer to another location. This is how we got the news," he reminisced.

Qallaf's family was still in the basement when Kuwait was liberated. "We heard loud shouts from people. We will never forget the feeling of being liberated! We jumped from our beds and went out on the streets. We congratulated everyone there regardless of their nationality. We visited family and friends - that day was so different from the rest. It was like a feast. A beautiful day had dawned on us, one worth remembering, and was a great relief for everyone. People from all walks of life including expatriates were dancing on the streets. The Iraqi soldiers had abandoned their posts - most of them had died or surrendered," he said.



Yacoub Yousef Al-Qallaf



The National Assembly



The oil well fires



The Fish Market



Local

Kuwait's favorite delicacy *Truly truffle*

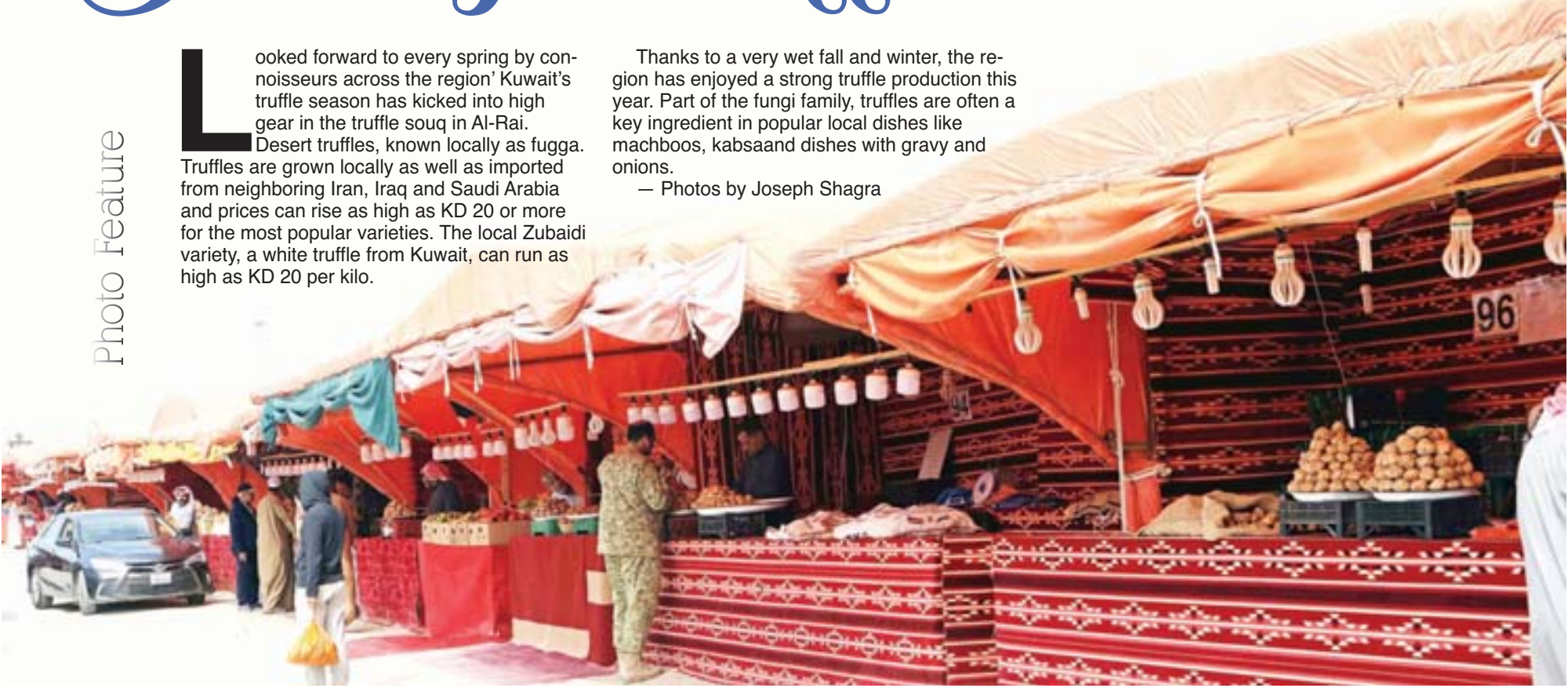


Photo Feature

Looked forward to every spring by connoisseurs across the region? Kuwait's truffle season has kicked into high gear in the truffle souq in Al-Rai. Desert truffles, known locally as fugga. Truffles are grown locally as well as imported from neighboring Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and prices can rise as high as KD 20 or more for the most popular varieties. The local Zubaidi variety, a white truffle from Kuwait, can run as high as KD 20 per kilo.

Thanks to a very wet fall and winter, the region has enjoyed a strong truffle production this year. Part of the fungi family, truffles are often a key ingredient in popular local dishes like machboos, kabsa and dishes with gravy and onions.

— Photos by Joseph Shagra



Local



Local

17th Fireman's Day Festival underway



KUWAIT: The 17th Annual Fireman's Day Festival was inaugurated yesterday at Souq Sharq, under the title of 'Protecting Children is Our Responsibility.' Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh attended the inauguration ceremony of the three-day event, along with top Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) officials. KFSD announced during the ceremony that 2018 witnessed a three percent drop in accident reports, five percent drop in fire reports, eight percent drop in residential fire reports and four percent drop in transportation fire reports. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and Fouad Al-Shaikh



Local

Kuwaiti chief lawmaker holds talks with top Iraqi officials

Kuwait, Iraq affirm 'solid' bilateral relations



BAGHDAD: Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem and his delegation meet with Iraqi President Dr Barham Salih.— KUNA photos



Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with his Iraqi counterpart Mohammad Al-Halbousi.

BAGHDAD: Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, who arrived yesterday in Iraq on an official one-day visit, held official talks later with Iraqi leaders discussing a host of issues of common interest. The parliament speaker, along with his delegation, met with President Dr Barham Salih at Salam Palace. Ghanem conveyed greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the Iraqi leader, wishing his country further progress and prosperity. In turn, president Salih requested that Ghanem convey

his best regards to His Highness the Amir. The two sides, during the meeting, affirmed that the bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries would remain solid.

Earlier, Ghanem, along with his entourage, met with his Iraqi counterpart Mohammad Al-Halbousi. The discussions dealt means of boosting cooperation between Kuwait and Iraq, particularly in the parliamentary field, Al-Dustoor news network said in a statement. The talks addressed various files of common concern, regional and international issues, it added. The

Kuwaiti parliament speaker expressed, during the meeting with Halbousi, aspiration to see Iraq secure, prosperous and stable. Meanwhile, Halbousi expressed gratitude to Kuwait for supporting his country in the war on terrorism, backing the local 'political process' and reconstructing the country. Separately, Ghanem met the head of the supreme judicial council Faek Al-Abboudi, discussing a host of legal affairs.

Ghanem also met with Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdulmahd, and the two sides discussed topics of mutual concern and means of boost-

ing ties on all levels. They also discussed resolving issues standing in the way of establishing economic partnerships between Kuwait and Iraq. The meeting was attended by the Speaker's accompanying delegation and Kuwaiti Ambassador to Iraq Salem Al-Zamanan. After departing Iraq, Ghanem is expected to head to Jordan on a two-day visit to Syrian and Palestinian refugee camps. He will be also attending the 29th Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union conference on Jerusalem on March 3-4 held in Jordan. — KUNA

Russian FM to visit Kuwait, other GCC states in March

MOSCOW: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is scheduled to visit Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states including Kuwait on March 3-7, the Russian Foreign Ministry announced. The planned tour will also include Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE, ministry spokesperson Maria Zakahrova said at a press conference yesterday. Lavrov's expected talks with top leaders of the Gulf countries would deal with means of boosting relations and cooperation at various levels, she said. The discussions will focus on implementation of previously inked accords between Moscow and these countries, execution of projects of mutual interest in diverse spheres in addition to enhancing humanitarian and cultural ties.

Moreover, they will touch on issues in the Middle East and North Africa, with emphasis on necessity of resolving conflicts with political and diplomatic means, according to international laws and the United Nations Charter, Zakahrova continued.

The Russian minister and his GCC hosts will also discuss conditions in Syria, Yemen, Libya, Arabian Gulf countries, the Palestinian issue and coordination at international quarters. She indicated that some focal points of the talks would be preparation for the Russia-Arab Ministerial Forum, due in Moscow on April 17, as well as prospects of reactivating the Russian-GCC Strategic Dialogue Council. —KUNA

Press dedicate more interest to local issues

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti press has shifted focus from Arab affairs to domestic issues because of readers' change of interest and significant expansion of the media sphere. Most of the local newspapers, nowadays, headline about local issues, following a long period during which Arab and Islamic affairs, namely the Palestinian cause, had dominated the dailies' spaces. The 1990 Iraqi aggression was the key crossroad, where the local press began centering on the domestic affairs, at the expense of the regional and Arab topics. Walid Al-Jassem, Director General of Al-Rai television station, said that various technical and political factors have prompted the press decision makers to shift to the Kuwaiti subjects. At the political level, Kuwait had shouldered

responsibility of defending Arab and Islamic causes. This responsibility turned much more pressing when it joined the United Nations on May 14, 1963. The Palestinian cause, namely the uprising in the 1980s, had dominated spaces of the daily Kuwaiti newspapers. With respect of technical aspects, Jassem said appointment of Arabs in ranking administrative and news posts in the past affected policies of choosing the issues that would be highlighted. Mazyad Al-Mousharji, chief editor of the economic journal Al-Mal, expressed his belief that the small number of newspapers in the 1980s played a role in unifying the highlighted issues. Now, in shadow of mushrooming media outlets and printed publications, the presented topics have turned much more diversified. Ahmad Nasser, a journalist at Al-Qabas newspaper, said 'the compass' of interest by the Kuwaiti newspapers over the past 10 years changed due to employment of a larger number of Kuwaiti journalists. Moreover, the Kuwaiti reader's increasing interest in the local issues has prompted the press to focus on these topics. — KUNA

Kuwait Towers illuminate during national celebrations

KUWAIT: Kuwait's three towers stand aloft adorning the seaside area in the heart of the Kuwaiti capital. The towers, during this month that witnessed the national days, were lighted emitting images of the Kuwaiti flag, portraits of Their Highnesses the Amir, the Crown Prince and the Prime Minister. Samir Al-Gallaf, the director of construction and architectural affairs at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, said that the three towers had been designed to mimic shape of some Kuwaiti women traditional acces-

sories. Most visitors and tourists of the country visit the towers' site, situated in the 38,000-square-meter 'Ras Ajouza' location.

Idea of building the towers emerged during era of the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, when the ministry of electricity drafted plans to build new water reservoirs to replace old ones, constructed in 1963. Engineers had planned to use the two large towers as reservoirs' and use the small one to produce electricity. — KUNA

Local

Alternative land plots allocated for railway route farm owners

Ministry denies 'delayed payment of egg suppliers' reports

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmad Al-Manfouhi said that new land plots had been allocated as alternative ones for those utilizing land plots intercepting the projected railway route. In a letter he sent to the cabinet's secretary general concerning the obstacles along the northern road projects and the railway route, Manfouhi explained that the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources was contacted concerning the farm-lands along the route, while the Ministry of Social Affairs was contacted concerning relocating Abdali agricultural co-operative society to an alternative location. Further, Manfouhi added that obstacles along the southern regional highway had been removed and that construction on the highway could commence.

Due payments

The Ministry of Social Affairs denied de-

laying the payment of financial dues to the suppliers of eggs in various co-op societies. In this regard, the ministry's assistant under-secretary for cooperation and the ministry's official spokesperson Abdul Aziz Showaib stressed that the ministry always urges various co-ops to pay suppliers' dues regularly, adding that various co-ops had been fully co-operating in this regard. He also denied that overdue payments were behind the egg shortage.

Smart meters

The Central Agency for Public Tenders set March 17 as the deadline for companies applying to supply 200,000 smart electricity meters and 100,000 smart water meters to file in their biddings, said informed sources. After receiving the biddings, the agency will refer them to the Ministry of Electricity and Water for technical studies before deciding on the best bidding offer, the sources added.

Separately, the sources said that the total cost of fuels and oils used by power and water desalination plants in the period from of April 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019 was KD 1,276 billion.

Employees' absence

Well-informed sources at the Civil Service Commission (CSC) denied using any new measures concerning pre and post official vacation leaves. The sources added that leaves are usually endorsed by employees' direct superiors in charge in every government body. Further, the sources said that sick leaves have to be approved by the Ministry of Health (MOH) through automated connection with CSC, which also checks the validity of all sick leaves issued by private hospitals. The sources added that all state departments had been instructed not to accept sick leaves issued by private hospitals after two weeks from their issuance, adding that CSC tends to reduce that period to match those issued by

public hospitals, which are rejected after a few days since issuance. Commenting on the large percentage of employees' absence in various government bodies after the national holidays, the sources warned that those absent without due excuse would be subject to disciplinary measures as per CSC regulations and laws.

No exemption

The Ministry of Public Works' official spokesperson Eman Al-Omar denied a local daily report alleging that the ministry intends to exempt three categories of its employees from using the biometric access control system. Omar explained that according to CSC resolution number 8/2017, only employees with severe or mild mental disabilities will be exempted from using the fingerprint system provided they submit certificates issued by the disability authority testifying that their disability hinders the use of the system.

Army chief meets Italian defense official

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Army Chief-of-Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khedhr met yesterday with Italian Undersecretary of Defense. Issues of mutual concerns, especially on the military level and ways to enhance them, were discussed during the encounter, the Public Relations and Moral Guidance Department at the Ministry of Defense said in a press release. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Army Chief-of-Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khedhr meets with Italian Undersecretary of Defense.



KUWAIT: The truck seen following the deadly accident.

Man dead, nine injured in two-vehicle collision; fire, security exercises held

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A man died and nine others were injured when a pickup vehicle collided into a tow truck along Wafra farms road and turned on its side due to impact. The Pakistani man's body was transferred to the coroner after the accident. Firemen from Wafra fire station rushed to the scene, where they rescued the injured - all expats - and handed them over to paramedics. Security sources explained that two ambulance choppers and six ambulances were dispatched to the scene where two of the injured had to be airlifted to Adan hospital, two others were taken to Adan hospital by ambulances and five were taken to Sabah Al-Ahmad medical center. The truck was removed off the road before criminal evidence investigators arrived to the scene. A case was filed to investigate the causes of the accident.

Test gone wrong

A half lorry driver went yesterday to take his driver's license test



A wall damaged by a truck at a driver's license testing center.

at a driving school in Ahmedi, but instead crashed his vehicle into a wall and got himself injured in the process. Firemen were called to free the Pakistani man out of the truck after he became trapped in the wreckage. He was then handed over to paramedics who transported him to hospital.

Officers honored

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Lt Gen Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah yesterday received and honored a number of officers and policemen who had arrested four Arab expatriates who had assaulted and kidnapped a citizen on the early hours of Wednesday. The honoring reception was also attended by interior ministry undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Nahham, assistant undersecretary for public security Maj Gen Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Maj Gen Abdullah Al-Ali. Speaking on the occasion, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah stressed that what the arresting force members did proves that security forces are always alerted to protect the society including both citizens and expatriates. Meanwhile, Lt Gen Nahham stressed that the reception is another proof of security leaders' constant communication with their agents and hailed the bonds they have.



India will stand like rock against 'enemy attack', Modi vows

Bon appe-teeth: man chomps on 'molar' in airline meal



HANOI: US President Donald Trump boards Air Force One at Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi to leave Vietnam following the second US-North Korea summit in Hanoi yesterday. (Inset) Michael Cohen, Trump's former personal attorney, ends his testimony before the House Oversight and Reform Committee in the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill. — AFP

Trouble finds Trump on every side

US president branded as criminal by a former friend

HANOI: Branded a criminal by a former friend in Washington, then let down by his new friend Kim Jong Un in Vietnam, Donald Trump cut a lonely figure before returning home from North Korea nuclear talks yesterday. The US president's usual fire was missing at a press conference marking the end of two days of negotiations to try and get Kim to give up nuclear weapons.

Trump made few of his customary quips and kept largely on topic, a far cry from the rambling, excited performance he put on after his first summit with Kim in Singapore last year. This time he didn't even seem angry, just tired. That, quite possibly, was in part due to having stayed up to watch his former personal lawyer Michael Cohen testify in Washington-during Vietnam's night time hours-that his old boss was a crook.

Trump lamented Congress' scheduling. "They could have made it two days later or next week, and it would have been even better. They would have had more time," he said bitterly. Originally, the Kim summit in Hanoi seemed set to give Trump a chance to escape the Washington swamp. Back home his pet project to build a wall

on the Mexico border is embroiled in controversy and allegations of misconduct are mounting. But on the other side of the world, a chance to make history beckoned.

Trump heavily hyped the event, apparently believing that by sheer force of personality he can succeed where decades of diplomats have flopped, transforming North Korea from an isolated, nuclear-armed fortress state to Asian tiger and friend of the US. He even let out that his name was being pushed for a Nobel Peace Prize. By lunchtime yesterday, though, it was clear that Trump's bold gambit had failed for now. He and Kim couldn't even agree on enough to issue a joint declaration and the summit ended two hours early. "Sometimes you have to walk," a deflated Trump said.



With friends like these

Hoping to get Kim to agree to fundamental cuts in his arsenal, Trump says he instead found himself facing impossible demands from the totalitarian leader for Washington to drop economic sanctions. But Trump insisted that he and Kim remain buddies. "There was a warmth that we have and I hope it stays," he said. "He's quite a guy."

Cohen blast his old boss

Clearly Trump likes to be liked. For a president who stakes so much on his claim to be a star negotiator, that personal magic may even be the vital ingredient. "Believe it or not I have a great relationship with almost every leader," Trump told the press conference, ending his boast on a defensive note. "A lot of people find that hard to understand."

But there will never be any rescuing his once-great relationship with Cohen, a man who served

him as lawyer and general fixer for a decade. Cohen, about to go to prison for three years after being convicted of lying under oath, took the oath again Wednesday in an extraordinarily theatrical congressional hearing. Broadcast across the world on cable and US network channels, Cohen used the big stage to unload on his old boss, describing him as a "mobster", "con-man", "cheat" and a "racist". As the Trump-Kim negotiations in Hanoi kicked off on Wednesday, many asked how the president would react.

Would he ignore the commotion back home to stay focused on the even-higher-stakes talks? Or would he go back to his hotel and tune in? There was never really much doubt. "I tried to watch as much as I could," Trump said, before delivering a detailed critique in which he estimated that Cohen had lied about him "95 percent instead of 100 percent". With that, his less than happy Vietnam trip was over. A less than happy return home loomed. "I'm about to get on a plane and fly back to a wonderful place called Washington, DC," Trump told the press conference. He sounded wearier than ever.— AFP

International

Trump 'walks' as North Korea's talks end abruptly without deal

Kim Jong Un's wants sanctions dropped

HANOI: The US-North Korea nuclear summit in Hanoi ended abruptly without a deal yesterday, with President Donald Trump saying he had decided to "walk" in the face of Kim Jong Un's demands to drop sanctions. The much-anticipated second meeting between the two leaders was supposed to build on their historic first summit in Singapore, but they failed to sign a joint statement as initially scheduled and the talks ended in deadlock.

"Sometimes you have to walk and this was just one of those times," an unusually downbeat Trump told reporters. "Basically they wanted the sanctions lifted in their entirety and we couldn't do that," Trump said before leaving Vietnam aboard Air Force One to head back to Washington.

But Trump insisted he was "optimistic that the progress we made" before and during the summit left them "in position to have a really good outcome" in the future. "I'd much rather do it right than do it fast," he added. He noted Kim had vowed not to resume nuclear or ballistic missile testing—something he previously identified as a yardstick for success—and reiterated their "close relationship". "We just like each other... there's a warmth that we have and I hope that stays, I think it will," he said.

'Major failure'

The outcome in Hanoi fell far short of the pre-meeting expectations and hopes, after critics said

their initial historic meeting in Singapore was more style over substance. The leaders walked away with no set plans for a third meeting, though Trump said he hopes to see Kim again soon. Ankit Panda, from the Federation of American Scientists, warned on Twitter that the White House's expectation of further talks "does not have to be a perception shared in North Korea."

"Kim may have left irate, for all we know. He may have no intention of continuing this," added Panda. In the original White House program, a "Joint Agreement Signing Ceremony" had been scheduled in Hanoi and a working lunch for the leaders. Instead both men left the summit venue without signing anything and Trump moved up his news conference by two hours.

"This is a major failure," tweeted Joe Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund peace foundation, saying it showed the limit of summitry, with "not enough time or staff" to work out a deal. Trump flew around the world for the meeting and Kim undertook a mammoth two-and-a-half-day trek through China in his olive green train, travelling 4,000 kilometers. Kim will stay on in Vietnam for a state visit, which will include a wreath-laying ceremony at the Ho Chi Minh mausoleum, before his expected departure tomorrow.

The US president, who touted his "special relationship" with Kim, frequently dangled the prospect of a brighter economic future for a nuclear-free North Korea, at one point saying there



HANOI: US President Donald Trump (right) walks with North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un during a break in talks at the second US-North Korea summit yesterday. — AFP

was "AWESOME" potential. From the outset, he had appeared to downplay expectations of an immediate breakthrough in nuclear talks, saying he was in "no rush" to clinch a rapid deal and was content if a pause in missile testing continued.

But Harry Kazianis, Director of Korean Stud-

ies at the Centre for the National Interest, said that no agreement was better than a bad one. "The challenge is North Korea's nuclear weapons are already a reality," he said. "Getting a deal that does little to nothing to remove that threat would be far worse than a flawed deal." —AFP

Fags and food: Things we learned from Hanoi summit

HANOI: Cigarette breaks and poolside strolls: the world again saw a more human side to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump as their unlikely diplomatic rapprochement endured for a second date. But bonhomie and bromance are not always enough and the summit ended abruptly without an agreement, with sanctions proving a deal-breaker. Here are the things we learned from the two-day gathering in Vietnam's capital Hanoi.

Food for thought

Hanoi was not a summit for anyone hoping to diet. The US president was treated to a five-course lunch with the Vietnamese prime minister that included scallops, mango, spring rolls, cod, Wagyu beef, wood-ear mushrooms, lotus seeds and longans, a tropical fruit. Perhaps understandably, the US side reportedly asked for a more "simple" dinner with Kim and backroom staff were said to be wrangling over the menu until the last minute. In the end, the 80s classic of prawn cocktail, avocado and thousand island dressing kicked off the meal, followed by a fusion of styles for the main: grilled sirloin

with a kimchi-stuffed pear. A runny chocolate "lava" closed it out. The following day's working lunch was abruptly cancelled but for the record, the menu showed they were due to eat snow fish - a deliciously tender Asian species - apple foie gras jelly and banoffee pie. In the event, the empty table settings spoke volumes.

Trains, planes and automobiles

For their first historic meeting in Singapore, Kim borrowed a plane from his Chinese friends but this time, he undertook a mammoth 4,000-kilometre (2,500-mile) rail journey in his olive green train. Footage of him taking a cigarette break at a brief stopover in China lit up social media, his ever-present sister Kim Yo Jong rushing to his side to hand him an ashtray. And to complete the set, automobiles played another role in this summit. In Singapore, Trump set Secret Service hearts pounding by allowing Kim a glimpse into his top-secret armored "Beast". This time, a senior North Korean delegation was given a guided tour around a Vietnamese car factory touted as a model for Pyongyang's potential economic development.

Vox pop Kim

At home, Pyongyang carefully choreographs Kim's every appearance in its tightly-controlled media, with state television often not even broadcasting natural sound from his events. And while foreign journalists have tried before to draw an unscripted response from the reclusive leader, no one had ever been successful before.—AFP

'No deal, no problem' at Trump-Kim summit

HANOI: Donald Trump summoned the world's media to Hanoi for a meeting with Kim Jong Un, travelled the long way around the world to get there, and dangled an "AWESOME" future before the North Korean leader. And they did not agree anything. That may not be such a bad thing, analysts say.

Their Singapore summit—the first-ever encounter between the leaders of two countries on opposite sides of the technically still unfinished Korean War-made global headlines last year. But the agreement they signed was short on specifics, with Kim committing only to a vague promise to "work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula". Subsequent progress stalled with the two sides disagreeing over what that means, and ahead of the Hanoi meeting analysts expected them to put meat on the bones of the text.

In the event, there was more bonhomie in the Vietnamese capital—a venue chosen partly to symbolize the possibility of a good post-war relationship with the US—but even less in the way of tangible outcomes, with no communique emerging

from the summit. Trump told reporters Kim wanted all sanctions imposed on the North over its weapons programs lifted before it made any further moves over its Yongbyon nuclear plant and other covert sites, and he had decided to walk away. "I'd much rather do it right than do it fast," he added.

Analysts pointed to the meeting as part of a long process, and potentially a necessary one. "These talks were not a failure," said David Kim of the Stimson Center. "Think of the Trump-Kim relationship like a Korean drama," he went on. "We are just beginning to watch the long love story unfold." It would be filled with "excitement, disappointment and utter heartache", but "the bond between Kim and Trump will remain steadfast to the end. "As long as both 'lovers' remain committed to their relationship, we can expect more positive outcomes in the future."

Trump has previously said he and Kim "fell in love" over an exchange of letters, and while no third summit with Kim had been agreed, the White House said working-level talks would continue.—AFP

International

Smoke signals: Kim Jong Un's sister rushed off her feet on Vietnam trip

Kims' keenness on cleanliness is rooted in the era of late father

HANOI: Ready with an ashtray at a railway station, taking away gifts of flowers and giving directions to staff, Kim Yo Jong has been rushed off her feet as personal secretary to her brother and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Vietnam. Kim Yo Jong, who holds the title of vice director of the ruling Workers' Party, came to the world's attention at the Winter Olympics in South Korea a year ago, when her big smile and relaxed manner made her a hit with many south of the DMZ.

But it has been non-stop for her on the trip to Hanoi, trailing her brother during his second summit with US President Donald Trump, her hair neatly half swept back in trademark fashion, making sure everything goes like clockwork. Kim Yo Jong, 29, in high heels and black two-piece suit, was ubiquitous even before her brother, a stickler for cleanliness, arrived in Hanoi on Tuesday. As Kim Jong Un took a cigarette break at a railway station in the southern Chinese city of Nanning, she approached him holding a crystal ashtray in two hands, footage from Japanese broadcaster TBS showed.

After Kim's train rolled into the Vietnamese border station of Dong Dang, Kim Yo Jong was the first person to emerge, alongside protocol chief Kim Chang Son. She appeared at one point to slightly push aside Kim Yong Chol, the leader's

chief nuclear envoy and top aide, as she sprinted from the train towards her brother and took welcome flowers from him. When Kim Jong Un signed an agreement with Trump after their first summit in Singapore last June, he ditched a pen sterilized by his security officials in favor of one offered by his sister.

"It is most fascinating because we see her discharging technical and hygienic tasks on one hand, but she also has to fulfill certain ceremonial tasks as one of the visiting VIPs," said Michael Madden, a North Korea leadership expert at the Washington-based Stimson Centre's 38 North think tank. The Kims' keenness on cleanliness is rooted in the era of their late father, Kim Jong Il, when immaculateness was key and sanitizers were widely used, Madden said.

Experts also say the use of a personal ashtray or pen in particular is intended to prevent the ruling family's DNA being collected by foreign governments. "The paranoia about medical intelligence involved Kim Jong Il, so the security units may have continued the policy with his son," Madden said. Since her debut on state media in December 2011, Kim Yo Jong has quickly climbed the leadership ladder. She was named as an alternate member of the party's all-powerful politburo in late 2017 as her brother draws his most impor-



HANOI: North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un (center) speaks during a bilateral meeting with US President Donald Trump (not pictured) at the second US-North Korea summit yesterday. — AFP

tant people closer to the centre of power. At the Olympics, her every move was scrutinized. Crowds applauded as she stood for the South Korean anthem during the opening ceremony. But some critics said the aloofness and high-tilted chin

spoke of someone who sees herself "above anyone else". As for the summit, Trump said he and Kim Jong Un had failed to reach agreement on denuclearization due to North Korean demands to lift punishing US-led sanctions. — Reuters

Victim no more, sex trafficked teen takes on Indian system

GOBRA: For more than a year, Nasima Gain did not leave her house. She spoke to no one, refused to meet friends and lay in bed. Closeted in her room, the Indian teenager was consumed by guilt, blaming herself for being snatched from her village, taken to a neighboring state and sex trafficked into a brothel. She recalls the day of her abduction, aged just 14, vividly.

"I was dressed in a sari that day because we were celebrating (a festival)," she said at a relative's home. "I think it was the first time I was wearing a sari and remember being very happy. That morning, I never imagined that I would be so terrified by night," she said from Gobra, a village of fewer than 500 families along the India-Bangladesh border.

Like tens of thousands of teenagers trafficked from the eastern state of West Bengal to brothels across India or into domestic servitude, Nasima was sold by one of her relatives. "I trusted him," she said of a childhood friend who grew up to traffic her. "We had planned to spend the day out. He took that chance and trapped us." Nasima and a friend were made to join a dance group then taken to a dance bar and sold for sex. She was beaten and abused for almost a year before a tipoff brought police to the rescue.

That was in 2010 and Nasima said she emerged an utter wreck. Now she is on a mission to ensure others who escape human trafficking and modern slavery get the help that eluded her. "Previously I stammered and had no confidence," she recalled. "Now I... keep my head high." Once she was one of about 40 million people estimated by the United Nations to be trapped in slavery; now Nasima is among the countless survivors striving to rebuild life.

Many face a personal struggle, others - like Nasima - wage legal battles hoping to boost support from governments. With dreams of

becoming a social worker, she is asking the High Court of West Bengal to ensure survivors get cash and help rather than face endless questions, rejection and abandonment. No date is scheduled for the next hearing but Nasima refuses to give up, despite her frustration with the lack of progress. "I feel very angry. We are trying so hard yet nothing has happened. (But) I will stay with the case until it is over."

Journey

Human trafficking in India rose almost 20 percent in 2016 from the previous year, government data shows. More than 60 percent of 23,117 rescued victims were children. Rehabilitation schemes offer negligible help, campaigners say. With few life skills and no backing, most survivors live in abject poverty, with little hope of a safe second life. "I wanted to build a group to fight against the problem," Nasima said, referring to her legal battle. "We need individual care plans and a sustained means of livelihood."

Her journey from victim to campaigner is an unlikely one. Now 22, Nasima documented her first, lonely year post-rescue in a diary, jotting down all the confusion and anger. She hid it in a suitcase to lock away the darkest 10 months of her life. "My family was happy I was back and I never really told anyone, including my parents, about what I had been through when I was away. Even today they think I was just a dancer at a bar."

Social worker Mohidul Islam met Nasima a week after she was rescued. He visited her house almost every week, calling out to her and trying desperately to persuade her to venture out. "Her family had practically been ostracized by villagers and Nasima's state of shock was understandable," he said. Islam's persistence paid off. A year later, she agreed to visit Sanjog, a charity, where she met fellow survivors. "There was nothing to be ashamed of. I realised that I was not alone and it was the trafficker who was guilty," she said.

Justice

As she discovered fellow survivors, Nasima felt she needed to go beyond her own fate to confront the wider problem. So in May 2017, Nasima filed a public interest litigation (PIL) to address the "psychological, physical and re-integrative needs" of all trafficking victims. —Reuters

North Korea's leader answers first questions from foreign journalists

HANOI: Kim Jong Un's summit with US President Donald Trump may have ended without progress on removing economic sanctions or ending the Korean War, but at least in his dealings on the world stage, the young North Korean leader took another step forward. In an unexpected first, Kim spoke to foreign journalists yesterday during a photo opportunity in the Vietnamese capital, Hanoi.

"I won't make a premature judgment, but my sense is that there will be good results," Kim said of his meeting with Trump, in response to a question from Washington Post reporter David Nakamura. While Kim's optimism was misplaced, it marked the first time the North Korean leader has ever answer a question from a foreign journalist, and there was more to come.

"There must be people who watch us having a wonderful time, like a scene from a fantasy movie. We have so far made lots of efforts, and it's time to show them," Kim said. Later, seated across the negotiating table from Trump, Kim was asked by Reuters whether or not he was ready to give up his nuclear weapons. "If I wasn't ready for such a thing, I wouldn't be here," Kim replied. Kim then asked the media for more time with Trump for "sufficient discussion". "Even one minute is precious for us," he said.

Kim's confident interaction with the foreign press is a marked departure from the style of his father and previous North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, who never gave interviews and whose voice was only ever heard twice in publicly available audio recordings. —Reuters

Israel accused of 'crimes against humanity'

Israel hits Gaza after 'explosive balloon' damages house

GENEVA: A UN probe yesterday said there is evidence Israel committed crimes against humanity in responding to last year's protests in Gaza, as snipers targeted people clearly identifiable as children, health workers and journalists. Israel immediately rejected the findings as "hostile, deceitful and biased."

The UN Independent Commission of Inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory investigated violations committed during demonstrations in the Gaza strip between March 30 and December 31 of 2018. "Israeli soldiers committed violations of international human rights and humanitarian law," committee chair Santiago Canton said in a statement. "Some of those violations may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity," he added.

The commission, set up by the UN Human Rights Council in May, said that "more than 6,000 unarmed demonstrators were shot by military snipers" during weeks of protest. "The Commission found reasonable grounds to believe that Israeli snipers shot at journalists, health workers, children and persons with disabilities, knowing they were clearly recognizable as such," it said. Israel's foreign minister said the Jewish State "rejects the report outright." "No institution can negate Israel's right to self-defense and its duty to defend its residents and borders from violent attacks," Foreign Minister Israel Katz said in a statement.

Protests 'civilian in nature'

Among the most contentious questions surrounding the Gaza protests was whether the Palestinian protesters posed a grave threat to Is-

raeli troops. The UN investigators stressed that there were reasonable grounds to believe that Israeli troops killed and injured Palestinians "who were neither directly participating in hostilities, nor posing an imminent threat." The commission also dismissed claims by Israel that the protests were aimed to conceal acts of terrorism. "The demonstrations were civilian in nature," it said.

"Despite some acts of significant violence, the Commission found that the demonstrations did not constitute combat or military campaigns." The investigators told reporters in Geneva that they did not have access to the Israeli military's rules of engagement concerning the suppression of protests. But, based on publicly available evidence including submissions to Israeli's Supreme Court, the commission said there is evidence that Israeli troops have been instructed that they can use lethal force against those who may be inciting others to engage in dangerous protests.

The so-called "main inciters" provision is totally at odds with international law and must be removed from Israel's rules of engagement, Canton told reporters. The commission said it conducted 325 interviews with victims, witnesses and other sources, while reviewing more than 8,000 documents. Investigators also looked at drone footage and other audiovisual material. Israel did not cooperate with the probe or provide access to Gaza.

Hamas role

For Katz, blame should be placed on Hamas, the Islamist movement that controls Gaza. Those "pushing the residents of Gaza to the fences, including women and children, is Hamas, an organ-



GAZA: In this file photo, Palestinian paramedics and journalists carry a wounded fellow journalist during clashes with Israeli forces east of Gaza city, along the Gaza-Israel border. — AFP

ization whose declared goal is destroying the state of Israel, and is the one to bear the responsibility," he said. Canton said the commission considered Hamas's culpability for the bloodshed, but stressed that because the demonstrations were generally peaceful in nature, Hamas was under no obligation to stop them.

"People have the right to demonstrate, they have the right to assembly," he told reporters. "So

to put responsibility on the de facto authority for letting those demonstrations happen (is) against international humanitarian law," he added. At least 251 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since March 2018, the majority shot during weekly border protests and others hit by tank fire or air strikes in response to violence from Gaza. Two Israeli soldiers have been killed over the same period.—Agencies

Kuwait Times

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
 E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
ads@kuwaittimes.net
 Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

MEGA SALE!
Strong March Offers

KD 27.990
~~KD 44.990~~

Orca OR-32EX208 LED
HDMI USB

Orca
OR-55UX350S

4K ULTIMATE SMART TV

KD 99.990
~~KD 179.990~~

HDMI USB

Orca
OR-58UX300M

4K ULTIMATE SMART TV

Monthly 5KD **KD 129.990**
~~KD 219.990~~

HDMI USB

Kuwait City (New St.) | Kuwait City (Panasonic Tower) | Sharq (Souq Sharq)
 Hawalli (Tunis St.) | Hawalli (Bin Khalidooon St.) | Al-Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak St.)
 Al-Salmiya (Boulevard Mall) | Al-Farwanya (Behind the Police Station)
 Al-Shuwaikh (Al-Ghazali Bridge) | Al-Fahaheel (Opposite Public Parking)
 Al-Rai (4th Ring Rd) | Al-Jahra (Opposite Main Co-op) | Airport (Departures)
 Al-Eqala (89 Mall)

1 809 809
www.best.com.kw

Best Almuallim @BestAlmuallimK BestAlmuallimK @BestAlmuallimK

International

South Korea's fertility rate drops below 1 for first time

Population of world's 11th largest economy may start sliding

SEOUL: South Korea's fertility rate hit another record low last year, government data showed yesterday, falling below one for the first time despite a raft of measures to try to reverse one of the world's lowest birth rates. The country's fertility rate—the number of children a woman is expected to have in her lifetime—fell to 0.98 in 2018, far short of the 2.1 needed to maintain population stability. “It is the first time that the figure has dropped below one since Seoul started collecting data in 1970,” Statistics Korea said in a statement. This means the population of the world's 11th largest economy, currently 51 million, may start sliding before 2028, the year Seoul had forecast as the beginning point for its decline.

The figure for 2017, 1.05, was also a record low. The South Korean government has spent a whopping 135 trillion won (\$120 billion) since 2005 in a desperate attempt to boost the birth rate, providing child subsidies to parents and launching campaigns to encourage young Koreans to wed and have children, without success. Many experts cite reasons ranging from the expense of child-rearing, high youth unemployment and a double burden of carrying out the brunt of

household chores and childcare for working mothers.

Others believe South Korea's notoriously competitive society, including its punishing education system and job market, are key factors. “I think bringing another child to this world is a sin,” a 34-year-old Korean woman, who did not wish to be named said. “This (Korean) society is just way too competitive. I don't think it's right for any child to go through this system.” Most South Ko-

reans associate child-rearing with marriage, but put off getting wed to prioritize higher education and career.

The country has one of the world's lowest out-of-wedlock birth rates at 1.9 percent as of 2017 — whereas other developed nations, including France and Norway, had birth rates among unmarried couples at 55 percent or higher. Wednesday's data showed that more than 30 percent of all South Korean women who gave birth last year were aged 35 or older. Back in 1998, new mothers in that age group accounted for only 6.2 percent. Meanwhile, over-65s are expected to make up 25 percent of the population by 2030 — a phenomenon dubbed the “silver tsunami”. —AFP

“ I think bringing another child to this world is a sin ”

Australia suffers hottest summer on record

SYDNEY: Australia suffered its hottest summer on record from December through February and forecasts show the southern autumn will continue to be drier and warmer than average, the government said yesterday. “After a record hot December and January, it won't come as a surprise that this summer will be our warmest on record,” said Andrew Watkins, manager of long-range forecasting at the Bureau of Meteorology.

Although the final figures won't be available until Friday, the bureau said it was already clear the average maximum and mean temperature for the three months of summer would for the first time be more than two degrees Celsius higher (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) than long-term averages. Rainfall was also below normal, and the bureau said it saw no let-up in a severe drought that has gripped vast areas of the country's agricultural heartland in the east and southeast for many months.

“Unfortunately, the outlook isn't giving a strong indication that we'll see a return to average or above average rainfall in many areas over the autumn period,” Watkins said. The bureau reported earlier that January had been the hottest month ever recorded in Australia, with mean temperature across the continent exceeding 30 degrees Celsius for the first time.

Watkins said weather patterns over the Indian and Pacific oceans contributed to the higher temperatures and lower rainfall, but that long-term climate change trends were also involved. Authorities said the January heatwave contributed to the deaths of more than a million fish in the Murray-Darling river system, the country's largest and which runs through five states in the east of the country. Meanwhile, bushfires—which are frequent summer occurrences in Australia's arid southeast—spread far into the tropical northeast of the country in January. —AFP

Iraq doctors say vendettas threaten their lives as they save others

BAGHDAD: In Iraq, medicine is a matter of life or death—not just for patients, but for doctors facing threats by vengeful relatives and emigrating en masse. Shaymaa Al-Kamali, a family physician in Baghdad, said her problems began when she barred a patient's father from staying in the hospital after visiting hours. Furious and carrying arms, their relatives stormed her clinic in protest, and she had to flee through a service entrance.

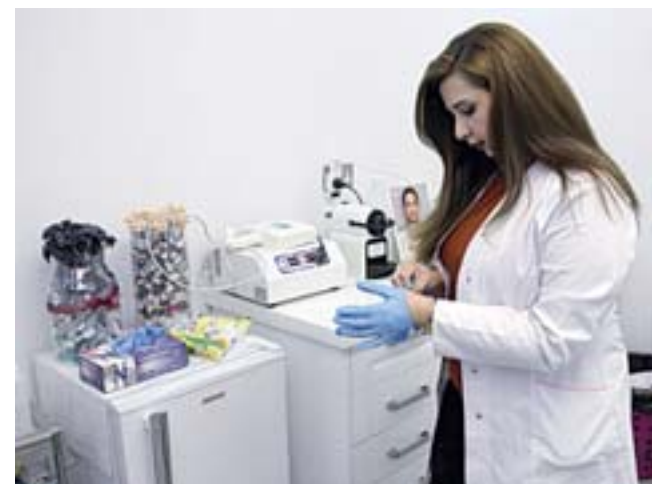
“I took off my doctor's coat and ran out with a colleague. We got into a taxi as if I was his wife and not a doctor like him,” Kamali said. “I didn't go back to work for ten days.” Doctors, nurses, and other health workers across Iraq say they regularly risk being physically harassed, verbally threatened, and even kidnapped while on the job. They blame this on the longstanding tradition of personal gun ownership in Iraq, a country ravaged by decades of violence.

And because of the retaliatory form of justice relied on by tribes—which often trumps federal law—some doctors had to pay as much as \$45,000 to settle vendettas with patients' families, said Kamali. As a result of this violent and chaotic situation, many doctors have opted to leave Iraq for safer hospitals abroad—something 32-year-old Kamali is herself increasingly considering. Of the 348 doctors who graduated with her in 2009 from medical school 285 have already left the country “mainly because of these assaults”, she said.

'Vast shortage of doctors'

“These kinds of attacks are a common occurrence in every Iraqi province,” said Sahar Mawlud, pharmacist and deputy health director in Salaheddin province. “Sometimes, patients are already dying by the time they arrive to the hospital. But when they die, their families accuse medics of not doing their jobs,” she said. In the northern province of Kirkuk a health worker was physically assaulted while treating a critically ill 70-year-old in February, according to the World Health Organization. “Such attacks constitute a serious violation of international humanitarian law,” warned Adham Rashad Ismail, the head of WHO in Iraq.

And further south in oil-rich Basra, gastroenterologist Hussein Uday said doctors, particularly those specializing in cardiac surgery or neurology, were emigrating in droves pushed by “fear” of reprisals. In total, around 20,000 doctors have fled Iraq in the last 15 years, according to a joint study conducted by the International Committee for the Red Cross, Iraq's health ministry and other medical organizations. It found 70 percent of Iraqi health



BAGHDAD: Iraqi family physician Shaymaa Al-Kamali wears a glove at her practice in Baghdad. In Iraq, medicine is a matter of life or death—not just for patients, but for doctors facing threats by vengeful relatives. —AFP

personnel are considering emigrating out of fear of reprisals, kidnapping or killing. “Iraq is left facing a vast shortage of doctors,” said health ministry spokesman Seif al-Badr.

In 2017, there were just nine doctors for every 10,000 people in Iraq, or three times less than in neighboring Kuwait and two times less than conflict-ridden Libya, said the WHO. But the problem facing the health sector goes beyond staffing woes. Iraq's health infrastructure was ravaged by back-to-back conflicts and more than a decade of international sanctions until the US-led invasion against Saddam Hussein in 2003. Sectarian violence followed, culminating in the three-year battle against the Islamic State group that ended in 2017.

'Law of the jungle'

Those difficult years shattered Iraq's reputation as a medical hub in the region, and there is no more striking example of that fall than Baghdad's Medical City. The health complex was one of the most advanced in the region in the 1970s, but its clinics are now shockingly short on equipment and medicine, and its buildings falling into disrepair.

ICRC chief Peter Maurer said pressure on doctors was gutting the basic tenets of the medical profession. “We are concerned not only by direct attacks on the medical installations,” he said during a recent trip to Iraq. “We are also concerned about tribalism and sectarianism entering the basic Hippocratic Oath of treating patients equally, depending on the seriousness and the urgency of the illness and not depending on the origin, or the ethnic belonging or the faith of a person or group,” he added. —AFP

Frustration drives shockwave protests in streets of Algeria

Thousands takes to the streets against 81-year-old's candidacy

ALGIERS: Mounting frustration at their ailing president's bid for a fifth term has brought protestors to the streets in Algeria, where Abdelaziz Bouteflika is the regime's candidate for April elections. Bouteflika, in power for 20 years, has rarely been seen in public since a 2013 stroke. He is currently in Switzerland for what his office calls "routine medical checks". Thousands have taken to the streets to protest against the 81-year-old's candidacy in recent days.

anticipate that society had reached this level of maturity and (political) consciousness," he told AFP. The government's stubbornness in sticking with Bouteflika even amid protests "is an underestimation of the shockwave" already in motion, Arous said. For fellow sociologist Nacer Djabi, the regime did not see the protests coming because its leaders have "lived in isolation for 30 years and are cut off from the people".

Why have the protests gained traction?

One major source of anger is the humiliation Algerians feel in seeing their country's image defined by a head of state whose speech is impaired and only appears in public in a wheelchair. Arous believes people are angry because Algeria has "become the laughing stock of the world". Nacer Djabi argued citizens "accepted the fourth term because they thought Bouteflika would not die (in office) - but the fifth (term) is too much". "Young people... who use social networks see what is happening elsewhere, and see the country's humiliation", he noted. Dris-Ait Hamadouche agrees that a sense of humili-

President Bouteflika in power for 20 years



Did the government expect protests?

The authorities were probably aware that a bid for a fifth term would be unpopular. But it was difficult to foresee how the nearly unprecedented protests would escalate so quickly. Complacency may have set in because Bouteflika's successful 2014 bid was accepted "relatively easily", according to Louisa Dris-Ait Hamadouche, who teaches political science at the University of Algiers 3.

For Zoubir Arous, a sociologist at the University of Algiers 2, the architects of the bid for a fifth term "have made a big error". "They did not



ALGIERS: Algerian plain clothes police detain a protester participating in a rally organized by journalists against alleged censorship of coverage of protests against a fifth term for veteran President Abdelaziz Bouteflika yesterday. —AFP

ation is palpable. With Algeria's heavily oil-dependent economy hit by tumbling crude prices, Bouteflika's fourth term has also been marred by "an accumulation of frustrations", she said.

She also thinks the much-mooted possibility of the president's brother Said becoming the next president "is not an acceptable option for Algerians". "Even if democracy is not a very

rooted notion, Algeria is a republic" and not a dynastic system, Dris-Ait Hamadouche said. Finally, the "Bouteflika Generation", born around the president's accession to power in 1999 and the driving force of the protests, is too young to have experienced the country's devastating 1992-2002 civil war, which the authorities evoke to discredit demonstrations. —AFP

Teenagers enslaved in Russia as sisters, leave as mothers

SHYMKENT: The story of 30-year-old Fatima Musabayeva, a Kazakh survivor of modern-day slavery, appears to have a happy ending. Of sorts. Eight years after escaping years of exploitation, Fatima lives in her own freshly remodeled apartment, raises a son and runs a small business. She went a long way to get where she is now.

In 2007, she and her sister Aliya travelled 2,000 miles from their home in Shymkent, a quiet city in southern Kazakhstan, to Moscow, hoping for jobs in a grocery shop. They ended up enslaved by the shop owners - falling prey to a trade estimated by the United Nations to affect 40 million people globally, trapped in forced labor and forced marriages. When the sisters, with several other victims, escaped in the early 2010s, the scandal made headlines and shocked Russia. It remains the country's most high-profile case of modern slavery. Dogged by discrimination, stigma, and trauma, and in need of healthcare and housing, many survivors worldwide struggle to cope in the aftermath of slavery. For those who are further along the road to recovery, pursuing justice is paramount. Having rebuilt their lives, Aliya and Fatima are now part of a lawsuit in the European Court of Human Rights after all legal routes in Russia and Kazakhstan failed to punish their former employers for enslaving and torturing them. Yet forgetting the ordeal is as hard as winning justice. "The wound has started to patch up," Aliya said. "But it is far from completely healing."

'Young, clueless and broke'

The story began when Fatima, 18, and Aliya, 17, were to become homeless after their father died and they faced eviction. "That's when a friend of mine told me her brother was working at a shop in Moscow, and suggested we all go work there," Fatima said.

"The friend said that ... we'll be able to buy a car and a house. We were young, clueless and broke. So we went." She was to work as a cashier,

while Aliya would babysit the employer's kids. They arrived to the jobs as promised. But there was no pay, no freedom and dire living conditions. Fatima and Aliya would work every day, sleep on the floor in the basement with a dozen other workers and eat rotten food. Every misstep would lead to punishment, beatings or rape. In 2009, Fatima tried to escape. She was caught, assaulted and raped. Nine months later, she gave birth to her son, Rinat, who was taken from her. Fatima ran away in 2010. She got to Shymkent and immediately sought help for her sister and son. "I went to the police, but they shrugged me off and said it's not their jurisdiction," she said. "So, I went to our local TV station, and they sent me to this organization, Sana Sezim, that helps people like me."

Woman of willpower

When Fatima contacted Sana Sezim - a women's rights group that helps trafficking victims - she had nowhere to live, but her main concern was finding Rinat and bringing Aliya back, said Raushan Khudaishukurova, program coordinator with the charity. "Her courage amazed me from the start," she said. "She was ready to do whatever it takes. Interrogations, identification line-ups, interviews in front of cameras - anything." Within a week of filing an official complaint to the local police, Fatima's former employers released Rinat.

It took her another three years to rescue Aliya - after threats, surveillance and temporary protection from the police. "For months, while my little sister was still there, I couldn't sleep at night," Fatima said. She recalled travelling back and forth between Moscow and Shymkent, trying to figure out how to rescue Aliya. "I was very protective of her (in childhood); (I) even fought boys in school who bullied her," she added. Throughout those tough years, Sana Sezim lawyers, psychologists and social workers supported Fatima.

They gave her a place to live, plus food and clothes, helped her get back into college, nurse her malnourished son to health and apply for social housing. Fatima was also struggling with trauma, typical for victims of slavery. So for two years, psychologist Shakhnoza Khasanova, vice president of Sana Sezim, counseled Fatima through her fears and stress, bolstering her self-esteem. "Fatima's exceptional determination, her willpower, helped her get her sister back, build a relationship with her son and restore her psychological health," Khasanova said. —Reuters

River flood swamps 2,000 buildings in Northern California

LOS ANGELES: A rain-swollen river in Northern California flooded about 2,000 homes and businesses on Wednesday along a valley famous for its wineries and left residents of one town stranded by high waters, officials said. Water rose to the roofs of homes and submerged cars as the Russian River overflowed its banks, forcing authorities in Sonoma County, about 70 miles (110 km) north of San Francisco, to order the evacuation of 3,600 people, local authorities said.

Residents got around flooded towns in kayaks, an indication that not everyone evacuated. Members of the National Guard and local rescuers used helicopters, boats and high-clearance vehicles to reach about 60 people who stayed behind and needed help, said Barry Dugan, a spokesman for the Sonoma County emergency operations center. Guerneville, a community of more than 4,500 people that is the largest town in the flood zone, was cut off from other areas by inundated roadways, the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office said on Twitter.

"I've been here 30 years. I've never seen it rain so hard," said Brian Gipson, director of marketing at the Farmhouse Inn hotel near Guerneville, which evacuated guests after water flooded its car park a third of a mile from the river. The evacuation orders affected about two dozen communities stretching dozens of miles along the river. The Russian River rose to more than 45 feet (13.7 metres) late on Wednesday, well over flood stage of 32 feet (9.8 metres), Dugan said. The river was expected to fall below flood stage at the end of yesterday. —Reuters

International

Outbreak of anti-Semitism forces France to confront a painful past

Surge in anti-Semitic violence prompts soul-searching for many

PARIS: A surge in anti-Semitic violence and hate speech has prompted soul-searching for many in France, which has long wrestled with its history of discrimination and prejudice against Jews. "Anti-Semitism has very deep roots in French society," Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said this month after a prominent writer was accosted in the street and warned that "France belongs to us." The number of anti-Jewish offences reported to police rose to 541 last year from 311 in 2017, after falling for two years.

Dozens of Jewish cemeteries have been desecrated, and swastikas have been found scrawled on the doors of people's homes. One elderly Holocaust survivor was even murdered in a grisly attack thought to be motivated in part by anti-Semitism. France, home to Europe's biggest Jewish community, hopes that curbing incendiary hate speech online and an increased focus on anti-racism education will help cut down on the vandalism and threats. But the problem goes back centuries in a country with a long history of anti-Semitism, at times endorsed by the state.

Medieval France

In the 13th Century in largely Catholic Medieval France, Louis IX issued a decree forcing Jews to wear the "rouelle", a piece of yellow cloth hung on their coats to mark them as outsiders. Sovereign authorized attacks on the Jewish faith became more prominent under Philip IV who, in 1306, seized the property of Jews and

expelled them from the country unless they converted. Almost 90 years later Charles VI announced a ban on all Jews living in his kingdom.

The constant harassment and scapegoating of the Jewish population was about money, according to historian Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci. "When they (Kings) needed money" they would use "any pretext" to chase out Jews and confiscate their property, she said. The anti-Semitic abuse and violence against Jews was not isolated to France, with Jewish communities across Europe blamed for everything from the Black Death epidemics to accusations of blood libel, the supposed drinking of Christian children's blood.

Much of the hatred stemmed from Jews being employed in occupations considered socially inferior, such as rent collection and money lending. Catholic doctrine at the time forbade Christians from lending money for interest as it was "sinful", leading to Jews to work in financial businesses and the characterization of the "Jewish banker" - centuries later symbolized by families such as the Rothschilds.

Fast forward a few centuries and within two years of the French Revolution, in 1791, France became the first country in modern Europe to emancipate the Jews-granting them equal rights under the law. "The revolutionary period was a period of questioning the elites of the former regime and the powers of the Church. All the supporters of the old regime and the most conservative Catholics blamed the Jews," said



RHONE: Photo shows a swastika and the words 'Shoa blabla' on the stele of the 'Jardin du Souvenir' (Garden of Memories) after anti-semitic graffiti was discovered in the Champagne-au-Mont-diOr cemetery.—AFP

Matard-Bonucci. In this period, she says, the term Judeo-Masonic was born—an alleged secret coalition between Jews and Freemasons. "Since Jews benefited from the Revolution, we soon saw them being blamed for it, with people imagining they were connected to secret societies," said Matard-Bonucci.

The Alfred Dreyfus affair

In more recent history, the Alfred Dreyfus affair became an infamous example of anti-Semitism in France, revealing deep splits in society at

the end of the 19th century. The decade-long scandal—which rocked the assumption that Jews had become an integral part of French life—revealed the depths of anti-Jewish sentiment in the country and triggered a national crisis.

Encouraged by a virulent anti-Semitic press, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, who was Jewish, was convicted of treason in 1894 on trumped-up spying charges. Despite the lack of evidence, he was sentenced to life imprisonment at the infamous Devil's Island penal colony in French Guiana and publicly stripped of his rank.—AFP

New York community seeks cohesion after anti-Semitic attacks

NEW YORK: Residents of Crown Heights, a diverse New York neighborhood far from Manhattan's skyscrapers, are trying to understand a spate of anti-Semitic attacks that has brought back painful memories. In recent months, several people wearing the type of black clothing and hats associated with the Orthodox Jewish community have been viciously assaulted—sometimes in broad daylight. So far this year, complaints of anti-Semitic crimes have soared by 71 percent in New York, compounding a 23 percent increase in 2018.

The assaults have most impacted Crown Heights, and Borough Park to the southwest of Brooklyn. Most of the alleged perpetrators have been arrested and the police have stepped up patrols, but the violence marks a troubling development—and for many locals harkens back to a difficult time. In 1991, tensions between the Jewish and African American communities boiled over, erupting into America's only anti-Semitic riot and rocking Crown Heights for three days.

The riots exploded after one of the cars in a motorcade transporting Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, head of the Crown Heights-based Chabad-Lubavitch movement, acci-

dently crashed into two black children. One died and the other was seriously injured, and in the ensuing violence a Jewish student was fatally stabbed by a black teen. The riots were a culmination of decades of two communities living alongside but separate from each other.

In the aftermath, community leaders, activists and organizers came together to try to heal the rift. "In 1991, we were like two ships passing each other in the night," said Richard Green, who heads the Crown Heights Youth Collective. Representatives from the two communities hustled and began outreach—especially with the younger residents—in a long-term effort to build trust. "It was amazing the way that people learned about each other," Green said.

It was "no longer this 'we or them.' It's us," he added, but now that "kind of fell off." The Orthodox Jewish community began arriving in Crown Heights in large numbers at the start of the 1940s. The black population came up from the southern United States, as well as the Caribbean, during the 1960s. In the last few years, communication between different communities has dwindled, Green said. "We don't communicate like we used to, and that's what's very needed right now," he said.

'Lack of understanding'

Rabbi Eli Cohen, director of the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, is trying to change that. Following the recent attacks, he started visiting local schools with Geoffrey Davis, an African-American community leader. The goal was "to listen and to talk. To see if there's any conversation that's feeding this trend," Cohen said, noting they wanted to "send a message to the kids that we're all New York citizens living together."—AFP

Social media gives anti-Jewish hatred a grandstand

PARIS: "Heil Hitler" and "Filthy Jews" creep into comments on a video report on a desecrated Jewish cemetery, pushing French authorities to raise pressure on social media to banish hate-based content. Virulent anti-semitism has become commonplace on forums like Facebook and Twitter while efforts to cull the loathing has struggled to make headway.

President Emmanuel Macron visited a desecrated Jewish cemetery in Quatzenheim, eastern France last week, but regional state-owned television France 3 Alsace was forced to cut the report from its Facebook page owing to dozens of scathing commentaries. In early January, Equality Minister Marlène Schiappa, who condemns the growing anti-Semitism, revealed that she had received thousands of insults, notably "Jewish whore".

The internet and social media give anti-Semites a stage that widens their audience, and tools to organize networks, says Sacha Ghoslan, head of the French Jewish Students Union (UEJF). "We have seen in the past 15 years that people who used to just express themselves in dark basements now have a much bigger audience," Ghoslan told AFP. And the internet allows such people "to ally anti-Semites of varied and normally opposite tendencies on shared hatred of Jews," he added, pointing to groups at the extreme right and left.—AFP

International

An Indian pilot captured in Pakistan becomes face of escalating conflict

Varthaman - a hero in India, a trump card for Islamabad

NEW DELHI: An Indian pilot shot down over Pakistan and paraded by his captors has become a hero in his own country, a trump card for Islamabad and perhaps the key to bringing the arch-rivals back from the brink. Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman was in a MiG jet that India said was shot down on Wednesday as he chased Pakistan warplanes over the rivals' disputed Kashmir border.

Footage of him being beaten and interrogated has since gone viral in India and Pakistan. The incident has sparked fears that the showdown between the two countries—who have fought two wars over Kashmir—could spiral out of control. But Pakistan said yesterday it was ready to hand Varthaman back “if it leads to de-escalation”. A foreign ministry spokesman said the pilot was “safe and in good condition”.

His experience-broadcast in a series of graphic videos on social media was condemned as “vulgar” by New Delhi and sparked prayers and appeals from Bollywood stars for his safe return. But it was well received in Pakistan, with citizens praising soldiers for rescuing him from angry civilians and then treating him humanely and with courtesy. One video purports to show the pilot being dragged and beaten as Pakistani soldiers intervene, shouting “Stop! Stop!”

Later, a separate shaky clip showed the bloodied, blindfolded pilot being interrogated, with the camera focusing on his name “ABHI” underneath winged insignia on his shoulder. It was his later appearance sipping tea, his face

swollen and sporting bruises, but otherwise collected and calm, that was most seized upon in both India and Pakistan. In it, he thanks the “thorough gentlemen” who rescued him from the mob and compliments the tea as “fantastic”.

“This is what I would expect my army to behave as, and I’m very impressed by the Pakistani army,” he said, his eye visibly swollen above an impressive handlebar moustache. It was unclear if he had been coerced to speak. That video was widely shown on Pakistani television, with still images used on the front page of many newspapers. “Indian pilot thanks Pak Army for saving him from mob,” read a front page headline in the English-language daily Express Tribune. None of the footage was broadcast on Indian media, with the Times of India saying it was making “a conscious decision” not to use the images.

On social media however, #GivebackAbhinandan and #Abhinandanmyhero hashtags spread quickly on Twitter and elevated him to national hero status. His polite refusal to proffer more details than necessary—“I am sorry major, I am not supposed to tell you this”—evoked particular commendation. “Such calm and resilience in the face of adversity. Prayers for our brave pilot #AbhinandanVarthaman,” tweeted Bollywood celebrity Emraan Hashmi.

‘Leverage’

Abhinandan told his captives he comes from southern India. Indian media said his father was a retired air force commander. Old footage pur-



LAHORE: Pakistani students hold placards with the image of Abhinandan Varthaman, the Indian Air Force pilot captured by Pakistan authorities in Pakistan-administered Kashmir on February 27, and shout anti-India slogans during a protest in Lahore. — AFP

portedly shows Abhinandan quipping that a key attribute for a successful fighter pilot is a “bad attitude”. AFP could not independently verify the video. Memories were rekindled of an emotional moment from 1999 when Indian pilot K. Nachiketa was captured after being shot down by Pakistan. He was returned a little over a

week later. In this case, New Delhi has decried Abhinandan’s treatment as a breach of the Geneva Conventions. Abhinandan was captured a day after Indian fighter planes bombed what India said was a militant camp in Pakistan, retaliation for a suicide bombing in Kashmir on February 14 that killed 40 paramilitaries.—AFP

Washington’s patience thins with Pakistan as India goes on offense

WASHINGTON: As conflict between India and Pakistan escalates to near all-out war, the United States has been thrust into a familiar position of hoping to defuse tensions—but is making no secret it faults Islamabad. US policymakers have grown exasperated with Pakistan for not doing more against Islamist extremists and envision a broad, long-term alliance with an emerging India—a stark flip from the Cold War when Washington sided with Pakistan.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, in a statement after calls with his two counterparts, urged restraint from both sides as India and Pakistan shot down each other’s warplanes. But in language that would be carefully parsed, Pompeo described the initial strikes by India as “counter-terrorism actions” and urged Pakistan to take “meaningful action against terrorist groups operating on its soil.”

India was responding to a February 14 suicide attack in divided Kashmir that killed 40 of its troops. For the first time since 1971, India hit Pakistan in territory beyond Kashmir, the Himalayan region that has triggered two of the rivals’ three full-fledged wars. Asad Majeed Khan, Pakistan’s ambassador to Washington, criticized the statement for not reprimanding India—where Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose Hindu nationalist

base is staunchly anti-Pakistan, faces imminent elections.

The statement “is construed and understood as an endorsement of the Indian position and that is what emboldened them even more,” Khan said. President Donald Trump has shown no sympathy for Pakistan, last year cutting \$300 million in military aid that had been flowing over logistical assistance to US forces in Afghanistan. Trump—who has championed the US right to act as it pleases—said last week that Pakistan had been “taking very strong advantage of the United States” and voiced understanding that India was planning “something very strong.”

Trump said yesterday after the nuclear summit with North Korea in Hanoi that the US was working to defuse the conflict. “They’ve been going at it, and we’ve been involved in trying to have them stop, and we have some reasonably decent news, I think, hopefully, that will be coming to an end,” he told a news conference. Richard Olson, who served as US ambassador to Islamabad from 2012 to 2015, said there was a growing sense among policymakers that militants coming out of Pakistan were “really a fundamental problem.” Defining the issue in terms of counter-terrorism indicates something of a harder line than had been adopted, at least publicly, in the past,” said Olson, now a senior advisor at the US Institute of Peace.

But Pompeo placed calls while heading to the summit with North Korea in Hanoi, his statement coming nearly 24 hours after the Indian strikes. And while US military officials maintain strong ties with Pakistani and Indian counterparts, the Trump administration has no confirmed defense secretary, ambassador in Islamabad or assistant secretary of state for South Asia—all positions key in a crisis. Khan, the Pakistani ambassador, nonetheless said there was “no other country better placed than the United States” to play a role owing to its relationships.—AFP

India will stand like rock against ‘enemy attack’, Modi says

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked Indians yesterday to “stand as a wall” with anger boiling over Pakistan’s capture of a pilot as a crisis escalates between the nuclear-armed rivals. In his first remarks since India and Pakistan both claimed to have shot down each other’s fighter planes near the disputed border of Kashmir, the prime minister urged his countrymen to unite “as the enemy seeks to destabilize India”.

“In the face of their objective, every Indian should stand as a wall, as a rock,” Modi said. “The entire country is one today and standing with our soldiers. The world is looking at our collective will and we have faith in our forces’ capacity. “India will live as one. India will work as one. India will grow as one. India will fight as one. India will win as one.”

Modi did not mention Pakistan by name during the address to party workers. But anger against the neighbor, with whom India has fought three wars since 1947, remains high. Protesters set ablaze Pakistan’s national flag outside the country’s embassy in New Delhi yesterday. Police detained some but others ran away, witnesses said. Claiming to be supporters of Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party the dozen men gathered outside the heavily guarded diplomatic mission shouting “Down with Pakistan” before setting fire to the flag dipped in kerosene.—AFP

International

Smoke or fire? Contacts between Trump campaign and the Russians

Trump and Moscow deny any collusion

WASHINGTON: Special Counsel Robert Mueller and other US prosecutors have been investigating whether President Donald Trump's 2016 campaign conspired with Russia. Trump and Moscow have denied any collusion. US intelligence agencies have concluded Russia interfered in the presidential election with a campaign of hacking and propaganda to sow discord in the United States and damage the Republican Trump's Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton. Russia denies it. Here are some key interactions between Trump advisors and Russian figures that have been unearthed by Mueller's probe and investigations in Congress.

Trump tower meeting

Several top Trump aides, including campaign chairman Paul Manafort, son-in-law Jared Kushner and son Donald Trump Jr, met in June 2016 at Trump Tower in New York with a Russian lawyer who had offered damaging information about Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. US prosecutors said the lawyer, Natalia Veselnitskaya, was an agent for the Kremlin. The meeting was arranged by Rob Goldstone, a British music publicist. Participants in the meeting said nothing improper occurred and that Veselnitskaya discussed US sanctions on Russia and adoption policy, not election issues. The president said he did not know about the meeting beforehand.

Efforts to build a skyscraper

Trump's former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, said he pursued a deal to build a Trump-branded skyscraper in Moscow until June 2016, after Trump had clinched the Republican presidential nomination. Cohen said in a guilty plea that he spoke with an assistant to Russian President Vladimir Putin's press secretary in January of that year and briefed Trump on the project more than three times. Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani said the Moscow skyscraper talks continued until Trump won the November 2016 election, but later said he misspoke. Trump, who repeatedly said during the campaign that he had no contacts with Russia, said after Cohen's guilty plea in November 2018 there was nothing wrong with pursuing the deal.

Efforts to set up a meeting

Trump campaign adviser George Papadopoulos worked between March 2016 and August 2016 to set up a meeting with Russian leadership, according to prosecutors. They said a London-based professor with ties to the Russian government told him in April 2016 that Moscow had compromising information on Clinton. Papadopoulos served 14 days in prison after pleading guilty to lying to the FBI about those efforts.

Manafort offers campaign insights

Manafort shared election campaign polling



WASHINGTON: Rep Elijah Cummings (D-MD) gives his closing statement after Michael Cohen, former attorney and fixer for President Donald Trump, testified before the House Oversight Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. —AFP

data in August 2016 with Konstantin Kilimnik, a former business partner who Mueller has described as having ties to Russian intelligence, according to a court filing inadvertently made public by Manafort's lawyers. The two also discussed a plan to resolve the conflict in Ukraine, a major Kremlin foreign policy goal as it seeks relief from US economic sanctions,

according to court filings. Manafort, a veteran Republican political consultant who earned million of dollars working for pro-Russian politicians in Ukraine, also offered private briefings about the campaign to Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska, who is close to Putin, in an effort to collect past debts, according to the Washington Post. —Reuters

Bon appe-teeth: man chomps on 'molar' in airline

SINGAPORE: A horrified Australian traveler discovered a suspected human tooth in a meal on a Singapore Airlines flight, prompting the carrier yesterday to apologize and launch an investigation. Bradley Button was eating rice on the flight on Tuesday when he heard a crunch and spat out what appeared to be a molar.

"For the rest of the flight I was not well, just the idea of having someone else's body part in my food is not nice," he told the Australian Associated Press. He said a flight attendant was "adamant" that she needed to take the object away for testing and that it was a small rock. "It was without a shadow of a doubt a tooth," he added. After the discovery, Button said he was given a voucher to use on the airline's duty-free products.

Singapore Airlines confirmed that a customer travelling on a service from Wellington to Melbourne found "what appeared to be a foreign object in their meal". "We sincerely apologize to the customer for this negative experience and for the inconvenience this has caused. We are currently investigating this incident and have sent the object for analysis to determine what it is," the carrier said in a statement. It is just the latest controversy to hit Singapore's flag carrier—last week there was an outcry online after worried passengers discovered cameras on seatback monitors on some of the airline's newer planes. The airline however insisted the cameras were disabled. —AFP

Nigeria's Buhari: Anti-corruption president

ABUJA: Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari was elected in 2015 on a wave of hope that he could defeat Boko Haram Islamists and turn around a country blighted by decades of corruption and poor governance. But while he will go down in history as Nigeria's first opposition candidate to defeat an incumbent, his first term was dominated by questions about his fitness to govern. From May 2016 until mid-2017, Buhari was in London for medical treatment for increasingly long periods of time, forcing government denials that he was gravely ill or even dead.

To date, he has not disclosed details about his condition, apart from saying he had "never been so ill" and had to undergo multiple blood transfusions. But after US President Donald Trump reportedly called him "lifeless" after the recovering Buhari visited Washington, his critics found a potent slur. His absence also sparked one of politics' more unusual conspiracy theories—that he had died and been replaced by a lookalike from Sudan. In recent months, some critics have focused less on his physical frailties and more on his mental faculties.

After an appearance in a live televised question-and-answer session in January 2019, one commentator called Buhari "intellectually disabled". Others were less kind. Buhari's opponents say they have been vindicated for claiming before the 2015 election that he was too old to run and had terminal prostate cancer. But his ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) party dismiss the assertions as smears, and voters gave Buhari a second mandate in the February 23 presidential vote.

Dogged by the past?

How far Buhari's illness has affected his attempt to end the threat from Boko Haram, tackle corruption, and boost the economy will be a subject of discussion for years. On security, there are worrying signs of a turnaround in initial gains against the jihadists, as the group's Islamic

State-backed faction grows stronger in the northeast. New security threats have also emerged elsewhere, including pro-Biafran secessionists in the southeast, and deadly clashes between farmers and herders in central states. In the north, armed bandits are carrying out kidnappings for ransom and rustling cattle, putting them into conflict with local vigilantes set up because of a lack of police.

Buhari, a former army general who led a tough military government in the 1980s, had campaigned on a promise to make the country safer. He also touted himself as a "converted democrat" to persuade those with misgivings that his military past was history. But in office he has struggled to shake off claims of authoritarianism—particularly in his fight against corruption which critics say has been one-sided against perceived political opponents.

His main challenger for the presidency, Atiku Abubakar, accused him of being "dictatorial" for suspending the country's chief justice just weeks before February elections. Nigerian lawyers said it was an "attempted coup against the judiciary", as the judge would have heard any legal challenges to the result. Former president and military ruler Olusegun Obasanjo even accused Buhari of trying to copy the hard-line regime of Sani Abacha, by suppressing free speech and silencing opponents.

Ruling 'cabal'

Buhari came to power largely through the overwhelming support of northern voters, who see him as a down-to-earth "man of the people". He has done little to challenge that perception, and is rarely seen in anything other than traditional Muslim robes. He has a reputation for a simple lifestyle. But his leadership style has been attacked for concentrating power within a small group of trusted advisors, who like him are Hausa-speaking, ethnic Fulani Muslims from the north.

On several occasions, his wife, Aisha, criticized the so-called "cabal" around her husband, suggesting they held the real power. She also indicated she would not support him in his bid for re-election, and even retweeted videos of opposition lawmakers criticizing the government. Critics, who gave Buhari the nickname "Baba Go Slow" because it took him six months to even appoint a cabinet, complain he has been sluggish to implement policies. —AFP

Lifestyle

Friday Times

FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2019

www.kuwaittimes.net



A model presents a creation by Manish Arora during the Fall-Winter 2019/2020 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show in Paris, yesterday. — AFP

**Sheeran
marries girlfriend
in 'tiny wedding'**

See Page 20

Lifestyle | Feature

Ed Sheeran marries girlfriend in 'tiny wedding'



British singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran has married his girlfriend Cherry Seaborn in a "tiny winter wedding", The Sun newspaper reported yesterday. "Ed got married a few days before Christmas. It was very quiet—just Ed's oldest school pals, limited family and the priest," an unnamed source told the tabloid. The 28-year-old, one of the best-selling artists in the world, has known Seaborn since his childhood in Suffolk, eastern England. They have reportedly been dating since 2015.

The Sun reported that there were only about 40 people at the ceremony at his estate in Suffolk. "He wanted no fuss and he wanted it to be something entirely for them—a tiny winter wedding," the source said. However, the couple are said to be planning a "festival-style party" in the summer. Sheeran announced his engagement on Instagram in January 2018, saying: "We are very happy and in love, and our cats are chuffed as well." Sheeran's record label did not immediately respond to requests for comment. —AFP

Ukraine pulls out of Eurovision 2019 after Russia row

Ukraine on Wednesday said it would not take part in this year's Eurovision Song Contest, after the singer selected to represent the country dropped out following a row over Russia. Singer MARUV won a public vote but said she would not participate because the Ukrainian national broadcaster had imposed conditions including a ban on concerts in Russia. Other performers who had competed to represent Kiev in the campy annual competition, to be hosted this year in Tel Aviv, also refused to accept the conditions.

"The National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine is declining to participate in the Eurovision Song Contest 2019," the broadcaster said in a statement on Wednesday. The broadcaster said the national selection process had revealed a "systemic problem" in Ukrainian music, that artists have business links to an "aggressor state". Russia and Ukraine are culturally close but political ties between the countries have been in dire straits since Moscow annexed the Crimean peninsula in 2014.

A conflict between Ukrainian troops and breakaway Moscow-backed rebels in the east of Ukraine has claimed some 13,000 lives since it broke out following the annexation. National broadcaster UA PBC earlier accused MARUV, whose real name is Anna Korsun, of failing to understand her role as an ambassador who should represent Ukrainian public opinion. "I'm a musician, not a tool in the political arena," Korsun wrote on Instagram. — AFP

Bruno Mars pokes fun at Indonesia song restrictions in cheeky tweet

Bruno Mars has launched a cheeky Twitter protest over Indonesia's most populous province slapping restrictions on some of his biggest hits—and poked fun at fellow music megastar Ed Sheeran in the process. The West Java broadcasting commission ruled this month that some 17 foreign songs could only be played on the airwaves between 10pm and 3am, citing morality concerns. Restricted titles include Grammy award winner Mars' "That's what I like" and "Versace on the Floor", Ed Sheeran's megahit "Shape of You" and Ariana Grande's "Love Me Harder".

"WTF! I was poppin in Indonesia! Then here comes @edsheeran with his sick, perverted lyrics, gettin us all pinched! Thanks Ed. Thanks a lot," the funk revivalist said to his 42 million Twitter followers this week. Separately, Indonesia is drafting a national law that seeks to ban blasphemous and "pornographic" music content, sparking concerns about freedom of expression in the world's biggest Muslim majority nation.

Responding to the American singer's tweet, broadcast commission chief Dedeh Fardiah said Mars "maybe didn't understand the context" of the new rules. The commission, she said, responded to complaints from local residents in West Java, which has some 48 million people and is one of Indonesia's most conservative provinces. "After a review, we think the (restricted) songs' lyrics indeed violate the rules which say programs cannot air material (between 3am and 10pm) which has sexual and ob-



scene content, or implies sexual activity," Fardiah told AFP. Foreign artists have occasionally found themselves in the cross-hairs of religious conservatives or fallen afoul of Indonesia's censors. Last year, a TV ad featuring members of K-pop supergroup Blackpink dressed in miniskirts was banned because the national Broadcasting Commission deemed it indecent. —AFP

Hate speech and hypocrisy skewered in African movie satire

Traditional chiefs, religious leaders, surreal bureaucrats, the police... no aspect of Burkinabe society escapes mockery in "Duga", a comedy screened Wednesday at Africa's top film festival. The film—titled "Duga (The Scavengers)" in English—uses a corpse that nobody wants to bury as the launch pad for a satire on hate-mongers, pen-pushers and humbugs. It is one of 20 feature films competing for the top prize at the Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (Fespaco). "False religious prophets spread fear and hate speech, and this leads to violence," said Abdoulaye Dao, a Burkinabe director who co-made the film with Herve Eric Lengani.

"Politicians let them get away with it because they know it will get them support. It's playing with fire. It happens in Burkina, in Mali and everywhere in Africa," he said, referring to the rise of jihadism. The film follows Rasmane, a retired man who volunteers to do a job nobody wants—that of burying a dead friend. Touched by the plight of the man's widow and daughter, Rasmane wants to help out but soon comes up against a string of people who want to exploit the situation for their own gain.

At the same time, a young laborer finds an abandoned baby in a dump. He offers to take care of the child, but the authorities throw every obstacle in his way—and even go so far as to accuse him of killing her mother. "The two stories run alongside one another and come together at the end," says Dao, whose 2009 film "An Extraordinary Woman" was well-received at Fespaco. "Life and death were two moments when communities used to come together,



to cry and to heal. Nowadays, this solidarity is crumbling away."

'Cursed over the corpse!'

But in making the film, the directors encountered one nightmare after another, Dao revealed. "The vehicle used in the film for transporting the body broke down all the time and also got stuck in the mud—we had to haul it out with a tractor, which inspired one of the scenes," he says. "And when we were filming in the forest, we had to move the equipment several times, just when everything was ready because there were snakes everywhere. "Then it rained all the time. After a while, we began to wonder whether we were being cursed because of the corpse!"

Launched in 1969 and loosely modeled on the Cannes Film Festival, Fespaco provides an opportunity for African movie and TV professionals to network and pitch their work to clients in Europe, North

America and beyond. The week-long festival opened on Saturday for celebrations marking its 50th anniversary.

The golden stallion

Sixteen African countries are showcasing 165 films, documentaries and series. The top prize—the so-called "African Oscar"—is the Golden Stallion of Yennenga, named after a mythical 12th-century warrior princess who founded the Mossi empire. If "Duga" wins, Dao will be the first Burkinabe filmmaker to hoist the award in 20 years, after Gaston Kabore's "Buud Yam" in 1997. Another Burkinabe in the running is Apolline Traore, whose "Desrances" portrays the courage of women caught in the post-electoral turmoil in Ivory Coast in 2010-11. But a rumored front-runner is the Kenyan film "Rafiki" by Wanuri Kahiu, which was temporarily banned in its home country last year because of its lesbian love theme. — AFP



Chloe tips hat to Lagerfeld's 'genius' at Paris show

Chloe paid tribute to its longtime designer Karl Lagerfeld at its Paris fashion week show yesterday, with a compendium of his wit and wisdom left on every seat. One of the German creator's last muses, 17-year-old Kaia Gerber—the daughter of supermodel Cindy Crawford, another Lagerfeld acolyte—also walked the catwalk. The “Kaiser”, who died at the age of 85 on February 19, made his name as a serious style player in his quarter century at the Parisian label known for its bohemian romance. While he became synonymous in his later years with Chanel and the Italian label Fendi, he twice led Chloe, taking over in 1974 and returning again in 1992. His arrival coincided with the rising feminist movement, with Vogue magazine calling his look “bold, confident, fun and liberating”.

Chloe said his “incalculable genius... is eternally treasured by us and everyone who felt the freedom and beauty of wearing his clothes”. The compendium of postcards featured an iconic

shot by photographer Frank Horvat from 1970 of Lagerfeld in Chloe's studio dressing the American Carol LeBrie, the first black model to feature on the cover of Italian Vogue.

Fashion week's cutest moment

Another from 1971 with Donna Jordan, dubbed the “Disco Marilyn”, carried a typically Lagerfeld legend: “In everyday life we are forced to be practical. All the more reason to go wild at night. Wildly gay, terribly audacious. I love dresses straight out of fairytales.” Fendi and Benetton were among a number of brands and designers who paid tribute to Lagerfeld at the Milan fashion shows last week. There was little of the Lagerfeld legacy, however, in Chloe's current designer Natacha Ramsay-Levi's autumn/ winter show. She sent out a typically knowing urban boho collection, with almost every model wearing metal shell and bear claw necklaces. — AFP

Paris fashion Week





A painting, believed to be the second version of 'Judith Beheading Holofernes' by Italian artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, is pictured during a photocall in London yesterday following its restoration. — AFP

'Lost Caravaggio' set for big London unveiling

The naked warrior looks plaintively up into the averted eyes of a graceful woman methodically slicing off his head with a sword. It is a burst of violence painted in haunting tones by a Renaissance master worth at least \$100 million—or yet another fake distressing the art world. The mystery may be about to be solved when a London gallery on Thursday reveals the restored version of what some think is Caravaggio's great lost work.

The canvas discovered in a Toulouse attic in 2014 was "very important" and "must be fully investigated," France's culture ministry cautiously noted in 2016. Caravaggio referred to the painting's existence in letters written to a friend.

Hot-tempered genius

Caravaggio's mastery elevated Europe's understanding of art by the time he died from what some scientists think was gradual poisoning from the lead in his paint at the age of 38 in 1610. His arresting interplay of shadows and radiant light heralded the onset of the brooding Baroque style that flourished for 150 more years and produced the likes of Rubens and Rembrandt. Caravaggio's best works resemble scenes on a macabre theatre stage. The Biblical heroes are played by models he picked off the street—mostly beggars and street kids—and cast against dark backgrounds in a candle-lit glow.

But he was a hot-tempered genius who was wanted for murder and hiding from the Rome authorities in his final years of life. He was "notorious for brawling, even in a time and place when such behavior was commonplace," the Caravaggio Foundation writes. The 144 centimeters by 175 cms (57 inches by 69 inches) canvas depicts the moment the chaste widow Judith beheads the Assyrian general Holofernes to defend the city of Bethulia.

She decapitates him after plying him with drink. The more risqué takes depict Judith as a seducer who first tempts him to bed—the path also chosen by Caravaggio in a similar work he painted eight years earlier that now hangs in Rome. The general's head is then taken away in a basket or on a silver platter for display. The old maid in the scene from what could be Caravaggio's missing work is disfigured by bulbous goitres—a condition affecting the thyroid gland—that compete for the eye's attention with the streams of blood gushing down the warrior's chest.

Inveterate copyist

But what if this is not a Caravaggio but an admittedly fine copy by one of his Flemish disciples? Louis Finson was a recognized artist in his own right who both owned and reproduced Caravaggio's work. Finson was also an art dealer who may have had an ulterior motive in making Caravaggio duplicates and then selling them off to wealthy merchants in his native Bruges and Amsterdam. Finson's death in 1617 would still make the canvas discovered in the Toulouse attic by a family working on a leaky pipe more than four centuries old. Caravaggio expert John Gash told The New York Times in 2016 that Finson was "an inveterate copyist." "But I think the quality here looks better," Gash said. French art expert Eric Turquin—who has the backing of Caravaggio specialist Nicola Spinosa and has been entrusted with the painting—is also sure that this is the missing depiction of the graphic scene. The French Judith captures an "energy that radiates", Turquin told AFP in 2017. — AFP

Digital exhibits keep Tunisia revolution vibrant

Dramatic mobile phone footage, firsthand accounts on social media and other digital content, often made by protesters dodging censorship, have helped immortalize Tunisia's 2011 revolution in a new exhibition. With videos of angry protesters in clouds of tear gas and an audio recording ending with the cry "Ben Ali has fled", the multimedia exhibits chart the 29-day uprising that toppled longtime dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, in what is known as one of the first Facebook revolutions. "Work, freedom and dignity!" The slogans that were to trigger uprisings across the Arab world meet visitors to the famed Bardo Museum in Tunis on an audio recording of protesters shouting.

Nearby, a TV plays an interview with the mother of Mohamed Bouazizi, filmed the day the young street vendor set himself alight in the town of Sidi Bouzid in December 2010. His death sparked riots in protest at unemployment and the cost of living. His mother's interview was broadcast by foreign satellite channels, adding momentum to the demonstrations which eventually forced Ben Ali to flee with his family to Saudi Arabia on January 14, 2011. One visitor to the "Before the 14th" exhibition, 22-year-old student Hassen Tahri, was in high school when the uprising broke out. "I was very young at the time and I don't remember much, but with this exhibition, we can reconstruct the sequence of events," he said. "It reminds us of January 13 and 14, when we didn't know what would happen, especially after (Ben Ali) fled."

Saving the historical record

The creators of the exhibition aim to bring together a digital record of the days leading up to Ben Ali's fall. A storm of images and videos posted online were instrumental in turning a street vendor's death into a full-blown uprising—but many were only saved as posts on social media. That worried activists and researchers, who feared that the online historical record was starting to be deleted. In response, they set up a collective of NGOs and worked with institutions including Tunisia's National Library to preserve the material.

They brought together photos, videos, blog posts, poems, statements and even Facebook statuses, along with information on their locations, dates and the people who posted them. The result of four years of work, the archive now holds nearly 2,000 photos and videos, mostly taken by protesters themselves. It is preserved for posterity at Tunisia's National Archives.

The exhibition, which will also go on show in the southern French city of Marseille later this year, includes material on protests dating back as far as 2008, through to the mass protests of early 2011. "It's important for young people to understand exactly what happened," said Hiba Jebali, a 21-year-old student visiting the exhibition. "They are the future of the country."

'Unprecedented'

Kmar Ben Dana, a historian who took part in the research, said it had been challenging to verify digital content created by people who had braved Ben Ali's censorship. "It's unprecedented, be-

cause it's made up of digital material," she said. Tunisia's democratic transition has been held up as a success story in a region since rocked by uprisings and wars. But unemployment in the North African country remains high and Tunisia has faced a deadly jihadist insurgency. The exhibition venue itself was the site of a massacre in 2015 when two jihadist gunmen opened fire, killing 22 people.

And eight years after Ben Ali's departure, many in Tunisia say the hopes of the revolution have been unfulfilled. In the face of insecurity and the high cost of living, some even say they now miss the rule of Ben Ali. But Ben Dana hopes that as well as being a record for historians, the archive can preserve the gains of the revolution. "We hope it (the exhibition) will help to show that the revolution was an extremely positive, extremely liberating event," she said. And it will help in the future "to write history based on these archives", she added. — AFP



People visit an exhibition entitled "Before the 14th" at the Bardo museum.



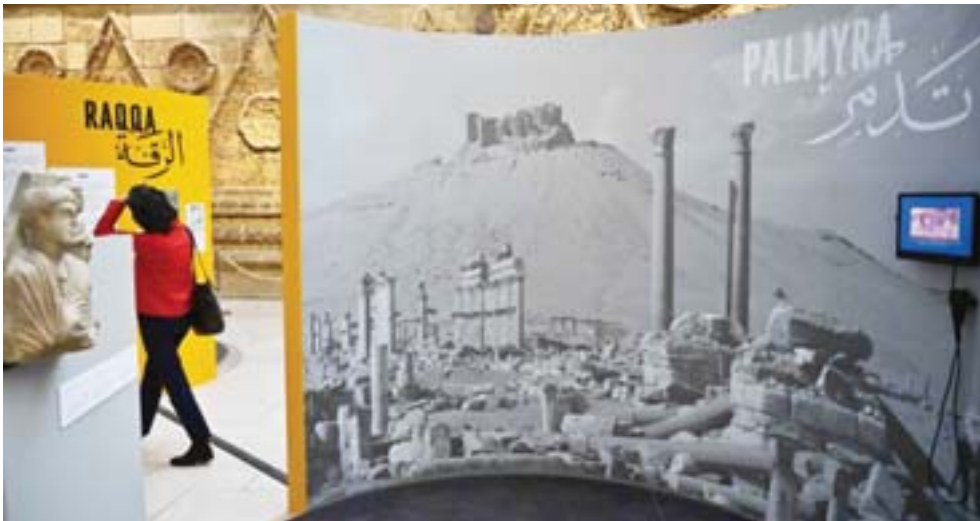
A woman visits an exhibition entitled "Before the 14th" at the Bardo museum.



A woman (left) visits an exhibition entitled "Before the 14th" at the Bardo museum in the Tunisian capital Tunis. — AFP photos



A man visits an exhibition entitled "Before the 14th" at the Bardo museum in the Tunisian capital Tunis.



People visit the exhibition titled “Cultural Landscape of Syria - Preservation and Archiving in Times of War” at the Museum of Islamic Art in the Pergamon Museum. — AFP photos

Digital archive on show in Berlin hopes to help rebuild Syria

After eight years of brutal war in Syria, the UNESCO World Heritage-listed city of Aleppo lies in ruins—but a vast digital archive in Germany aims to keep its memory alive and help rebuild it one day. The Syrian Heritage Archive Project documents what it can of the millennia-old history of a part of the world that saw some humanity’s earliest urban centers and writing systems, but which has become a symbol of the barbarity of war. The special exhibition opening in Berlin on Thursday features a digital treasure trove of photographs, maps and films as well as artefacts to take visitors on a virtual journey through Aleppo and other cultural marvels of Syria.

“This project aims to preserve the past and also has a vision for the future: to gather archives so that reconstruction can happen quickly,” said Stefan Weber, director of Berlin’s Museum of Islamic Art, which is hosting the exhibition until May 26. “For over 100 years, our museum has had a special connection with Syria,” said Weber, a Damascus University graduate in modern Arabic, pointing to the 17th-century Aleppo Room, a wealthy merchant’s dining room that is a centerpiece of the permanent exhibition. The archive exhibition, partially funded by the German foreign ministry, is one of several such initiatives—alongside a digital map of pre-war Aleppo’s Old Town created by Germany’s Cottbus University, and 3-D models of key sites made by a French IT startup.

To create the mammoth archive, a German-Syrian research team painstakingly analyzed and scanned images of pre- and post-war Aleppo, then catalogued and compiled them all into a vast database. Beyond Aleppo-Syria’s second largest city and traditional commercial capital—the 300,000 digitized documents also include images and data on ancient villages of northern Syria, as well

as the towns of Raqa and Palmyra. To fill in the white spaces on the huge cultural mapping project, a team of 24 Syrian and Iraqi refugees will guide their compatriots through the exhibition in order to collect any information they may be able to contribute.

Jewel of Islamic art

Germany, with its dark and painful history, has plenty of experience with urban reconstruction, rebuilding entire city centers after World War II, and again renovating decrepit ex-communist urban areas after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Weber said he knows it will take time to see Aleppo reborn, and that “it will be up to the Syrians themselves to decide what they plan to do with their cultural heritage with what we make available to them”.

The war, which has claimed more than 350,000 lives, has by some estimates cost the country three decades of economic development. The UN has estimated the damage at nearly \$400 billion (345 billion euros). More than two years after President Bashar al-Assad’s Russia- and Iran-backed troops fully reclaimed Aleppo from rebels forces, much of it still lies in ruins, leaving many residents in



unstable and unsafe homes. One war-damaged building collapsed on February 2, killing 11 people inside, among them four children.

Existing reconstruction initiatives are mainly carried out by private individuals, while the state authorities are focusing on infrastructure. To help wider reconstruction, “the museum already sent a file last year to UNESCO, which has transferred the elements to the Syrian authorities,” said Karin Puett, a historian with the project. She stressed that

the initiative has no “direct contacts with the authorities”, just with the researchers and scientists involved.

The dossier facilitated the launch of a major reconstruction project: Aleppo’s Umayyad Mosque, one of the oldest in the world. Work to rebuild its minaret, a jewel of Islamic art destroyed in April 2013, began last August. Information on the project is available at www.project-syrian-heritage.org — AFP



Lifestyle | Feature



A visitor lights a candle on the grave of his pet in the cemetery of the Tierhimmel ("Animal Heaven") crematorium and pet cemetery in Teltow, just outside Berlin. — AFP photos

A grave marker for a pet rabbit is seen in the cemetery of the Tierhimmel.

My dog and I, til death do us part

Ralf Hendrichs was devastated when his Doberman died. But he was even more distraught when he learnt that its carcass ended up in a public grinder along with those of roadkill and farm animals. "We cried for days on end," Hendrichs said, recalling the death of his faithful friend more than 15 years ago and its sad end that prompted him to set up a cemetery for pets south of Berlin. Hendrichs now not only manages the 10,000-square-metre (108,000-square-foot) cemetery called Tierhimmel (Animal Heaven), he also offers grieving pet owners comfort.

study by the Industrial Association of Pet Care Producers (IVH) and the German Pet Trade and Industry Association. No clear reason for the increase however has been identified. And more people than before are ready to give their four-legged friends a peaceful resting place.

Teltow cemetery started its first year in 2003 with 120 burials, but that has jumped to more than 4,000 annually now. Sebastian Oehlandt said he goes to the cemetery two or three times a week to spend time at the small tomb of his cat of almost 15 years, Hiro. "Suddenly, there was this massive hole," he said, recalling the day when Hiro died just before Christmas. "I needed time for me," said the 27-year-old, who lives with his father and another cat.

Another regular face at the cemetery, Karla Lemke, was still inconsolable more than a year after losing her miniature pinscher, Alien. "For the last 14 months since he died, I've come here every day, twice a day," said the 63-year-old, who has turned Alien's grave into the most decorated and colorful in the cemetery.

Social partner

Not only the elderly, but also young professionals, are turning to pets for comfort and companionship. "A domestic animal as a social partner, in particular for singles, has become more and more important in our society," said IVH president Georg Mueller in the 2017 study, noting the trend among both the elderly and younger adults. Hendrichs confirmed the tendency. "Young adults who have a very busy professional life often have an animal at home," he said.

"They want to go home in the evening and pet their cats, hug their dogs, and it's precisely these young people who said when their pets die that they are not just good for the trash." Across Germany, 120 cemeteries and 26 crematoriums offer a final resting place for animals, although there is no firm data on the number of pets buried.

At the Teltow cemetery, boxes of tissues are available at every corner—at the entrance of the main building, the crematorium or the quiet room, where the walls are covered with photos of dearly departed companions. The bereaved can also light a candle, like in a chapel. And Hendrichs is there too to lend a listening ear; a pet owner's grief needs to be taken seriously, he stressed. For those in need of professional support, the cemetery has a veterinarian at hand trained in psychology. The vet organizes small group discussions much like therapy sessions, said Hendrichs.

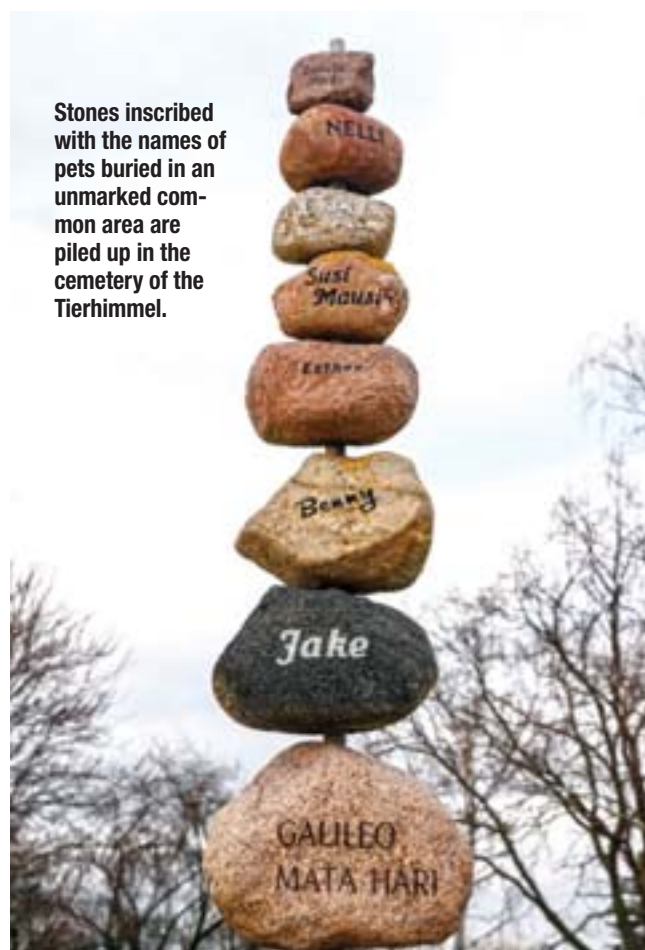


A deceased pet dog lies "in state" before being cremated at the Tierhimmel ("Animal Heaven").

The graveyard at Teltow is the only one in Germany offering pet burials as well as cremations. "We often see very sad scenes here. People cry buckets," the 66-year-old said, noting that some even turn suicidal. "For us, a pet is not just an animal, but a companion, a member of the family" who deserves to be given a dignified send-off, he said. Domestic pets have claimed a firm spot in the hearts of Germans.

Today, 34.3 million people in the country of 80 million own a pet, up 45 percent from a decade ago, according to a joint

Stones inscribed with the names of pets buried in an unmarked common area are piled up in the cemetery of the Tierhimmel.



Lifestyle | Feature

‘For us, a pet is not just an animal, but a companion, a member of the family’

Share a grave

In a little hall at the Teltow cemetery, a dog is delicately put on a willow basket, half covered by a beige veil upon which lies a yellow rose. The little white and clay coloured furball is given a final caress by his master, before being cremated. “Some say that a dead animal is poisonous—that’s completely wrong,” said Hendrichs. At the same time, the cemetery is also a business. Each grave plot costs 180 euros (\$200) for every two years, plus 120 euros for burial costs, while cremations cost between 105 and 370 euros depending on the animal’s weight.

Other products are also available, such as urns or personalized keepsakes—a paw print mold, a pendant containing the pet’s ashes or a diamond created from the ashes starting at 2,500 euros. “With that, the owners can have their former companion close by all the time,” said Hendrichs. His latest project will take that one step further. He is now planning a cemetery where pet and owner can share a grave. “We’ve had so many requests, for years.” — AFP



Hundreds of photographs of deceased pets hang in a “chapel” where visitors can enjoy a moment of silent meditation at the Tierhimmel.



Swiss violin maker David Leonard Wiedmer works in his workshop in Lyon. — AFP photos



A violin made by David Leonard Wiedmer in his workshop.



Swiss violin maker David Leonard Wiedmer works in his workshop.

Swiss luthier striving to make a 21st-century Stradivarius

Meet the man who is trying to make the closest thing you will get to a 21st-century Stradivarius. Award-winning Swiss luthier David Leonard Wiedmer has set himself the task of reproducing the legendary Italian violin at his workshop tucked away in a quayside in Lyon, southeast France. Working from the details of one of the most famous Stradivarius violins, Wiedmer told AFP: “This is the first time I’m making this model so I’m looking forward to hearing how it sounds. “Apparently the original sounds very, very good, so we’ll have to find the same features again. It’s a challenge.” Wiedmer may still only be 29, but he has already made his reputation as a master craftsman.



Swiss violin maker David Leonard Wiedmer poses with one of the violins he made.

One of his violins won gold at the Violin Society of America’s international competition last year. With friend and collaborator Damien Gest, he won gold for one of their cellos. And in the same competition, he picked up silver for his workmanship on a viola. Last year’s prizes were just the latest in a series of awards for his work, including a medal in 2015 for one of his violins at a competition in Cremona, the home of the Stradivarius. Trained at the Ecole nationale de lutherie de Mirecourt, in eastern France, Wiedmer served apprenticeships in New York and London with renowned luthier Florian Leonhard before setting up shop in Lyon three years ago.

While part of learning his craft involved restoring old instruments, he quickly moved on to creating his own. “Already at school he had an exceptional hand,” Gest told AFP. “We were always the first to give up going out with our pals to finish an instrument.” At his Lyon workshop, Wiedmer works beside his partner Lea Trombert, a former cellist, who switched to making instruments rather than playing them. And while the work represents an endless challenge, it is one he never tires of.

“There is the woodwork, there is the music, the human relationship, the psychology, physics, chemistry—it’s huge,” he says. “It’s really a constant thought process. I love thinking about it and this is precisely a job where you do only that and there are no answers.” It takes him at least a month to make a violin, which will cost between 6,000 and 12,000 euros (\$7,000 and \$13,600).

“There is no perfect violin,” he says. “The perfect violin, is the one that suits the musician.” With clients in Asia, Europe and the United States and an order book full until 2022, he says he has plenty of food for thought—and little time for holidays. — AFP



Swiss violin maker David Leonard Wiedmer works in his workshop.



Discover Singapore

from dusk till dawn

They say New York is the city that never sleeps, but in Singapore you can now eat, drink, and even fish around the clock. Begin your night at any one of Singapore's highly acclaimed cocktail bars or by tucking into tasty nosh at a local eatery, then set out to discover the Lion City after dark.

Party until dawn

As night falls, the riverside bars and restaurants along Clarke Quay start buzzing with tourists and locals alike. Start your night here before heading to clubbing powerhouses Attica and Zouk to dance the night away. Prefer to belt out your own tunes? Karaoke rooms are for hire at Tang Music Box; make sure you're aware of the minimum spend before commandeering the mic. Thrill seekers make a beeline for G-Max Reverse Bungy, where you'll be sent hurtling at a speed of up to 200km/h into the night sky. There's a lovely view of Singapore to be had if you can keep your eyes open.

Shop until you drop

Shoppers have no need to fret when the swanky malls of Or-

chard Road close their doors for the evening, as Little India's Mustafa Centre is open 24/7. A bargain hunter's paradise, it hawks everything from household groceries to the latest electronics, bolts of exotic fabrics to glittering gold jewelry. Heaving during regular shopping hours, the aisles finally quiet down around midnight leaving you plenty of space to meander without having to squeeze past a sea of shoppers. Be prepared, however, to become completely and utterly lost once inside this behemoth centre; there is no rhyme or reason to the layout and some hallways lead to complete dead ends. Don't try to find where you came in; it's easier just to head outside and then figure out where you are and how to get home.

Uncover Singapore's underbelly

Peek behind Singapore's shiny, modern and sometimes sterile facade with a nighttime tour through Geylang, the island's unofficial red-light district. Expect to hear stories of the area's origins, its mishmash of religions and its shady history while touring some of Singapore's less savory streets, where you're bound to see a side to Singapore you may not have known existed. Not everyone





heads to Geylang for a walk on the wild side, however - the area is also known as one of Singapore's foodie havens. Home to many famous eateries, including chilli crab hot spot No Signboard Seafood and frog porridge purveyor Geylang Lor 9 Fresh Frog Porridge, this is the place to head for local cuisine at its best. With the streets here tending to be busier at one o'clock in the morning than at one o'clock in the afternoon, it's definitely worth a late-night visit.

All night feasting

Singapore is known for its dazzling array of tasty nosh and no matter what time of the day or night, you'll find something to tantalise your taste buds. Late-night dim sum lovers head to around-the-clock 126 Eating House for steaming dumplings. At centrally located BK Eating House, a number of stalls continue to churn out cheap, finger-licking good dishes into the wee hours of the morning - try the mee sua (wheat flour noodles) at Yan Kee Noodle House.

If you're craving an after-dinner treat, you'll love the sinfully good desserts (best paired with an equally decadent cocktail) at famous Singaporean chef Janice Wong's 2am: dessertbar. If you prefer something a little less sweet, why not sample some durian? Fondly known as the 'king of fruit', this spikey cannonball-esque fruit's smell precedes it. A sickly-sweet stench, which some liken to rotten meat, will assault your nostrils as you arrive at one of Singapore's all-night durian stalls. Sellers are typically too happy to educate you in the fine art of durian selection, opening and eating. Plastic gloves are provided, and many first-timers say

the initial bite is the worst. Those that make it to their second say it's slightly better. Tuck in if you dare.

Midnight massage

Wanting to soothe your aching muscles after a long day exploring the Lion City? Peoples Park Complex in Chinatown is a local go-to spot for cheap and cheerful massage joints: Mr Lim Foot Reflexology is one of note that will have your weary feet walking on cloud nine. If it's after 10pm, head for 24-hour Le Spa where you can choose from Swedish or Balinese massages, with added extras including cupping and ear candling. If you're looking to try a traditional Chinese massage, book in for a 'tui na' session at Natureland. This manipulative treatment is said to clear blockages that interrupt one's 'qi', the vital energy of the body in traditional Chinese medicine. Make sure to drink plenty of water post-treatment.

Cast a line

Prawning is a favorite Singaporean pastime, so much so that many prawning farms are open 24/7. Simply hire a rod at the door, pull up a seat next to the dark-watered pool, cast your line and wait. A few time-honored techniques include making sure you've cut the bait small enough, holding your rod at a particular angle and reacting quickly when you feel that highly anticipated nibble. If you're not having any luck, ask the attendants for some pointers. Once prawned out, head to the grills to cook your freshly caught catch. - (www.lonelyplanet.com)





ZITI WITH FENNEL AND ITALIAN SAUSAGE

A pasta dish that'll have your family asking for seconds

There is something magical about this recipe, which coaxes the ultimate flavor out of just a few humble supermarket ingredients, turning them into a rich-tasting and well-balanced pasta dish that will have your family reaching for seconds. After browning the sausage, we sautéed a hefty amount of sliced onions, along with sliced fennel, which added texture and flavor to the dish. And while it may seem like a mistake to add an entire can of tomato paste and no other tomato product to make the sauce, the concentrated, bold flavor of the tomato paste intensified during cooking and added rich notes to the dish. To pull everything together, we added 2 cups of boiling water, simmering the mixture until thick. Sharp Pecorino cheese, added to the sausage-onion

mixture, enriched the sauce by giving it a salty bite. Chopped fennel fronds added pleasant anise notes upon serving.

ZITI WITH FENNEL AND ITALIAN SAUSAGE

Ingredients

Servings: 4-6

Start to finish: 30 minutes

1 pound sweet or hot Italian sausage, casings removed

2 onions, halved and sliced thin

1 fennel bulb, fronds chopped, stalks discarded, bulb halved, cored, and sliced into 1/2-inch pieces

1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste

1 pound ziti

Salt and pepper

1 ounce Pecorino Romano cheese, grated (1/2 cup), plus extra for serving

Preparation

Bring 4 quarts water to boil in large pot for pasta. Cook sausage in Dutch oven over medium-high heat, breaking up meat with wooden spoon, until no longer pink, about 4 minutes. Stir in onions and fennel, cover, and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Uncover, reduce heat to medium, and continue to cook until vegetables are golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook until darkened, about 3 minutes. Stir in 2 cups boiling pasta water and simmer until thickened, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, add pasta and 1 tablespoon salt to boiling water and cook, stirring often, until al dente. Reserve 1 1/2 cups cooking water, then drain pasta and return it to pot. Add sausage mixture, Pecorino, and 1 cup reserved cooking water and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste and add remaining cooking water as needed to adjust consistency. Sprinkle individual portions with fennel fronds and extra Pecorino before serving.

Nutrition information per serving:

550 calories; 187 calories from fat; 21 g fat (7 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 48 mg cholesterol; 929 mg sodium; 68 g carbohydrate; 6 g fiber; 9 g sugar; 21 g protein.

Baked brie with jam or fruit is popular for good reason

Baked Brie topped with jam or fruit is popular for good reason. When the cheese is warmed, it becomes rich and gooey, and pairing it with sweet fruit brings out the savory notes in the cheese. For sweet and creamy flavor in every bite, we reengineered the traditional whole wheel of baked Brie by trimming off the rind (which doesn't melt that well) and slicing the cheese into cubes. This allowed our honey-apricot mixture to be evenly distributed throughout this deconstructed version of the dish, not just spooned on top.

Baking the cheese in a cast-iron skillet seemed like a no-brainer; since the skillet holds on to heat so well, it keeps the cheese in the ideal luscious, fluid state. We finished the dish with an extra drizzle of honey and some minced chives to reinforce the sweet-savory flavor profile. Be sure to use a firm, fairly unripe Brie for this recipe. Serve with crackers or Melba toast.

BAKED BRIE WITH HONEYED APRICOTS

Ingredients

Servings: 8-10

Start to finish: 30 minutes

1/4 cup chopped dried apricots

1/4 cup honey

1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

2 (8-ounce) wheels firm brie cheese, rind removed, cheese cut into 1-inch pieces

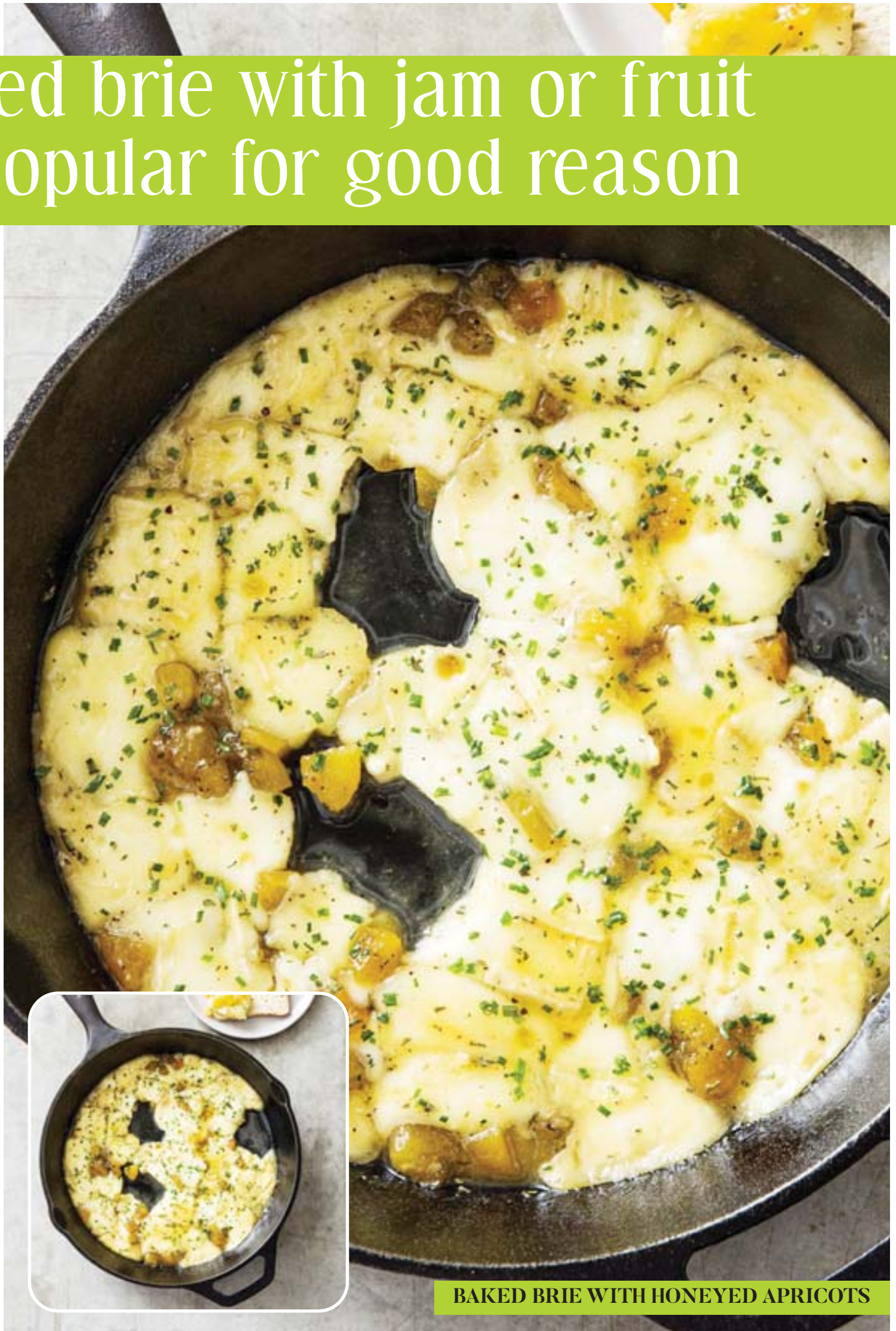
1 tablespoon minced fresh chives

Preparation

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 F. Microwave apricots, 2 tablespoons honey, rosemary, salt, and pepper in medium bowl until apricots are softened and mixture is fragrant, about 1 minute, stirring halfway through microwaving. Add Brie and toss to combine. Transfer mixture to 10-inch cast-iron skillet and bake until cheese is melted, 10 to 15 minutes. Drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons honey and sprinkle with chives. Serve.

Nutrition information per serving:

239 calories; 141 calories from fat; 16 g fat (10 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 57 mg cholesterol; 432 mg sodium; 13 g carbohydrate; 1 g fiber; 13 g sugar; 12 g protein.



BAKED BRIE WITH HONEYED APRICOTS

FRENCH TOAST



This foolproof French toast recipe guarantees crisp slices

This foolproof French toast recipe guarantees crisp, custardy slices by keeping things simple. Stale bread is standard, but we got better (and more efficient) results from oven-dried slices. For the batter, we beat milk, egg yolks, and melted butter for an indulgent coating; brown sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon added warm, sweet flavors.

After soaking the slices in batter, we cooked them over medium-low to gradually impart a golden-brown crust. Prevent the butter from clumping by warming the milk in the microwave or a saucepan until warm to the touch (about 80 F). An electric griddle set at 350 F can also be used to cook the French toast, but it may take an extra 2 to 3 minutes per side. Cook the slices all at once using the entire amount of butter for cooking.

FRENCH TOAST**Ingredients**

Servings: 4

Start to finish: 1 hour

8 large slices hearty white sandwich bread or challah
 1 1/2 cups whole milk, warmed
 3 large egg yolks
 3 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1/4 teaspoon salt

Preparation

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 300 F. Place bread on wire rack set in rimmed baking sheet. Bake bread until almost dry throughout (center should remain slightly moist), about 15 minutes, flipping slices halfway through baking. Remove bread from rack and let cool for 5 minutes. Return baking sheet with wire rack to oven and reduce temperature to 200 F.

Whisk milk, egg yolks, sugar, 2 tablespoons melted butter,

vanilla, cinnamon, and salt together in bowl. Transfer mixture to 13 by 9 inch baking pan. Soak bread in milk mixture until saturated but not falling apart, 20 seconds per side. Using firm slotted spatula, remove bread from milk mixture, 1 piece at a time, allowing excess milk mixture to drip back into pan, and transfer to clean rimmed baking sheet in single layer.

Melt 1/2 tablespoon butter in 12 inch skillet over medium-low heat. Using slotted spatula, transfer 2 slices soaked bread to skillet and cook until golden on first side, 3 to 4 minutes. Flip and continue to cook until second side is golden, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer toast to wire rack in oven. Wipe out skillet with paper towels and repeat with remaining bread, 2 pieces at a time, adding 1/2 tablespoon butter to skillet for each batch. Serve.

Nutrition information per serving:

401 calories; 171 calories from fat; 19 g fat (10 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 176 mg cholesterol; 489 mg sodium; 45 g carbohydrate; 2 g fiber; 18 g sugar; 10 g protein.

Comic

Word Search

World Currencies

Find and circle all of the world currencies that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a John Paul Getty quotation.

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

- | | | | | |
|-----------|--------------|----------|------------|---------------|
| AFGHANI | EURO | KWANZA | NEW SHEKEL | RUPEE |
| ARIARYRY | FORDYT | KYAT | NGULTRUM | RUPIAH |
| BAHT | FRANC | LEMPIRA | OUGUTYA | SHILLING |
| BALBOA | GOLD CORDOBA | LEONE | PATACA | SOM |
| BIRR | GOURDE | LIANGENI | PESO | SUCRE |
| BOLIVAR | GUARANI | LIRA | POUND | SYLI |
| BOLIVIANO | GULDER | LITAS | PULA | TAKA |
| COLON | HRYVNYA | LOTI | QUETZAL | TALA |
| DALASI | KINA | MANAT | RAND | TENGE |
| DENAR | KORUNA | METICAL | REAL | TOLAR |
| DENAR | KRONA | NAIRA | RIAL | VATU |
| DIRHAM | KRONE | NAKFA | RANGGIT | WON |
| DOLLAR | KROON | NEW CEDI | RYIAL | YEN |
| DRAM | KUNA | NEW DONG | RUBLE | YUAN RENMINBI |
| ESCUDO | KWACHA | NEW KIP | RUFYRA | ZLOTY |

Yesterday's Solution

Winter

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

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| BLACK ICE | HAIL | SEASON | SNOWBOARD |
| BLIZZARD | HEADBAND | SKATES | SNOWFLAKE |
| BOOTS | HIBERNATION | SKI DOO | SNOWMAN |
| CARNIVAL | HOCKEY | SKI PANTS | SNOWSHOES |
| CHRISTMAS | HOLIDAYS | SKIING | SOLSTICE |
| COLD | ICE FISHING | SLED | SOUP |
| EGG NOG | ICICLES | SLEET | STEW |
| FIREPLACE | KNET CAP | SLIPPERY | STORM |
| FIREWOOD | LONG UNDERWEAR | SNOW CASTLE | SWEATSHIRT |
| FOG | METTENS | SNOW FLOW | TBOGGAN |
| FREEZE | OLYMPICS | SNOW SHOVEL | VACATION |
| FROST | PARKA | SNOW TIRES | WIND CHILL |
| GLOVES | SCARF | SNOWBALL | WOOL SOCKS |

The hidden sentence is: ONE KIND WORD CAN WARM THREE WINTER MONTHS

Crossword 2146



ACROSS

- Having a color similar to that of a clear unclouded sky.
- Tropical American feather palm having a swollen spiny trunk and edible nuts.
- (computer science) A computer that is running software that allows users to leave messages and access information of general interest.
- Occupied or in the control of.
- French philosopher and theologian.
- A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
- A mythical Greek warrior who was a leader on the Trojan side of the Trojan War.
- An Oscan-speaking member of an ancient people of Campania.
- The cry made by sheep.
- The father of your father or mother.
- On the side away from the wind.
- A port in southwestern Scotland.
- An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
- A colorless odorless inert gaseous element occurring in the earth's atmosphere in trace amounts.
- An ache localized in the middle or inner ear.
- Large dark brown North American arboreal carnivorous mammal.
- A deep orange-red variety of chalcodony.
- Someone who copies the words or behavior of another.
- Austrian composer (1860-1911).
- Used of pens.
- A member of the Siouan people living in the Yazoo river valley in Mississippi.
- Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
- Endless loop of flexible material between two rotating shafts or pulleys.
- A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- Tropical American tree having wood like mahogany and sweet edible egg-shaped fruit.
- Press or grind with a crunching noise.
- An early French settler in the Maritimes.
- (used with singular count nouns) Colloquial for 'not a' or 'not one' or 'never a'.
- Arranged in or consisting of laminae.
- A Turkish unit of weight equal to about 2.75 pounds.
- A fencing sword similar to a foil but with a heavier blade.
- Of the dull yellowish green of the meat of an avocado n 1.
- The bill in a restaurant.
- Dearly loved.
- Trade name for an oral contraceptive.
- (Babylonian) The sky god.

DOWN

- God of wealth and love.
- Openly distrustful and unwilling to confide.
- Relating to or near the ulna.
- Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
- An independent group of closely related Chadic languages spoken in the area between the Biu-Mandara and East Chadic languages.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- The corporate executive responsible for the operations of the firm.
- Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
- Scottish physiologist who directed the research by F. G. Banting and C. H. Best that led to the discovery of insulin (1876-1935).
- (Scotland) A slope or hillside.
- An accessory or adjoining anatomical parts or appendages (especially of the embryo).
- A small cake leavened with yeast.
- Massive plantigrade carnivorous or omnivorous mammals with long shaggy coats and strong claws.
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- Someone whose business is advertising.
- The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Wales or its people or their language.
- An aggressive remark directed at a person like a missile and intended to have a telling effect.
- A woolen cap of Scottish origin.
- In great numbers.
- Feeling or showing extreme anger.
- Skillful (or showing skill) in adapting means to ends.
- Surpassing the ordinary especially in size or scale.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- A large commercial and industrial city in northeastern Texas.
- A state in northwestern North America.
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
- A colorless liquid aldehyde.
- A nonmetallic largely pentavalent heavy volatile corrosive dark brown liquid element belonging to the halogens.
- A reptile genus of Iguanidae.
- Thick heavy expensive material with a raised pattern.
- In bed.
- Airtight sealed metal container for food or drink or paint etc..
- Having removed clothing.
- Small very thin pancake.
- A person who buys.
- A sharp hooked claw especially on a bird of prey.
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- A person who possesses great material wealth.
- A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
- A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
- (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
- Informal terms for a mother.
- A hospital unit staffed and equipped to provide intensive care.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

TV Listings



00:20 Colossal
02:20 SuperBob
03:50 Timeline
06:00 Timeline
08:05 Thor: The Dark World
10:10 The Osiris Child
12:00 Kill'em All
13:50 Dark Paradise
15:25 Flight Of The Intruder
17:20 A Knight's Tale
19:40 Patriots Day
22:00 Commando
23:45 Killers



00:50 Into Alaska
01:45 North Woods Law
02:40 Monsters Inside Me
03:35 Sharks Of Palau
04:25 Into Alaska
05:15 North Woods Law
06:02 Wildest Middle East
06:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees
07:36 Vet On The Loose
08:00 Vet On The Loose
08:25 Weird Creatures With Nick Baker
09:15 Animal Cops Miami
10:10 Into Alaska
11:05 North Woods Law
12:00 Wildest Middle East
12:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees
13:50 Sharks Of Palau
14:45 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
15:40 Tanked
16:35 Monsters Inside Me
17:30 Weird Creatures With Nick Baker
18:25 Animal Cops Miami
19:20 Sharks Of The Shadowland
20:15 The Vet Life
21:10 Amanda To The Rescue
22:05 Wildest Middle East
23:00 Monsters Inside Me
23:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees



00:25 EastEnders
00:55 Our Girl
01:50 Holby City
02:45 Inside No. 9
03:15 Inside No. 9
03:45 Save Me
04:40 Father Brown
05:30 Doctors
06:00 Doctors
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Bad Move
07:25 The Detectorists
07:55 Doctor Who
08:50 Death In Paradise
09:45 Father Brown
10:35 Inside No. 9
11:05 Doctors
11:35 Doctors
12:05 EastEnders
12:40 Holby City
13:35 Casualty
14:25 Inside No. 9
15:00 Death In Paradise
16:00 Doctors
18:30 Agatha Raisin
19:20 Agatha Raisin
20:10 Our Girl
21:05 Line Of Duty
22:10 Luther
23:10 Father Brown



00:00 Homicide Hunter
01:00 Surviving R Kelly
02:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
02:55 Homicide: Hours To Kill
03:50 Crimes That Shook Britain
04:45 Evil Up Close
05:30 Beyond The Headlines
06:15 Cold Case Files
07:00 Homicide Hunter
08:00 It Takes A Killer
08:20 The First 48

09:05 Crimes That Shook Australia
09:50 Homicide Hunter
10:35 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
12:25 The First 48
13:20 Evil Up Close
14:15 Live PD: Police Patrol
15:10 It Takes A Killer
16:05 Homicide Hunter
17:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
18:00 The First 48
19:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
20:00 Cold Case Files
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 Police Patrol
23:00 Surviving R Kelly



00:25 Chappelle's Show
00:50 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
01:20 This Is Not Happening
01:45 John Oliver's New York Stand Up Show
02:35 Chappelle's Show
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:30 Chappelle's Show
03:55 Chappelle's Show
04:20 Lip Sync Battle UK
04:45 Lip Sync Battle UK
05:10 Catch A Contractor
06:00 The Dude Perfect Show
06:25 The Dude Perfect Show
06:50 Punk'd (Bet)
07:15 Punk'd (Bet)
07:40 Sweat Inc.
08:25 Lip Sync Battle UK
08:50 Lip Sync Battle UK
09:15 Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders: Making The Team
10:05 Friendszone
12:10 Workaholics
12:35 Workaholics
13:00 Idiotsitter
13:50 Idiotsitter
14:15 Friends
16:45 Impractical Jokers
18:00 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
18:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand
19:20 Takeshis Castle Thailand
19:45 Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders: Making The Team
20:35 Barely Famous
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Jo Koy: Don't Make Him Angry
22:20 Comedy Central Stand Up Presents
22:45 Tosh.0
23:10 Tosh.0
23:35 Pete Holmes: Nice Try, The Devil



00:30 Xploration Outer Space
01:20 Pick A Puppy
02:10 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
03:00 Ultimate Survival
03:50 How It's Made
04:40 Weather Gone Viral
05:30 Xploration Outer Space
06:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
07:00 Mysteries At The Museum
07:50 Ultimate Survival
08:40 How It's Made
09:30 Kids Do The Craziest Things
10:20 Pick A Puppy
11:10 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
12:00 Mysteries At The Museum
12:50 Weather Gone Viral
13:40 Xploration Outer Space
14:30 How It's Made
15:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
16:10 Xtreme Waterparks
17:00 Pick A Puppy
17:50 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
18:40 Breaking Magic
19:30 Deception With Keith Barry
20:20 The Carbonaro Effect
20:45 The Carbonaro Effect
21:10 Ultimate Survival
22:00 How It's Made
22:25 How It's Made
22:50 Xtreme Waterparks
23:15 Xtreme Waterparks
23:40 Deception With Keith Barry



00:50 People Magazine Investigations
01:45 Dead Of Winter
02:40 Primal Instinct
03:35 Bride Killa
04:30 Reasonable Doubt
05:25 Married With Secrets
06:20 American Monster
07:10 I Almost Got Away With It
08:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
08:25 Beauty Queen Murders
09:15 Blood Relatives
10:10 Married With Secrets
11:05 American Monster
12:00 Diabolical: Deadly Love
12:55 Beauty Queen Murders
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:45 Married With Secrets
15:40 American Monster
16:35 Reasonable Doubt
17:30 Beauty Queen Murders
18:25 Blood Relatives
19:20 I Almost Got Away With It
20:15 Married With Secrets
21:10 American Monster
22:05 Village Of The Damned
23:00 Dead Of Winter
23:55 Welcome To Killer Town



00:10 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Alex & Co.
01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
01:50 Evermoor Chronicles
02:15 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:55 Hank Zipzer
04:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
04:20 Hank Zipzer
04:45 Alex & Co.
05:35 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
06:25 Binny And The Ghost
06:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
06:50 Rolling With The Ronks
07:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
07:25 Raven's Home
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
07:55 Penny On M.A.R.S
08:20 Shake It Up
08:45 K.C. Undercover
09:10 Bizaardvark
09:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
10:25 Tangled: The Series
11:15 Bizaardvark
12:05 Liv And Maddie
12:55 K.C. Undercover
13:45 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
14:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
15:00 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
15:15 Shake It Up
15:40 K.C. Undercover
16:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
16:10 A.N.T. Farm
16:35 Penny On M.A.R.S
17:00 Tangled: The Series
17:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
17:50 Raven's Home
18:15 Stuck In The Middle
18:40 Bizaardvark
19:05 K.C. Undercover
19:30 Bunk'd
19:55 Descendants Wicked World
20:00 Raven's Home
20:25 Liv And Maddie
20:50 K.C. Undercover
21:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:20 A.N.T. Farm
21:45 Bizaardvark
22:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
22:35 Stuck In The Middle
23:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
23:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
23:50 Lollipop



00:00 PJ Masks
00:30 The Lion Guard
01:00 Sofia The First
01:25 Minnie's Bow-Toons
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
02:00 PJ Masks
02:50 The Hive
04:00 Henry Hugglemonster
04:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons S2
04:35 The Hive
04:45 PJ Masks S2
05:30 PJ Masks
05:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S1
06:00 Disney Muppet Babies S1
06:20 Paprika S1 Splits
06:40 PJ Masks
07:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2 Splits
07:15 Puppy Dog Pals S1 Splits
07:30 Vampirina S1
07:45 Fancy Nancy Splits S1
08:00 Sofia The First S2
08:30 Elena Of Avalor
09:00 Mission Force One S3 Splits
09:15 Mission Force One S3 Splits
09:30 PJ Masks S2
10:00 Disney Muppet Babies S1
10:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2
11:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
11:30 PJ Masks: Robot Special
12:30 PJ Masks
13:30 Mission Force One S3 Splits
14:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
14:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
15:00 Disney Muppet Babies S1
15:30 Elena Of Avalor
16:00 Puppy Dog Pals
16:25 Vampirina Ghouls Girls Rock!
16:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2 Splits
16:45 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2 Splits
17:00 Fancy Nancy S1
17:30 Vampirina
18:00 PJ Masks
18:30 The Lion Guard
19:00 Sofia The First S4
19:25 Vampirina Ghouls Girls Rock!
19:30 Elena Of Avalor
20:00 Puppy Dog Pals
20:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2 Splits
20:45 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2 Splits
21:00 Fancy Nancy S1
21:30 Vampirina
22:00 PJ Masks
22:30 The Lion Guard
23:00 Sofia The First S4
23:25 Minnie's Bow-Toons S1
23:30 Henry Hugglemonster



00:15 Ultimate Survival
01:05 Impossible Engineering
01:50 Mythbusters Jr.
02:35 What On Earth?
03:20 Misfit Garage
04:05 Misfit Garage
04:50 How Do They Do It?
05:15 How Do They Do It?
05:35 Container Wars
06:00 Storage Wars Canada
06:20 Container Wars
06:45 Ultimate Survival
07:35 Deadliest Catch
08:20 Gold Rush
09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier
09:55 Alaskan Bush People
10:45 How Do They Do It?
11:10 How Do They Do It?
11:30 Misfit Garage
12:20 Misfit Garage
13:05 Storage Wars Canada
13:30 Container Wars
13:55 Alaskan Bush People
14:40 Railroad Australia
15:30 Man v Expert

16:15 Wheeler Dealers
17:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier
17:50 Gold Rush
18:40 How Do They Do It?
19:05 How Do They Do It?
19:25 Misfit Garage
20:15 Misfit Garage
21:00 American Chopper
21:50 Wheeler Dealers
22:40 Twin Turbos
23:30 Deadliest Catch



00:15 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
00:35 Booster
01:00 Booster
01:25 Counterfeit Cat
01:45 Counterfeit Cat
02:10 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
02:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
06:29 Big Hero 6 The Series
07:00 Phineas And Ferb
07:29 Phineas And Ferb
08:00 Gravity Falls
08:29 Gravity Falls
09:00 Supa Strikas
09:29 Milo Murphy's Law
10:00 Milo Murphy's Law
10:29 Lab Rats
11:00 Phineas And Ferb
11:29 Phineas And Ferb
12:00 Supa Strikas
12:29 Gravity Falls
13:00 Gravity Falls
13:29 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
14:00 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
14:29 Disney 11
15:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
15:29 Furiki Wheels
16:00 Big City Greens
16:31 Space Chickens In Space
16:45 Space Chickens In Space
17:00 Milo Murphy's Law
17:29 Supa Strikas
18:00 Disney 11
18:29 K.C. Undercover
19:00 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
19:29 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:00 Big City Greens
20:29 Gravity Falls
21:00 Gravity Falls
21:29 Star Wars Resistance
22:00 Milo Murphy's Law
22:29 Furiki Wheels
23:00 Dude That's My Ghost
23:25 Dude That's My Ghost
23:50 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja



01:30 Red Carpet Rundown: Oscars 2019
02:00 E! News
03:00 WAGs Miami
04:00 WAGs
06:00 WAGs
07:00 WAGs
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop
08:55 Botched
09:50 Botched
10:45 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
11:40 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
16:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
17:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
18:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
19:00 E! News
20:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
21:00 Botched
22:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
23:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry



00:10 Culinary Genius USA
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 The Chase
03:25 This Time Next Year
04:20 Big Star's Little Star
05:15 Don't Tell The Bride
06:15 Culinary Genius USA
07:10 The Chase
08:05 This Time Next Year
09:00 Big Star's Little Star
09:55 Don't Tell The Bride
10:55 Culinary Genius USA
11:50 The Chase
12:45 Emmerdale
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Culinary Genius USA
15:10 The Chase
16:00 Dancing On Ice
17:50 Don't Tell The Bride
18:50 Emmerdale
19:15 Emmerdale
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 The Chase
21:00 Dancing On Ice
22:50 Emmerdale
23:40 Coronation Street



00:30 Heroes Of War
01:15 Ancient Aliens
02:00 Ancient Top 10
02:45 Decoding The Past
03:30 UFO Hunters
04:15 Ancient Aliens
05:00 The Universe
05:45 Ancient Aliens
06:30 The Lost Evidence
07:15 Heroes Of War
08:00 Ancient Top 10
08:45 Decoding The Past
09:30 UFO Hunters
10:15 Ancient Aliens
11:00 The Universe
11:45 The Lost Evidence
12:30 Heroes Of War
13:15 Ancient Aliens
14:00 Ancient Top 10
14:45 Decoding The Past
15:30 UFO Hunters
16:15 Ancient Aliens
17:00 The Universe
17:45 The Lost Evidence
18:30 Heroes Of War
19:15 Ancient Aliens
20:00 Ancient Discoveries
20:45 Decoding The Past
21:30 UFO Hunters
22:15 Ancient Aliens
23:00 Stan Lee's Superhumans
23:45 History's Most Hated



00:20 Mountain Men
01:05 Sean Bean On Waterloo
01:50 Brothers In Arms
02:35 Storage Wars
03:00 Storage Wars
03:25 Ozy And Jack's World De-tour
04:15 American Pickers Best Of's
05:05 Sean Bean On Waterloo
06:00 Pawn Stars
06:25 Pawn Stars
06:45 Pawn Stars
09:20 Pawn Stars
09:45 Pawn Stars
10:05 Pawn Stars
10:30 Mountain Men
11:15 Mountain Men
14:15 Mountain Men
15:00 Counting Cars
16:50 Counting Cars
17:15 Cars That Made America
18:45 Forged In Fire
19:30 WW2 Treasure Hunters
20:15 WW2 Treasure Hunters
21:00 Ice Road Truckers
21:50 Project Impossible
22:40 Milwaukee Blacksmith
23:05 Milwaukee Blacksmith
23:30 Cars That Made America

Stars



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, career choices have you in a foul mood right now. You feel as if you're being strangled. Aries energy is building to an exploding point if you're not careful. Start looking for work that gives you the freedom to help others to do better financially including your new boss. You feel better making others happy. Obstacles in other parts of life might be giving you the same feeling. Look and re-evaluate the situation. You've got this life to live. How do you want to do it? Decide what you want and go after it wholeheartedly.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, you may feel frustrated with work and home. Ambition is running high in all parts of your life and you feel as if you're not getting what you desire accomplished. Learning, studying and educating yourself in both career and love can help you create the possibilities you need. The sky's not the limit anymore. Listen to everyone, even those that get on your nerves. Out of irritation by someone you don't care for, a thought can take root and grow as to how to achieve your drives. Go out with business acquaintances, Taurus, and enjoy the instructional dinner.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, loosen up on yourself and let yourself imagine what can be. You're being too strict on self. Time is what you have now. You've got what it takes to make what you want. You don't have to yell to get your point across. People hear you. The old adage about people whispering makes others think you really have something important to say applies here. They will listen if you whisper but they will revolt if you yell. Don't be too hard on you, Gemini. Others see you as a good friend, worker and employee.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, today you realize how tired you are of the same old, same old. That doesn't mean you want to get rid of your family but rather change the conditions you've been living under. It also means that you're looking at your workplace with more scrutiny. Work has to measure up now especially. If not, you'll move on to another work place you hope will be better. Enjoy meeting with friends, discussing your emotional and mental health, then make the decisions you need, Cancer. Your social calendar needs more time.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, because you've been happier lately, you're thinking about the fact that time is passing. In other words, you're getting older. It doesn't matter how young you are now you're aware that time is passing. Your mood is becoming more anxious about security and making a good home for those you love. Money means more as does what you're doing at work. Irritations make you a little quicker to snap at your offender than is usual, Leo. Try to keep calm and decide the best manner in which to create what you need. Take a moment to yourself this evening. Perhaps a bath, reading a book, watching some television or just curling up on the sofa for a needed nap makes you calmer.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, ambition is at the top of your list today. Listen to coworkers especially those below your pay grade. They may have thought of something you might have missed. You're the innovator lately and one of your workmates may make your day with an idea. You're contemplating your age and what you've accomplished now whether your nineteen or fifty. Age doesn't matter, your mind does. You're quieter today, Virgo, but that doesn't stop your friends from seeking you out for assistance on personal matters. All in all, this is a great day. Relax and think tonight.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, your desire for money and material items still has a high place in your mind but you also need companionship from those you trust. That's in high importance emotionally as well. Though you don't want to hear anything that goes against your thoughts, you listen to others with only half your hearing. You feel loved and cared for, Libra, but you need other emotional openness with your lover too. Your state of mind is playing back and forth in an exciting manner. Settle down and inspect your thoughts.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Scorpio, someone younger than you gives you great advice now. This person might push you right out of your comfort zone. That's not a bad thing especially when you're worrying that you're getting older. Your sober thinking might just keep you from achieving your desires right now, Scorpio. Sex is on your mind in this practical time and immersing yourself in that emotional outpouring might help you realize you're only as old as you think you are. That particular part of the emotional encounter may have you realize you're young enough to start over if need be.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarius, unconventional thoughts and behavior take over your life just now. Let it be. You need to think and you do. Thoughts and changing of thoughts seem to be happening at a fired bullets pace. You can handle it. Research a vacation at a far-away exotic place and make plans to go there. Ask a friend. Independence and a need for travel will take you there where you might decide to stay longer or even live. You really need a good change of scenery and life qualities, Sagittarius. Be at peace and know you'll make the right decision.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, it may be your new enthusiasm in life or a new career but you're looking at the fact that you're aging now. You also note the age you'll be when you feel you've accomplished what you desire. You're not old or older because thoughts keep you young. Really you don't need to think about such things. They will delay the progress your making and you don't want anything to hinder that, Capricorn. You may think what you're doing is so wonderful that you're frightened it could stop. Keep retarding thoughts out of your mind. Only allow good. Be optimistic now. You'll be grateful tomorrow.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Aquarius, ambition is intensified now. This happens at work and at home. You feel that superfluous feelings have neither a place in your career or in your love life. That's only true of your feelings alone. Others, who are involved, feel they have more thought on this matter than you give them credit. Emotional seriousness is only part of what your lover wants, Aquarius. They want to feel emotionally involved in your life. Give in a little if you want your love life to remain with the status quo. Otherwise you'll be taking on more responsibility at home too.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, you want more creative and less ordinary choices in life now at work and at home. You're in the mood for the unique and different. The easy path isn't the road choice you use. You want to enjoy the hunt, so to speak. If it's easy it can't measure up to your standards. That's included in love too. You've got a lot of energy and drive, Pisces. This would be an excellent day to spend with a lover. Senses are heightened and love or something akin to it is in the air for you. Enjoy life now.

Country Codes

Afghanistan	0093	Jordan	00962
Albania	00355	Kazakhstan	007
Algeria	00213	Kenya	00254
Andorra	00376	Kiribati	00686
Angola	00244	Kuwait	00965
Anguilla	001264	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Antigua	001268	Laos	00856
Argentina	0054	Latvia	00371
Armenia	00374	Lebanon	00961
Australia	0061	Liberia	00231
Austria	0043	Libya	00218
Bahamas	001242	Lithuania	00370
Bahrain	00973	Luxembourg	00352
Bangladesh	00880	Macau	00853
Barbados	001246	Macedonia	00389
Belarus	00375	Madagascar	00261
Belgium	0032	Majorca	0034
Belize	00501	Malawi	00265
Benin	00229	Malaysia	0060
Bermuda	001441	Maldives	00960
Bhutan	00975	Mali	00223
Bolivia	00591	Malta	00356
Bosnia	00387	Marshall Islands	00692
Botswana	00267	Martinique	00596
Brazil	0055	Mauritania	00222
Brunei	00673	Mauritius	00230
Bulgaria	00359	Mayotte	00269
Burkina	00226	Mexico	0052
Burundi	00257	Micronesia	00691
Cambodia	00855	Moldova	00373
Cameroon	00237	Monaco	00377
Canada	001	Mongolia	00976
Cape Verde	00238	Montserrat	001664
Cayman Islands	001345	Morocco	00212
Central African Republic	00236	Mozambique	00258
Chad	00235	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Chile	0056	Namibia	00264
China	0086	Nepal	00977
Colombia	0057	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Comoros	00269	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Congo	00242	New Caledonia	00687
Cook Islands	00682	New Zealand	0064
Costa Rica	00506	Nicaragua	00505
Croatia	00385	Nigar	00227
Cuba	0053	Nigeria	00234
Cyprus	00357	Niue	00683
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Norfolk Island	00672
Czech Republic	00420	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Denmark	0045	North Korea	00850
Diego Garcia	00246	Norway	0047
Djibouti	00253	Oman	00968
Dominica	001767	Pakistan	0092
Dominican Republic	001809	Palau	00680
Ecuador	00593	Panama	00507
Egypt	0020	Papua New Guinea	00675
El Salvador	00503	Paraguay	00595
England (UK)	0044	Peru	0051
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Philippines	0063
Eritrea	00291	Poland	0048
Estonia	00372	Portugal	00351
Ethiopia	00251	Puerto Rico	001787
Falkland Islands	00500	Qatar	00974
Faroe Islands	00298	Romania	0040
Fiji	00679	Russian Federation	007
Finland	00358	Rwanda	00250
France	0033	Saint Helena	00290
French Guiana	00594	Saint Kitts	001869
French Polynesia	00689	Saint Lucia	001758
Gabon	00241	Saint Pierre	00508
Gambia	00220	Saint Vincent	001784
Georgia	00995	Samoa US	00684
Germany	0049	Samoa West	00685
Ghana	00233	San Marino	00378
Gibraltar	00350	Sao Tome	00239
Greece	0030	Saudi Arabia	00966
Greenland	00299	Scotland (UK)	0044
Grenada	001473	Senegal	00221
Guadeloupe	00590	Seychelles	00284
Guam	001671	Sierra Leone	00232
Guatemala	00502	Singapore	0065
Guinea	00224	Slovakia	00421
Guyana	00592	Slovenia	00386
Haiti	00509	Solomon Islands	00677
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Somalia	00252
Honduras	00504	South Africa	0027
Hong Kong	00852	South Korea	0082
Hungary	0036	Spain	0034
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sri Lanka	0094
Iceland	00354	Sudan	00249
India	0091	Suriname	00597
Indian Ocean	00873	Swaziland	00268
Indonesia	0062	Sweden	0046
Iran	0098	Switzerland	0041
Iraq	00964	Syria	00963
Ireland	00353	Taiwan	00886
Italy	0039	Tanzania	00255
Ivory Coast	00225	Thailand	0066
Jamaica	001876	Toga	00228
Japan	0081	Tonga	00676

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 Ears, Nose, and Throat conditions in adults & pediatrics
- ◆ Minimally invasive Endoscopic sinus surgery including Balloon sinuplasty
- ◆ Minimally invasive Microscopic & Endoscopic Ear surgery
- ◆ Diagnosis & treatment of Otolaryngology 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

@Malhajry

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.

SHARL, Ahmad Alkhatir St., Building 54, Floor 11.
Tel: (+965) 22060777.
@fahadhaimeed, @fahadhaimeed, @fahadhaimeed
Email: fahadhaimeed@beautybeyond.com.kw
www.beautybeyond.com.kw

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

Telephone: 1830003 Ext: 2400
alsalam.int.hospital

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

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

Telephone: 1830003
alsalam.int.hospital

- ◆ 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.

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)
- ◆ YAAT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistuloscope)
- ◆ Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery

◆ Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
◆ Laparoscopic mini bypass
◆ Transanal minimally Invasive 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

daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.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).

daralshifa
Tele:1802 555

IC INTERNATIONAL CLINIC

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

Dr. Hani Haider
General Surgery Consultant

http://www.international-clinic.com **Tel: 1886677** ic_kwt

To advertise on this Page

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

Dr Sahar Ghannam

Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser



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

Friday is a holiday.

Address: Fourth Ring Road - Abdallah Fadalh Street, Meidan Hawally, opposite fire station - block 35, building 31.
 Clinic Phones: 25610407/ 409/ 314 Fax: 25610465
 Mobaile: 90974754/ 99166746

 saharpolyclinic
  Dr.saharghannsmclinic
 Email: drsgderma@gmail.com

Dr. Ala' Groof

Consultant Surgeon
Canadian board certified.

General Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Endoscopic/laparoscopic Surgery, Obesity/Metabolic Surgery, Tumor Surgery

- Treat patients with problems in the arteries and veins- varicose veins, narrowing/occlusion or ballooning of vessels.
- Treat patients with diabetic foot wounds and leg swelling.
- Treat patients in need of hemodialysis access and associated problems.
- Treat patients with gall bladder stones, abdominal swellings/tumors/hernias.
- Treat patients with problems of overweight- Sleeve Gastrectomy and gastric bypass.

We cover GIG insured patients- KPC/AFYA

Meidan Hawally - End of Fourth Ring Road - behind the Gas Station - Sabaek building, seventh floor
Tel: 25626000 - 65966000



To advertise on this Page

Call: 24833199 ext:101,102

To advertise on this Page



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

WELCOME

Dr Tammam Abu Ali

Consultant ENT, Head & Neck, Facial Plastic Surgeon

Fellowship of the royal college of surgeons in UK and Ireland.
 19 years work experience in ENT Specialist in UK Kuwait.
 As Head of ENT department in American Hospital in Kuwait.
 10 years work experience in UK and Ireland.


- 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

 qmckuwait




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
 Laproscopic and Bariatric Surgery



email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com

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.

Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228

Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Clover Center Mazaya Building



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 Turak
Gynaecologist



Dr. Zareena Zahir
Gynaecologist



Dr. Masar Khan
Senior Cardiologist



Dr. P. Seshendra Reddy
Orthopedic Consultant (JOST) Specialized in Neck, Shoulder Hip and Knee

50721507 / 24551555

EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER

Block No.4 Jahra - Kuwait

Tel : 24568857 / 24568859 info@exircenter.kw www.exircenter.kw



WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR INSURANCES

Classifieds

Kuwait Times
Established 1961

Friday, March 1, 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: Warm with light variable wind to light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

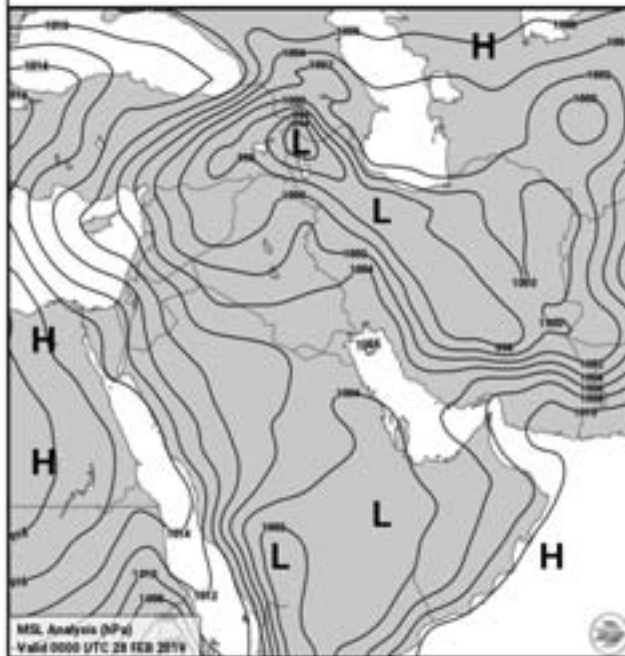
BY NIGHT: Cool with light to moderate south easterly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear with a chance for fog forming over some areas.

WEATHER WARNING

No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	25 °C	15 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	24 °C	11 °C
ABDALY	25 °C	10 °C
BUBYAN	--- °C	-- °C
JAHRA	24 °C	14 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	23 °C	14 °C
SALMIYAH	24 °C	17 °C
AHMADI	25 °C	17 °C
NUWAISIB	25 °C	13 °C
WAFRA	24 °C	12 °C
SALMY	23 °C	11 °C

SFC. CHART 28/02/2019 0000 UTC



4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	03/01	Dusty with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	20 °C	12 °C	NW	20 - 50 km/h
Saturday	03/02	Fair	20 °C	12 °C	NW	10 - 35 km/h
Sunday	03/03	Fair	22 °C	09 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 28 km/h
Monday	03/04	Fair	23 °C	09 °C	VRB-E	08 - 28 km/h

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	04:57
Sunrise	06:16
Zuhr	12:01
Asr	15:18
Sunset	17:46
Isha	19:03

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	26 °C
MIN. Temp.	13 °C
MAX. RH	59 %
MIN. RH	17 %
MAX. Wind	SW 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	.17 mm

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Firman (Christian), S/o Sebesthiraj, Passport No: H8366062, Civil ID No: 283092507206, Date of birth: 25.09.1983, (native district: Thanjavur), Residing at No: 19/33, Kela Veethi, Papanasam Post and Taluk, Thanjavur - 614205, has converted to Islam

with the name of Fareedh.S. (C 5448)
24-2-2019

I, **Putturu Lakshmi Devi** W/o Puttur Chandra Sekhar, holder of Indian Passport No: 5456069 & Civil ID No: 279060106203 has changed my name to Puttur Santhi, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5447)
21-2-2019

EMERGENCY

112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is

1889988

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

Business

FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2019

39 Facebook content reviewers in India complain of low pay, high pressure

40 Meeting President Maduro: Inside a US businessman's oil deal with Venezuela

41 Still much to be done on China trade: US Trade Rep Lighthizer



BARCELONA: Richard Yu, the CEO of Huawei's consumer products division presents the new HUAWEI Mate X foldable smartphone at the Mobile World Congress (MWC), on the eve of the world's biggest mobile fair. — AFP

Huawei racks up 5G deals at mobile fair

‘We need to be more transparent, and that means speaking out more often’

BARCELONA: Chinese telecoms giant Huawei racked up a slew of deals to sell 5G equipment at the world's top mobile fair in Spain despite Washington's campaign to convince its allies bar the firm from their next-generation wireless networks.

The famously secretive company launched a media offensive at the Mobile World Congress which wraps up in Barcelona yesterday against US accusations that its cheap equipment used in telecommunications infrastructure across the globe is a Trojan horse for potential Chinese state spying and sabotage. The United States considers the matter urgent as countries around the world prepare to roll out fifth-generation, or 5G, networks that will bring near-instantaneous connectivity that can enable futuristic technologies such as self-driving cars.

On Sunday on the eve of the start of the fair, which companies usually reserve to unveil their new devices, top Huawei officials held several press conferences and meetings with reporters where they strenuously rejected Washington's claims.

“We need to be more transparent, and that means speaking out more often,” Huawei's president for Western Europe, Vincent Ping, told reporters on Monday.

The highlight of the media offensive came Tuesday when one of Huawei's rotating chairmen, Guo Ping, delivered a keynote speech where reiterated the company's position that there are no “back-doors” in its 5G tech that could allow Beijing to spy on countries. “The US security accusation against our 5G has no evidence. Nothing. The irony is that the US Cloud Act allow their entities to access data across borders,” he told a packed auditorium, speaking in English.

This argument was echoed by several telecoms operators and government delegations at the trade fair. “Security is a matter of concern if it has been proven. But for now, we just hear speculations from the US about Huawei over questions of security,” Malawi's Minister for Communications Technology said. “Huawei is quite aggressive in this industry and they are a step ahead of the other players. We

just want to appreciate all the questions of security as a matter of concern but we need that countries as US show us the problems in order to help us.”

Nick Read, the head of Vodafone, the world's second largest mobile operator, said Washington “clearly needed” to share the evidence it has against Huawei with European authorities so they can decide whether or not to use the Chinese firm's tech. Washington sent a large delegation of its own to the trade fair, which draws some 100,000 people from across the telecoms industry, to press its case with industry executives and its foreign counterparts.

‘Insult to our industry’

But it appears to have failed to dissuade other countries. Huawei announced it had signed ten commercial contracts or partnership agreements for 5G with ten telecoms operators including Switzerland's Sunrise, Iceland's Nova, Saudi Arabia's STC and Turkey's Turkcell. “This is an insult to our industry. We do know how to run tests and

protect our networks, we always have,” Turkcell chief executive officer Kaan Terzioğlu told AFP when asked about Washington's campaign against Huawei.

“I am very happy with what Huawei is providing us and I don't differentiate where tech is coming from. We never work with a single provider, we use mainly Ericsson and Huawei and we are very happy with those vendors.” Huawei's 5G equipment is seen as being considerably more advanced than that of its rivals such as Sweden's Ericsson or Finland's Nokia. Huawei however has not managed to convince US operators to use its equipment.

Three of the biggest US telecoms operators are involved in major deals that require regulatory approval which will make it hard for them to defy Washington's opposition to the use of Huawei equipment, a telecoms specialist who asked not to be named said. Sprint has launched a bid to buy Time Warner while Sprint and T-Mobile are trying to merge and do not want to anger the US administration, the source added. — AFP

Business

Global markets mostly drop on Kim-Trump summit failure

‘Global equities in general have pulled back as risk sentiment took a hit’

LONDON: World stock markets mostly sank yesterday as a summit between Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un ended abruptly without an agreement. Asian equities had been fluctuating throughout the day on tempered optimism over China-US trade talks, weak factory data from Beijing and fresh geopolitical tensions in Kashmir. But they took a decisive turn south after an expected lunch and signing ceremony between the US and North Korean leaders was called off at the last minute.

European indices also mainly fell, with London down half a percentage point on persistent Brexit uncertainty, and the pound continued to struggle. “Global equities in general have pulled back as risk sentiment took a hit after the US and North Korea failed to reach an agreement over denuclearisation for the (Korean) peninsula,” said XTB analyst David Cheetham. “US president Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un abruptly cut short their summit in Hanoi, and in doing so cancelled a signing ceremony as the two leaders failed to make any tangible progress and agree terms on the deal.”

The shock news came just hours after Kim raised the prospect of a permanent US diplomatic presence in Pyongyang and Trump said he was in “no rush” for a speedy deal over North Korea’s nuclear program. Trump later told reporters that he was not willing to give in to Kim’s demands to lift sanctions on the country. “It was about the sanctions,” he said. “Basically, they wanted the sanctions lifted in their entirety, and we couldn’t do that.”

However, he said the talks ended on friendly terms and he was hope-

ful of progress further down the line. In reaction, Seoul dived 1.8 percent and Tokyo ended 0.8 percent lower, while Shanghai and Hong Kong each shed 0.4 percent. The global rally that has characterized most of this year had already taken a knock after US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told lawmakers that “real progress” had been made in trade talks with China, but a lot of work was still needed before a pact is signed. While his comments did not derail expectations of an agreement at some point — with both sides reporting good progress and Trump delaying a deadline for a deal — it did give traders pause for thought, observers said.

Chinese economic gloom

Also fuelling selling pressure was gloomy data showing Chinese manufacturing activity contracted for a third straight month in February, with factories hit by the long Lunar New Year break, concerns about slowing growth and uncertainty from the trade row. However, Zhou Hao, a senior emerging markets economist at Commerzbank AG, said the results were likely not as bad as they seemed

and the outlook could be positive. “I think we still want to wait for the next month’s reading as this month’s is distorted by the holiday,” he said. “Also the economy could stabilise this month. Rising input prices suggest that there is no need to worry about deflation, so the question now rests on whether the economy has enough impetus.” Nervousness continues to stalk trading floors after Pakistan and India said they had shot down each other’s fighter jets on Wednesday, fuelling worries of a conflict between the nuclear-armed neighbors. —AFP



and the outlook could be positive. “I think we still want to wait for the next month’s reading as this month’s is distorted by the holiday,” he said. “Also the economy could stabilise this month. Rising input prices suggest that there is no need to worry about deflation, so the question now rests on whether the economy has enough impetus.” Nervousness continues to stalk trading floors after Pakistan and India said they had shot down each other’s fighter jets on Wednesday, fuelling worries of a conflict between the nuclear-armed neighbors. —AFP



HANOI: A currency dealer monitors exchange rates in front of screens showing a news broadcast of US President Donald Trump’s presser following the second US-North Korea summit. —AFP

BMW, Daimler join forces to develop self-driving cars

FRANKFURT: German high-end car giants BMW and Mercedes-Benz maker Daimler said yesterday they would work together to develop automated driving and driver assistance systems, the latest cooperation for the historically fierce rivals. The two manufacturers have sealed a “long-term, strategic cooperation... to make next-level technologies widely available” by around 2025, they said in a joint statement.

Munich-based BMW and Stuttgart’s Daimler plan first to focus on so-called level three and four systems on an internationally-recognized scale for automated driving. They will stop short of level five — which would see the on-board computer take over completely from the human driver under all circumstances. Rather, the hoped-for technology will at first offer driving and parking assistance and limited autonomy on motorways.

“Instead of individual, stand-alone solutions, we want to develop a reliable overall system,” said Daimler board member Ola Kallenius, who is set to take over from departing chief executive Dieter Zetsche in May. The firms would “discuss the possibility of extending their collaboration to cover higher levels of automation, both on highways and in urban areas,” they said. “Other technology companies and automotive manufacturers” could be invited aboard in future, the companies added.

Yesterday’s announcement marks the latest cooperation between BMW and Daimler, who have otherwise been locked for years in a near neck-and-neck race for dominance of the global high-end car market. —AFP

Qatar, China, Japan sought ‘extras’ after Barclays fundraising

LONDON: Qatari, Chinese and Japanese investors all sought “extras” from Barclays as the British bank raised billions of pounds at the height of the credit crisis in 2008, a landmark London criminal trial heard on Wednesday. Glenn Leighton, a former Barclays director and a witness for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) prosecutor, told Southwark Crown Court that these agreements with Qatar, Japan and China were separate from the bank’s emergency fundraising in June 2008 but negotiated “in tandem”.

Former CEO John Varley and some of his most senior former colleagues — Roger Jenkins, Tom Kalaris and Richard Boath — are charged with conspiracy to commit fraud by false representation over “side deals” struck with Qatar as it raised more than 11 billion pounds (\$14 billion) in emergency funding in 2008. Two capital raisings in June and October 2008 allowed Barclays to avoid a state bailout as markets roiled in the financial crisis over a decade ago.

Prosecutors allege the four defendants misled shareholders and other investors by not disclosing that Barclays paid an extra 322 million pounds to Qatar through so-called “advisory service agreements” (ASAs), described as a “mechanism of paying the Qataris what they wanted”. The men, the most senior bankers to face a jury trial over credit crisis-era conduct, deny wrongdoing.

Cross-examined by William Boyce, a lawyer for Boath, Leighton agreed that Japan’s Sumitomo and China Development Bank sought Memoranda of Understanding to deepen

relationships with Barclays after investing in the bank in June 2008. But such agreements did not lead to preferential prices for any strategic investors during the first of the bank’s two emergency fundraisings in 2008, the court heard.

“The Japanese, Chinese, Qataris all wanted extras and the extras were dealt with in different ways without it affecting the level playing field for everyone else,” said Boyce, taking the court through Leighton’s interviews with the SFO and markets regulator in 2014 and 2013. “That’s right,” Leighton responded. Leighton, who was responsible for designing spreadsheets to stress test numbers for the June 2008 transaction, said he had understood that the Qataris had to perform their side of the service agreement, designed to open up fresh business opportunities for Barclays in the Middle East.

Leighton told the court that after June capital raising, he travelled to Bahrain to advise an investment fund that had got itself into trouble in the financial crisis and also advised an entity in Kuwait. “Part of our success in winning these transactions came from the fact that we had our own shareholder (Qatar) pushing for Barclays to be involved in those trades,” Leighton said. Boyce put it to Leighton that Barclays’ former head of the investment bank, Bob Diamond, had trumpeted the Qatari ASA to investors when unveiling the capital raising on June 25, 2008, saying it would “sort out our strategy for the whole Middle East”.

“This was broadcasting it as loudly as it could because it was so good for the bank,” Boyce said, taking Leighton through testimony he has given to investigators. “That’s right,” Leighton said. Barclays did not publicly disclose that it paid Qatar a 42 million pound fee under the first ASA in June 2008. Four months later, the bank paid Qatar 280 million pounds in a second ASA, the court has heard previously. Varley and Jenkins have been charged with two counts each of fraud by false representation over the two fundraisings in 2008. Kalaris and Boath face one charge each over the June fundraising. The trial continues. —Reuters

Business

Facebook content reviewers in India complain of low pay, high pressure

'I have seen women employees breaking down on the floor'

HYDERABAD: On a busy day, contract employees in India monitoring nudity and pornography on Facebook and Instagram will each view 2,000 posts in an eight-hour shift, or almost four a minute. They are part of a 1,600-member team at Genpact, an outsourcing firm with offices in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad that is contracted to review Facebook content.

Seven content reviewers at Genpact said in interviews late last year and early in 2019 that their work was underpaid, stressful and sometimes traumatic. The reviewers, all in their 20s, declined to be identified for fear of losing their jobs or violating non-disclosure agreements. Three of the seven have left Genpact in recent months. "I have seen women employees breaking down on the floor, reliving the trauma of watching suicides real-time," one former employee said. He said he had seen this happen at least three times. Reuters was unable to independently verify the incidents or determine how often they may have occurred. Genpact declined comment.

The working conditions described by the employees offers a window into the moderator operations at Facebook and the challenges faced by the company as it seeks to police what its 2 billion users post. Their account contrasts in several respects with the image presented by three Facebook executives in interviews and statements to Reuters of a carefully selected, skilled workforce that is paid well and has the tools to handle a difficult job. Ellen Silver, Facebook's vice president of operations, acknowledged to Reuters that content moderation "at this size is uncharted territory".

"We care deeply about getting this right," she said in January. "This includes the training reviewers receive, our hiring practices, the wellness resources that we provide to each and

every person reviewing content, and our overall engagement with partners." While rejecting the Hyderabad employees' assertions about low pay, Facebook has said it had begun drafting a code of conduct for outsourcing partners but declined to give details.

It has also said it would be introducing an annual compliance audit of its vendor policies this year to review the work at contractor facilities. The company is organizing a first-ever summit in April to bring together its outsourcing vendors from around the world, with the aim of sharing best practices and bringing more consistency to how moderators are treated. These efforts were announced in a blog post on Monday by Justin Osofsky, Facebook's vice-president of global operations.

Facebook works with at least five outsourcing vendors in at least eight countries on content review, a Reuters tally shows. Silver said about 15,000 people, a mix of contractors and employees, were working on content review at Facebook as of December. Facebook had over 20 content review sites around the world, she said. Over a dozen moderators in other parts of

the world have talked of similar traumatic experiences.

A former Facebook contract employee, Selena Scola, filed a lawsuit in California in September, alleging that content moderators who face mental trauma after reviewing distressing images on the platform are not being properly protected by the social networking company. Facebook in a court filing has denied all of Scola's allegations and called for a dismissal, contending that Scola has insufficient grounds to sue. Some examples of traumatic experiences among Facebook content moderators in the United States were described this week by The Verge, a technology news website. (<https://bit.ly/2EammsL>)

“ We care deeply about getting this right ”

TikTok app fined for illegally gathering children's data

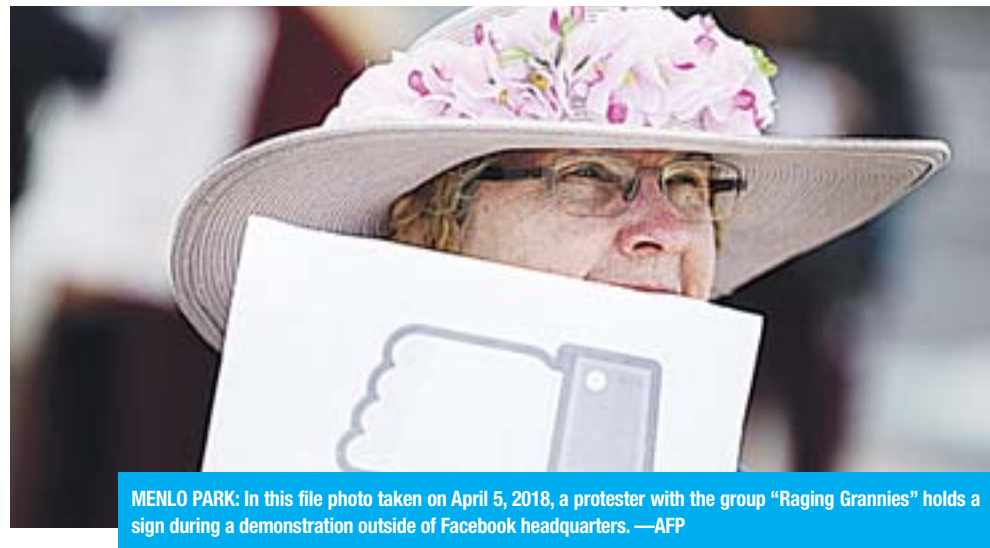
WASHINGTON: The fast-growing, Chinese-owned video sharing network TikTok agreed to pay a \$5.7 million fine to US authorities to settle charges that it illegally collected personal information from children, officials said Wednesday. The Federal Trade Commission said the penalty by the social network, which had been known as Musical.ly, was the largest ever in a children's privacy investigation.

The social network, which has been surging in popularity with young smartphone users and taking over from rivals like Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, failed to obtain parental consent from its underage users as required by the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, FTC officials said. "The oper-

ators of Musical.ly — now known as TikTok — knew many children were using the app, but they still failed to seek parental consent before collecting names, email addresses, and other personal information from users under the age of 13," said FTC chairman Joe Simons.

"This record penalty should be a reminder to all online services and websites that target children: We take enforcement of COPPA very seriously, and we will not tolerate companies that flagrantly ignore the law." TikTok claimed some 500 million users worldwide last year, making it one of the most popular worldwide apps. Owned by China's ByteDance, it expanded its reach in the US with the merger with Musical.ly.

Teens have been flocking to the service, which allows them to create and share videos of 15 seconds. According to the FTC, the company required users to provide an email address, phone number, username, first and last name, a short biography, and a profile picture. The consumer protection regulator said 65 million accounts have been registered in the United States. Officials said the company knew that many of its users were under 13 and should have taken greater precautions. —AFP



MENLO PARK: In this file photo taken on April 5, 2018, a protester with the group "Raging Grannies" holds a sign during a demonstration outside of Facebook headquarters. —AFP

Pressure, lack of experience

The Genpact unit in Hyderabad reviews posts in Indian languages, Arabic, English and some Afghan and Asian tribal dialects, according to Facebook. On one team, employees spend their days reviewing nudity and explicit pornography. The "counter-terrorism" team, meanwhile, watches videos that include beheadings, car bombings and electric shock torture sessions, the employees said.

Those on the "self-harm" unit regularly watch live videos of suicide attempts - and do not always succeed in alerting authorities in time, two of the employees said. They told Reuters they had no experience with suicide or trauma. Facebook said its policies called for moderators to alert a "specially trained team" to review situations where there was "potential imminent risk or harm."

The moderators who spoke to Reuters said in the instances they knew of, the trained team was called in when there was a possibility of a suicide, but the reviewers continued to mon-

itor the feed even after the team had been alerted. Job postings and salary pay-slips seen by Reuters showed annual compensation at Genpact for an entry-level Facebook Arabic language content reviewer was 100,000 Indian rupees (\$1,404) annually, or just over \$6 a day. Facebook contended that benefits made the real pay much higher. The workers said they did receive transport to and from work, a common non-cash benefit in India.

Moderators in Hyderabad employed by another IT outsourcing firm, Accenture, monitor Arabic content on YouTube on behalf of Google for a minimum of 350,000 rupees annually, according to two of its workers and pay slips seen by Reuters. Accenture declined to comment, citing client confidentiality. Facebook disputed the pay analysis, saying Genpact is required to pay above industry averages. The outsourcer, while declining to comment on its work for Facebook, said in a statement that its wages are "significantly higher than the standard in the industry or the minimum wage set by law." —Reuters

Carrefour raises its cost savings target

PARIS: French supermarket giant Carrefour said yesterday its net losses deepened in 2018 largely due to the closure of its struggling Dia stores, but increased its cost savings target for this year by 40 percent. Europe's leading retailer, which is in the middle of a major re-organization plan, posted a net loss of 561 million euros (\$638 million) compared to 531 million in 2017, it said in a statement.

Some 301 million of the fall came from "discontinued operations" — mainly from having to close most of 273 former stores of the low-cost Dia supermarket chain, it added. Adjusted for such exceptional items, Carrefour's net profit actually rose 3.75 percent to 802 million euros, beating analyst forecasts which expected the figure to be between 749 and 752 million euros. —AFP

Business

Meeting President Maduro: Inside a US businessman's oil deal with Venezuela

A long tradition of oil companies making deals with disfavored governments

GULF STREAM: In November 2017, Harry Sargeant III, a wealthy American businessman, flew to Venezuela to see about buying some oil. Sargeant, the former finance chairman of the Florida Republican Party, was looking to purchase a New Jersey asphalt plant that needed a steady supply of the heavy crude that Venezuela has in abundance. Never mind that the South American country was in the crosshairs of the Trump administration.

The trip got off to a worrying start when Sargeant's plane was directed to a special hangar in Caracas and surrounded by soldiers. But what followed, he says, was privileged treatment, including an unexpected meeting the next day with Nicolas Maduro, Venezuela's socialist president. Within a year, Sargeant had inked an attractive oilfield agreement to help raise plummeting crude production in Venezuela, whose economy is in a free fall. A new Delaware company called Erepla Services LLC, of which Sargeant is a shareholder, would rehabilitate three troubled oilfields in exchange for almost half the revenue.

"We like high-risk places," said Sargeant, whose dealmaking has taken him to hot spots such as Iraq. The 61-year-old former Marine Corp pilot discussed the Venezuela deal with Reuters in an exclusive interview in the wood-paneled cigar room of his mansion in Gulf Stream, an affluent community on Florida's east coast.

Sargeant's timing for the venture turned out to be lousy: On January 28, just weeks after news broke of Sargeant's partnership with Petroleos de Venezuela SA (PDVSA), the US government unleashed tough new sanctions banning Americans from working with Venezuela's state-run oil firm. It was part of a wider US pressure campaign to topple Maduro's government. Sargeant acknowledges

sanctions have derailed his deal.

Still his willingness to do business with a ruler the Trump administration seeks to undermine reflects a long tradition of oil companies making deals with disfavored governments around the world. Prior to the January sanctions, the United States had been the biggest cash-paying customer for Venezuela's oil, importing more than 500,000 barrels daily.

The intended partnership also highlights Venezuela's desperation. With Western oil majors steering clear of new investment there, the country has turned to China and Russia as well as upstart firms like Erepla. Maduro has long sought an end to what he calls an economic war being waged against his government by the United States. His embrace of an American company belies his public denunciations of Trump. "There is no doubt they wanted to send a message that Venezuela was open to American business," Sargeant said. The Venezuelan government and PDVSA did not respond to emails requesting comment about the state oil company's deal with Erepla or Sargeant's version of events.

Face to face with Maduro

Sargeant says his business dealings in Venezuela date to the late 1980s. A Sargeant family company claimed in court that it was forced out of Venezuela's asphalt business by PDVSA in 2005. And the firm, records show, once owed a \$52 million judgment to PDVSA. He says he decided to give the country another shot on his search for heavy crude because he still had industry contacts there.

The day after Sargeant's November 2017 arrival, he said, a small convoy of SUVs took him to a house at the Fuerte Tiuna military base in Cara-

Dutch fears that flights would be shifted from Amsterdam-Schiphol to the Paris's Charles de Gaulle hub. Le Maire denied that Air France-KLM was at risk of a divorce, but said he expected Dutch proposals on how to ease the crisis as CEO Ben Smith tries to improve profitability in Europe's cutthroat aviation market. "It's not the French or Dutch governments that will best manage Air France-KLM, it's Ben Smith, Mr Elbers and the Air France-KLM board," he said. "The company will do better if we work together," he said.

Dutch resentment

Dutch newspaper AD reported yesterday that Prime Minister Mark Rutte began discussing the Air France-KLM stock buy as early as 2017 in top-secret meetings with just Hoekstra and two other ministers. Alarm bells started ringing after Delta and China Eastern Airlines each bought stakes of 8.8 percent in the airline, AD said, prompting fears of a threat to the status of Amsterdam's Schiphol airport as a major European hub.

A series of costly strikes last year by pilots and other staff at Air France added to concerns that KLM's profits were being used to spare the French airline from making painful cost-cutting steps. They ended only after Smith agreed to multi-year pay increases that analysts said were barely justified by Air France's finances.

KLM's operating profit of 1.1 billion euros (\$1.25 billion) last year far outstripped the 266 million reported by Air France — even though



CARACAS: Supporters of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro ride their motorcycles in front of the National Congress. —AFP

cas. Inside, he said officials showed off a room with various live snakes, some venomous, on display in glass cages. Sargeant thought he would be meeting only with a PDVSA official he knew. Instead he said he found himself face-to-face with Maduro, whom he said was "friendly but serious."

Maduro, he said, wanted him to explain why American companies were not investing in the oil sector there. And, with the help of a translator, the Venezuelan president waxed philosophical about the ravaged economy, Sargeant recalls. "He said China reinvented itself and the Venezuelans can reinvent themselves," Sargeant said. Sargeant did not end up purchasing the New Jersey asphalt plant. Instead, a few months later, he and his team began discussing a production venture with PDVSA, according to Ali Rahman, a Washington DC-based executive at Erepla. "We went in saying 'Hey, we're an American oil company, we want to help revitalize the Venezuelan oil sector, and we want to do it waiving the American flag.'"

Controversial past

Sargeant's tolerance for risk-taking has taken him to hazardous corners of the globe where some of his business dealings have become tangled in investigations and lawsuits. During the height of the Iraq War, one of his firms, International Oil Trading Company (IOTC), won lucrative contracts from the Defense Logistics Agency to supply the US military with fuel.

Disputes ensued at the Armed Forces Board of Contract Appeals. The US government in the civil proceedings claimed IOTC used "bribery and fraud" to win permission from the nation of Jordan to transport oil across its territory. IOTC and Jordan denied those allegations at the time. Early last year the US government settled, and agreed to pay IOTC \$40 million, in what Sargeant says is a full vindication. His proposed deal with PDVSA is at odds with Republican Party efforts in his home state of Florida, a key battleground for the 2020 presidential election and where an estimated 200,000 Venezuelans have recently settled. —Reuters

France warns of Air France-KLM 'instability'

PARIS: France yesterday urged Dutch officials to guard against management "instability" at Air France-KLM after the Netherlands upped its stake in the binational holding, putting it on equal footing with Paris in a bid to gain more oversight over the company. French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire accused the Dutch government of "destroying value and creating instability" after lifting its stake to 14 percent, just shy of the 14.3 percent held by France.

France was caught off guard by the stealth purchases unveiled this week, and Le Maire said he would demand explanations from his Dutch counterpart Wopke Hoekstra in Paris on Friday. "Between two states, which are friendly and close founding members of the European Union, such behavior is unacceptable," Le Maire told Public Senat television. "It's not reasonable to remain in this situation, which benefits nobody," he added.

The stake purchase comes just weeks after tensions flared over the renewal of Pieter Elbers as head of the KLM unit, and reports of

Air France has a fleet of more than 300 planes, compared with around 170 for KLM. "In an ever more competitive aviation industry, KLM has watched, flabbergasted, as the French side does everything it can to avoid change, especially its pilots," French daily Le Figaro said in a front-page editorial yesterday. "At a time of rising nationalism, this two-speed progress renders things impossible in the alliance," it said.

Board seats?

Air France-KLM shares fell a further 2.6 percent yesterday to 10.94 euros, after sinking 11.7 percent on Wednesday on news of the Dutch stake purchase. The Air France-KLM board, after a hastily convened meeting Wednesday, said it would "closely monitor the consequences" of the Dutch move. But it remains unclear if it will give additional seats to Dutch government representatives. The Dutch have five board seats, compared to 11 for France.

The conflict poses a tricky challenge for Ben Smith, a Canadian who became the first non-French leader of the holding in September following the strikes that cost the previous CEO his job. Concerns have been growing in the Netherlands that Smith is looking to shift more KLM flights to Paris from Amsterdam in a bid to better compete against Lufthansa, and British Airways and Iberia owner IAG. "KLM's position has been constantly eroded over the past few months," Hoekstra said on Tuesday. "We now have a seat at the table." —AFP

Business

Still much to be done on China trade: US Trade Rep Lighthizer

Final details would be hashed out before a 'signing summit'

WASHINGTON: Washington's chief trade negotiator said on Wednesday there remained much to do before reaching a new trade agreement with China, even as both sides signal their talks are nearing the finish line. After months of negotiating with Beijing, "now we are making real progress," US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said in congressional testimony.

However, "much still needs to be done both before an agreement is reached and more importantly after it is reached if one is reached." Lighthizer's remarks to a House committee underscored the remaining hurdles facing negotiators despite the apparent eagerness on both sides to bring their eight-month trade war to an end. Citing "substantial progress," President Donald Trump on Sunday said he would postpone a sharp increase in US duties on \$200 billion in Chinese imports while the two sides worked to reach an agreement.

He said the final details would be hashed out before a "signing summit" with Chinese President Xi Jinping at an unspecified future date. Along with Japanese and European officials, the United States accuses China of entrenched unfair trade practices, including massive state intervention in markets, subsidies and the theft of foreign technology.

Chinese officials have offered to increase purchases of American farm goods and energy exports but it remains unclear whether Beijing will give in to US demands for fundamental changes in industrial policy,

which analysts say could weaken the communist party's power. Lighthizer's testimony coincided with other headline-grabbing appearances on Capitol Hill, with Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell and former Trump attorney Michael Cohen also appearing.

But Lighthizer's remark about the remaining work needed in the China negotiations helped send Wall Street lower. Stock prices recovered some of those losses but major indices finished the day mostly lower. "I don't think the market is really taking that seriously," Adam Sarhan of 50 Park Investments said adding that investors were not unduly worried. "It is pulling back after a recent rally." Appearing before the House Ways and Means Committee — which writes tax laws — Lighthizer faced queries during the lengthy hearing from about three dozen lawmakers from across the United States on broad array of matters under negotiation.

“We are making real progress”

'It'll have layers'

Lighthizer said he appreciated the hardships US firms — exporters and importers — have suffered in the trade war, and praised Trump for withstanding the political fallout to pursue a difficult trade policy. "Because of his insight and grit, we are in a position to deal with this problem for the first time after decades of government inaction," he said.

Unlike US trade skirmishes with Canada, Mexico, the European Union and others, the hearing showed there was support for the China confrontation among

chief executive Mike Hawes said in yesterday's statement. "The industry faces myriad challenges, from falling demand in key markets, to escalating global trade tensions and the need to stay at the forefront of future technology. "But the clear and present danger remains the threat of a no-deal Brexit, which is monopolizing time and resources, undermining competitiveness."

Hawes added: "Every day a no-deal Brexit remains a possibility is another day automotive companies pay the price in additional and potentially pointless costs. "No deal must be taken off the table immediately and permanently." Britain is scheduled to leave the EU on March 29, although there has been increasing talk of a possible delay, the exact nature of its departure remains shrouded in uncertainty.

Japanese carmakers Honda and Nissan both recently curbed investment in Britain, citing economic turmoil over Brexit and China, as well as weak diesel demand. Honda announced it will close its UK car plant in south west England in 2022, putting 3,500 jobs at risk. And Nissan has cancelled plans to build its new X-Trail SUV model at its car factory in northeast England.

Elsewhere yesterday Aston Martin, which plays a starring role in the blockbuster films of fictional British spy James Bond, said it was taking action to "mitigate the impact on the business from potential supply chain disruption should the UK withdraw from the European Union without an agreement or in an unstructured manner". The luxury brand also posted a £68.2-million annual loss, but blamed £136 million of costs linked to its London stock market launch in October. But revenues soared by a quarter to almost £1.1 billion, aided by strong volume growth across all regions including China, as the world's appetite for high-end cars appeared to remain undimmed. —AFP



WASHINGTON: Rep Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) (L) talks with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer during a House Ways and Means Committee hearing. —AFP

Democrats and Republicans. "The fact that it's bipartisan is why we're making success," Lighthizer said. He stressed that any agreement must have teeth, and provide for the ability to take "proportional action unilaterally" in the event that China failed to live up to its end of the bargain. "This enforcement process, if we have an agreement... will be very specific," Lighthizer said. "It'll have layers. It'll have timeframes and there will be reaction."

After exchanging punitive tariffs on more than \$360 billion in total two-way trade, Trump and Xi declared a truce in December and agreed to hold off on further tariffs or retaliation for 90 days. The

United States had been poised to more than double the tariffs on the most recent and largest round of Chinese exports on Saturday.

But according to Lighthizer's office, those increases will remain suspended "until further notice." Analysts say the two sides are likely to trumpet mutual agreements to resolve the easier parts of the trade dispute — increasing purchases of American goods, more open investment in China and tougher protections for intellectual property and proprietary technology. The harder parts covering issues like scaling back China's ambitious industrial strategy for global preeminence, are another question. —AFP

UK car output slumps on China slowdown, Brexit

LONDON: The number of cars built in Britain tumbled almost a fifth in January, industry data showed yesterday, rocked by China's slowdown and the threat of a no-deal Brexit. In a gloomy plot twist, James Bond's favourite carmaker Aston Martin revealed plans to set aside up to £30 million (\$40 million, 35 million euros) to help weather potential Brexit disruption.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) meanwhile said UK car production dived 18.2 percent to 120,649 vehicles last month compared with a year earlier. That was the eighth successive monthly decline and marks the latest dose of bad news for Britain's beleaguered car sector. Output destined for China collapsed by 72.3 percent and the European Union by 20 percent, the SMMT revealed. Overall exports tanked 21.4 percent to 93,781 vehicles.

'Clear and present danger'

Britain's largely foreign-owned automobile industry is suffering also because of simmering US-China trade tensions and weak demand for high-polluting diesel cars — which face tighter regulation worldwide. Turning to Brexit, the SMMT urged British Prime Minister Theresa May to take "no deal" off the table "immediately and permanently".

"Another month of decline is a serious concern," SMMT

Indonesia, Australia to sign trade deal

JAKARTA: A long-awaited trade deal between Indonesia and Australia will be signed next week, Jakarta said yesterday, after months of diplomatic tension over Canberra's contentious plan to move its embassy to Jerusalem. Indonesian trade minister Enggartiasto Lukita and his Australian counterpart Simon Birmingham are set to sign the multi-billion-dollar agreement in Jakarta on Monday, according to a trade ministry invitation sent to journalists. The pact will include improved access for Australian cattle and sheep farmers to Indonesia's 260 million people, while Australian universities, health providers and miners will also benefit from easier entry to Southeast Asia's biggest economy. Greater access to the Australian market is expected to spur Indonesia's automotive and textile industries, and boost exports of timber, electronics and medicinal goods. Bilateral trade was worth US\$11.7 billion in 2017. The deal has been in negotiations since 2010 and was expected to be signed before the end of last year but it stalled when Prime Minister Scott Morrison proposed the relocation of Australia's embassy to Jerusalem.

Morrison first floated the shift in October, ahead of a critical by-election in a Sydney suburb with a sizeable Jewish population. Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, was angered by the proposal. Both Israel and the Palestinians claim Jerusalem as their capital. Most nations have avoided moving embassies there to prevent inflaming peace talks on the city's final status — until Trump unilaterally moved the US embassy early last year. —AFP

Sports

Former Olympic, world champion DeGale hangs up his gloves

'Today marks 10 years since my professional debut fight'

LONDON: Former two-time super middleweight world champion James DeGale announced his retirement yesterday days after he took a pummelling from fellow Briton Chris Eubank Junior. The 33-year-old, who as a middleweight won Olympic gold in Beijing in 2008, said he had been on an "amazing journey" but 10 years to the day of his first professional bout was an apt one to hang up his gloves.

De Gale was the first British pugilist to progress from the Olympics to a world title after turning professional. He won the IBF world title belt in the United States in 2015 against Andre Dirrell before defending it three times across the Atlantic.

"Today marks 10 years since my professional debut fight on February 28, 2009 and today is the day I am announcing my retirement from boxing," said DeGale in a statement. "It's been an unbelievable journey and I've had an amazing decade—if I'm honest,

the best years of my life."

DeGale, who lost his world title in an upset points decision to American Caleb Truax in December 2017 before regaining it in a rematch in April the following year, admitted the Eubank bout had exposed to him how far he had fallen as a pugilist.

"It's hard to admit that I'm not the fighter I once was, but I'm human and along the way, my injuries have taken a toll—both on my mind and body and these things have contributed to my performance in the ring," said DeGale.

"I lost the fight on Saturday at the O2 but I'm touched to have a good send-off from the fans in my home city. "I'm proud to say that I've made history as the first ever British Olympian boxer to turn professional and to win a world title.

"I am also proud to have been a road warrior—to travel wherever I needed to be to fight and win. There's nothing left to prove." —AFP



BOSTON: File photo shows James DeGale celebrates his win over Andre Dirrell after their super middleweight fight at Agganis Arena at Boston University on May 23, 2015 in Boston, Massachusetts. —AFP

Australian rugby league gets tough on players and crime

SYDNEY: Australian rugby league authorities announced tough and controversial new rules to crack down on players accused of serious crimes yesterday after a spate of off-field incidents tarnished the game's reputation. Under the regime, players who are charged with serious criminal offences will now be automatically suspended. Previously, they could continue playing while they awaited the outcome of their court cases. St George Illawarra's Jack de Belin, who is facing sexual assault allegations, was on Thursday the first to be banned, although he will still be able to train with the team.

He has pleaded not guilty and concerns have been raised that suspending players could impact their presumption of innocence.

"If we were to shift the policy and stand a player down, we're in dangerous territory," said Rugby League Players Association chief executive Ian Prendergast ahead of the decision.

"We're making that decision with the same set of facts that are before the courts and we've been concerned about the public debate given the very real potential to prejudice the party's right to a fair hearing." But Australian Rugby League Commission chairman Peter Beattie said there must be benchmark set for the sake of the sport. "We've spent a considerable amount of time working on what's in the best interests of rugby league," Beattie said in a statement. "I want to make it clear this is no fault, we're making no judgement whatsoever, in relation to any player charged with any offence. "What we're doing is setting a benchmark and standard for the game of rugby league," he said. "We do have a responsibility of player welfare and we want to have a clear partnership with all clubs. They'll be able to train with the team," he added.

Beattie said serious offences would be deemed anything with a maximum penalty of 11 years in prison or above.

The fate of players charged with an offence carrying a jail term of less than 11 years, including violence against women or children, would be at the discretion of National Rugby League chief executive Todd Greenberg. —AFP

Four talking points ahead of Super Rugby games

WELLINGTON: Four talking points ahead of this week's round of Super Rugby games:

CASE OF THE MISSING ALL BLACKS

Pre-World Cup restrictions limiting All Blacks to 180 minutes on field during the first three rounds have made it difficult for fans in New Zealand to know when they can see the best players in action.

The Otago Highlanders have rested Ben Smith, Aaron Smith and Luke Whitelock for their clash against Melbourne Rebels to ensure their internationals do not break the All Blacks quota. But the Wellington Hurricanes have plenty of All Blacks minutes in reserve and welcome their international trio of Beauden Barrett, TJ Perenara and Ngani Laumape for their match against the ACT Brumbies.

Waikato Chiefs coach Colin Cooper said the arrangement, intended to prevent player burn-out and injuries ahead of the World Cup, was confusing and suggested a simpler approach. "I think they should just cut them (All Blacks) out of the first three games and keep it plain and simple," he told reporters. "Minutes are tough because of injuries. You can have a good plan but injuries always muck that up."

THE TWO FOLAUS

Israel Folau's younger brother John is a step closer to playing alongside his superstar sibling after being picked to appear for the Emerging NSW Waratahs. John, a winger, previously played rugby league with the Parramatta Eels and made one appearance in the format for Tonga. But he switched codes last season and in December was handed a one-year contract by the Tahs. He didn't feature in the pre-season due to injuries, but has now been given his chance to shine for a side featuring promising Waratahs talent against the Auckland Contenders on Friday.

"Now I have the opportunity to play for a team that represents an entire state, which is humbling," the Australia-born player said when signing with the Waratahs. "Attack-wise, I think I can bring something to the team." Big brother Israel last weekend became Australia's highest try-scorer in Super Rugby with a career total of 58 and counting. The Waratahs have a bye this weekend.



File photo shows Wellington Hurricanes players celebrate after winning the match. —AFP

REBELS TACKLE HOMOPHOBIA

The Melbourne Rebels have grabbed attention with their Quade Cooper-inspired play, but have also been doing sterling work off the field trying to eradicate homophobic language in junior teams. The Rebels have teamed up with Monash University in an education programme designed to curb the use of casual homophobic slurs in junior teams after a study found they were regularly banded about. Rebels centre Tom English said the youngsters who used such language often did not realise how hurtful it was. "We've attacked the racism stigma, now we're attacking the homophobic one. When people make those off-the-cuff comments, they don't think that there's one person in the room that it may affect," he told Australia's ABC. "Whether it turns that person away from the game or they go home and feel bad or sorry for themselves, that's not what we're about in sport and as human beings."

'ANGRY' CANES

The euphoria in the Wellington Hurricanes camp after they snatched victory from the NSW Waratahs in round one evaporated quickly against the Canterbury Crusaders when they let in five unanswered tries in the first 42 minutes. A late rally to limit the Crusaders' victory to 38-22 did nothing to improve the mood as the 'Canes singled out Friday's clash with the ACT Brumbies as a chance to regain some respect. "I think there will be some pretty angry players in there (changing room) that think we let ourselves down," coach John Plumtree said. —AFP

Kyrgios topples Nadal to reach Acapulco q-finals

Women's top seed Sloane Stephens stunned by Beatriz Haddad Maia

ACAPULCO: Australia's Nick Kyrgios survived three match points to beat top-seeded Rafael Nadal 3-6, 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (8/6) on Wednesday and reach the quarter-finals of the Mexico Open. It was a bravura finish to a drama-filled match in which Nadal, playing his first tournament since falling to Novak Djokovic in the Australian Open final, had three chances to close it out after taking a 6-3 lead in the third-set tiebreaker.

Kyrgios saved the first with a leaping drop shot, and the second with a net-skimming volley. Nadal was just wide with a passing shot to make it 6-6, double-faulted to give Kyrgios a chance and sailed a backhand long to end the match after three hours and three minutes.

Kyrgios screamed and dropped to the court in celebration—a conclusion that seemed unlikely when he complained to a trainer after the opening set that he was feeling ill but feared the fallout should he retire.

Kyrgios steeled himself to continue, and distractions seemed forgotten as he became absorbed in the battle against the 17-time Grand Slam champion. Down 0-40 in the ninth game of the second set, Kyrgios saved four break points to keep the set on serve and raced to a 5-0 lead in the tiebreaker.

Kyrgios, who received treatment on his lower back before the start of the third, was in trouble

again in the sixth game, but fought off five break points to stay on terms and push it to the decisive tiebreaker.

Kyrgios leveled his head-to-head record with Nadal at 3-3 and will play three-time Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka for a place in the semi-finals. Switzerland's Wawrinka, seeded third, belted 32 winners in a 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 victory over American Steve Johnson.

Women's top seed Sloane Stephens also bowed out Wednesday, stunned by Brazilian qualifier Beatriz Haddad Maia 6-3, 6-3. Haddad Maia's victory over the fourth-ranked American was her first over a top-10 player in seven opportunities.

"It was just a tough match, obviously she played well," said Stephens, who is playing in Acapulco for the first time since winning the 2016 title. "A tough day. But I'm not too sad about it. I'm just going to go back and work some more, practice some more and get ready for Indian Wells."

Haddad Maia, 22, next faces China's Wang Yafan, who was leading Monica Puig 4-1 when the Puerto Rican retired with an injury. Former world number one Victoria Azarenka of Belarus sailed into the quarter-finals, downing Tatjana Maria 6-2, 6-1. Azarenka fired 20 winners to Maria's 10, and took full advantage of the German's 28 unforced errors. —AFP



ACAPULCO: Australian tennis player Nick Kyrgios returns the ball to Spanish tennis player Rafael Nadal (out of frame) during their Mexico ATP 500 Open men's single tennis match in Acapulco, Guerrero state, Mexico on Wednesday. —AFP

Barker stuns Wild to take world scratch title

PRUSZKOW: Britain's Elinor Barker stunned favourite and defending champion Kirsten Wild to win the women's scratch title at the world track cycling championships on Wednesday. Barker sprinted away from her Dutch rival to take gold in the 40-lap (10km) race.

Belgium's Jolien D'Hoore, who was third in 2017

and runner-up in 2018, edged out France's Laurie Berthon for another medal. The medal hopes of contenders Amalie Dideriksen of Denmark and Italy's Martina Fidanza ended when they got caught up in a fall amongst the peloton. Barker, 25, who was second in the race in 2017, won her first world title in 2013 as part of the pursuit team. The Welsh rider is also an Olympic champion having been part of the gold medal team at the 2016 Games in Rio.

The Netherlands won the men's team sprint while Australia claimed victory in the women's version thanks to Kaarle McCulloch and Stephanie Morton. Roy van der Berg, Harrie Lavreysen and Jeffrey Hoogland were close to the world record for the Dutch men in the sprint set at altitude by Germany in Mexico in 2013. —AFP



PRUSZKOW: (L-R) Second placed the Netherlands' Kirsten Wild, winner Britain's Elinor Barker and third placed Belgium's Jolien D'Hoore pose with their medals on the podium during the medal ceremony of the women's scratch competition of the UCI Track Cycling World Championships on Wednesday in Pruszkow, Poland. —AFP

South Africa's Van Niekerk working 'too hard' not to run in Doha

MIDRAND: South African Olympic 400m champion Wayde Van Niekerk said yesterday that he will "probably" compete at the world athletics championships in Doha in September as he returns from injury.

Van Niekerk, who was injured in a touch rugby game at the end of 2017, also paid tribute to fellow South African athlete Caster Semenya and her fight against International Associations of Athletics Federations rules on testosterone levels.

"Caster's super strong. She's fighting for women to have equal rights," he said at an event hosted by his sponsor, T-Systems South Africa, as it renewed their deal for three years in Midrand, south of Pretoria.

On his hopes for Doha, Van Niekerk, a silver medallist at the 2017 world championships in London, said he was "working way too hard to not be there". "I think I'll be there and I think things are going my way. It's going quite good. My team is

very patient with me. I honestly believe I will be there and I will be able to compete quite well," added the 26-year-old runner. "It's a blessing having a team in Doha."

His rehabilitation included time in the United States, Qatar and South Africa. "It's never crossed my mind (that I wouldn't be there)." A video of Van Niekerk running recently appeared on Instagram which Van Niekerk described as "extremely rusty".

"I would have liked my comeback to look better," he said with a smile. Earlier this month Van Niekerk won a 400m race at the provincial Free State championships in central city Bloemfontein in a time of 47:28 seconds, 4:25 sec outside his world record.

It was the first time Van Niekerk had competed since defending his 400m title and finishing second in the 200m final at the 2017 world championships in London. "(But) I'm excited to get back into the mix," he said, refusing to confirm where he would compete next.

"I had a lot of time to sit back and understand the situation I'm going through. I come back stronger... mentally I feel very strong, physically I still need to do work." The Cape Town-born athlete set the world record of 43:03 when winning 400m gold at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. —AFP

Sports

Wagner bags five-wickets as NZ Zealand rip Bangladesh tail

Tamim led an assault on NZ bowlers after being sent in to bat

HAMILTON: A hasty rewrite of the battle plan saw Neil Wagner bag a five-wicket haul as New Zealand ripped through the Bangladesh tail to counter Tamim Iqbal's virtuoso century on day one of the first Test in Hamilton yesterday. Despite Tamim's heroic 126, New Zealand claimed the first-day honours when they reached stumps at 86 without loss in reply to Bangladesh's 234. But for half the day everything had flowed Bangladesh's way as Tamim led an assault on the New Zealand attack after being sent in to bat. The green wicket did not assist swing bowlers Tim Southee and Trent Boult and it took a switch to short-ball specialist Wagner to get results. "As a unit we started assessing how we had to bowl and how we had to try and bring ourselves back into it. I thought we did that really well and obviously got the rewards for it," said Wagner who finished with five for 47 from his barrage of bouncers.

"Tamim obviously batted extremely well and... made it quite hard for us and we had to fight hard to get those wickets." Tamim, Bangladesh's most prolific Test run-scorer of all time, laid the foundations for a potentially huge total when he laid into the bowling.

He cracked 21 fours and a six as he feasted on fruitless New Zealand efforts, led by Southee and Boult, to find the edge of his bat. But there was minimal support, and after Tamim had steered Bangladesh to 180 for four,

his dismissal triggered a collapse where the last six wickets fell for 54 runs.

Liton Das, the last man out, had the second highest score of 29. "I had a very clear plan. If the ball was there to hit, I would try to hit it. Luckily, I got a few boundaries early and then kept on batting the way I liked to bat," said Tamim, who believed Bangladesh left themselves 150 runs short. "It was a very, very good wicket. It was greenish, but it didn't do too much. We should have scored a lot more than what we have put on. We have ourselves to blame." New Zealand had an anxious moment at the start of their reply when Ebadat Hossain, on debut, saw his third ball in Test cricket fly from Tom Latham's bat direct to second slip, but Soumya Sarkar spilled the straightforward chance.

From there Latham and Jeet Raval knuckled down to bat unruffled through to stumps with Raval on 51, his eighth half-century, and Latham on 35. In a productive morning session, Bangladesh went to lunch at 122 for two with Tamim contributing 86, including 15 fours, as he showed that despite the green hue the wicket held no dangers. Wagner in that period took one for 13 off six overs, while Southee had none for 40 off six. One session later and Bangladesh went to tea at 187 for seven with Wagner's figures improving to three for 29 while Southee was still being caned at one for 71.



HAMILTON: Bangladesh's Tamim Iqbal celebrates his century during day one of the first cricket Test match between New Zealand and Bangladesh at Seddon Park in Hamilton yesterday. —AFP

The pair cleaned up the last three wickets immediately after tea with Southee, while expensive, taking three for 76. Colin de Grandhomme only took one wicket but it was the key dismissal of Tamim who

clipped a wide delivery to Kane Williamson at gully. It made up for de Grandhomme's earlier error when he dropped a regulation caught and bowled opportunity from Tamim on 65. —AFP

England beat W Indies in record-smashing ODI

GRENADA: Jos Buttler and Eoin Morgan made centuries before Adil Rashid took four wickets in five balls as England beat West Indies by 29 runs in an astonishing fourth one-day international in Grenada on Wednesday.

Spectators were left ducking for cover as the teams piled up a world record 46 sixes in St. George's — 24 by England and 22 by West Indies.

England's total surpassed the 23 hit by West Indies in the first game last week, while the combined tally bettered the 38 sixes hit by India and Australia in Bengaluru in 2013.

Buttler smashed 12 sixes in his 150, from only 77 balls, while Morgan was almost subdued by comparison, compiling 103 from 88 balls as England scored 418 for six off their 50 overs.

West Indies impressively chased the target with opener Chris Gayle, who hoisted 14 sixes and passed 10,000 ODI career runs, smashing 162 from 97 balls.

Gayle's innings meant West Indies were ahead of the required run-rate for much of their chase and looked capable of achieving a remarkable victory.

It took a fine spell by fast bowler Mark Wood (4-60) and a match-winning 48th over by leg-spinner Rashid (5-85) to seal victory as West Indies were dismissed for 389, their highest one-day score.

The victory gave England a 2-1 lead in the series, which lost a game when rain washed out Monday's third match in Grenada.

"Tonight was such a close game it could have gone either way," a relieved Morgan said. "Helluva game of cricket. It almost needed something special to win us the game with the ball and that was Adil Rashid alongside Mark Wood.

"Collectively as a group we battled brilliantly. Jos is built like a champion racehorse and when he gets out in his stride he's very difficult to stop.

"Watching him in full flow today was exceptional." West Indies captain Jason Holder said his team's batting attitude had been "not



GRENADA: Mark Wood (L) of England celebrates the dismissal of Shal Hope (R) of West Indies during the 4th ODI between West Indies and England at Grenada National Cricket Stadium, Saint George's, Grenada, on Wednesday. —AFP

to die wondering".

"We knew what run rate we had to keep up with and it was just a matter for us to just keep going and be fearless," he said, paying tribute to 39-year-old Gayle, who will retire from one-day internationals after the World Cup in England.

"To get 10,000 runs in any format of cricket is a great achievement. It's unfortunate he has announced his retirement (because) he seems to be getting better with age." The final match of the series will be in St. Lucia tomorrow. —Reuters

Women cricketers get on Lord's honours board

MELBOURNE: Women cricketers will now feature on the iconic Lord's honours board after the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) decided to highlight individual performances from one-day internationals. Earlier, only players who made a century or took a five-wicket haul in men's test matches were officially recorded within the dressing rooms, but changes have been made as part of the 135-year-old MCC's refurbishment drive at Lord's ahead of 2019 season.

Accordingly, Anya Shrubsole's sensational figures of 6-46 which helped England beat India in the 2017 World Cup final, are now on the bowlers' board. Australia's Lisa Keightley and England's Claire Taylor, Sarah Taylor and Caroline Atkins are the first women's players to see their names recognised for ODI centuries.

"We are delighted to now be able to recognise the same achievements for One-Day Internationals as we have done for Test Matches for many years," MCC chief executive and secretary Guy Lavender said in a statement. "This is a landmark moment for Lord's, with women's cricket now documented in the dressing rooms for the first time." The Honours Boards are amongst the most popular attractions for the many visitors to the Home of Cricket. There is a huge amount of prestige for players to see their name inscribed in history, so it is appropriate for a new installation of the boards to take place. —Reuters

Sports

Dwyane Wade buzzer-beater lifts Heat past Warriors

James puts up 33 as Lakers edge Pelicans

MIAMI: Dwyane Wade banked in a miracle shot—a 3-pointer at the buzzer off of one leg—as the host Miami Heat shocked the two-time defending NBA champion Golden State Warriors 126-125 on Wednesday night. Goran Dragic had 27 points off the Miami bench, Wade finished with 25 points in a reserve role, and Josh Richardson scored 21. The Heat snapped their six-game home losing streak, and they did it two nights after losing to the team with the worst record in the NBA, the Phoenix Suns. Dragic scored 20 of his points in the second quarter Wednesday, when Miami led by as many as 24 points. That was the highest-scoring quarter of Dragic's career. Klay Thompson led Golden State with 36 points, Kevin Durant had 29 and Steph Curry added 24. Draymond Green fouled out and was held to five points.

TRAIL BLAZERS 97, CELTICS 92

Damian Lillard scored 33 points and Maurice Harkless added 17 as visiting Portland continued to cruise through its East Coast road trip with a victory against Boston, which lost its fourth straight. Jusuf Nurkic added 16 points as the Trail Blazers improved to 4-0 on their seven-game trip. It was their fifth consecutive victory overall and it came one day after eight Portland players were trapped in an elevator for 30 minutes while at practice at nearby Emerson College. Kyrie Irving scored 31 points for the Celtics, who went 5-6 in February. Irving's scoring outburst came after he scored just seven points in a loss at Toronto on Tuesday.

BUCKS 141, KINGS 140 (OT)

Eric Bledsoe opened overtime with a 3-point basket, and Nikola Mirotic added another two minutes later, allowing visiting Milwaukee to pull away from Sacramento and post its 12th win in 13 games despite limiting star Giannis Antetokounmpo to 24 minutes due to a sore right knee. Bledsoe paced the Bucks with 26 points, 12 rebounds and 13 assists for the fifth triple-double of his career. Antetokounmpo

scored 17. Sacramento's Buddy Hield led all scorers with 32 points. The Kings played the fourth quarter and overtime without rookie standout Marvin Bagley III, who injured his left knee in the final minute of the third period.

ROCKETS 118, HORNETS 113

James Harden scored 30 points, and Clint Capela had 23 points and 17 rebounds as Houston won its third straight game with a narrow victory at Charlotte. The Rockets let a 15-point, first-half lead slip away completely and had to come from 12 down in the second half. They ultimately seized control with a 13-0 run in the fourth quarter and salted the game away on two free throws by Harden with 14.6 seconds remaining. Chris Paul added 17 points and 10 assists for the Rockets, and Gerald Green and PJ Tucker scored 15 apiece. The Hornets, who lost for the fifth time in their past six games, were led by Kemba Walker with 35 points.

LAKERS 125, PELICANS 119

LeBron James had 33 points and 10 assists as host Los Angeles held off New Orleans. It was the first game in which James and Anthony Davis faced each other since Davis publicly demanded a trade late last month with the Lakers reportedly being his top choice for a new team. Davis, who sat out the Pelicans' 128-115 victory against Los Angeles last Saturday in New Orleans, had 22 points in 21 minutes Wednesday. Brandon Ingram scored 23 points, Kyle Kuzma added 22, and former Pelican Rajon Rondo had 11 points and 16 rebounds as Los Angeles won for the second time in six games. Former Laker Julius Randle led the Pelicans with 35 points.

SPURS 105, PISTONS 93

LaMarcus Aldridge scored 24 points, and San Antonio defeated visiting Detroit to snap a three-game losing streak. DeMar DeRozan and Marco Belinelli added 17 points each for the Spurs, who won for just the second time in their past nine games. White hit for 15 points, and



MIAMI: Stephen Curry #30 of the Golden State Warriors drives to the basket against the Miami Heat on Wednesday at American Airlines Arena in Miami, Florida. — AFP

Jakob Poeltl and Patty Mills scored 11 points apiece for San Antonio, which returned home from its arduous Rodeo Road Trip with a victory. Reggie Jackson led the Pistons with 22 points, Blake Griffin added 17 points, and Andre Drummond contributed 10 points and 17 rebounds for Detroit. The Pistons had a three-game win streak snapped.

JAZZ 111, CLIPPERS 105

Donovan Mitchell scored 32 points while Rudy Gobert added 20 points and 13 rebounds to lead Utah over Los Angeles in Salt Lake City. Derrick Favors and Ricky Rubio added 13 points apiece for the Jazz, and Favors grabbed 11 rebounds. Utah won its fourth straight home game after overcoming early shooting struggles. Lou Williams and Danilo Gallinari scored 18 points apiece to lead the Clippers. Montrezl Harrell added 16 for Los Angeles, and Patrick Beverley had 12 points and 10 boards.

MAVERICKS 110, PACERS 101

Rookie Jalen Brunson drilled a clinching 3-pointer with 1:03 to play, and Dallas beat visiting Indiana. Brunson finished with a career-best 24 points on 9-of-14 shooting, and he added five assists and three steals. Rookie teammate Luka Doncic scored 26 points, including a deep 3-pointer with 2:02 to go for a 103-96 lead. Bojan Bogdanovic led Indiana with 22 points but managed just four points in the fourth quarter. Wesley Matthews, in his return to Dallas since being traded prior to the deadline, contributed 20 points, including two late 3-pointers.

HAWKS 131, TIMBERWOLVES 123 (OT)

Rookie Trae Young matched a career high by scoring 36 points for the second straight game as host Atlanta rallied to beat Minnesota.

John Collins added 34 points on 13-of-21 shooting as the Hawks avenged squandering a 22-point lead in a 123-120 overtime loss to Minnesota on Dec. 28. Karl-Anthony Towns finished with 37 points on 12-for-19 shooting from the field and added 18 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who fell to 9-22 on the road this season after dropping the opener of the three-game trek. Andrew Wiggins had 21 points for Minnesota, Derrick Rose had 18 and former Georgia Tech star Josh Okogie chipped in with 15 while playing in front of family and friends in attendance.

WIZARDS 125, NETS 116

Bradley Beal scored 31 points as Washington overcame a sluggish start in the opening minutes and rolled past host Brooklyn, snapping a four-game losing streak and winning for the fourth time in 13 games. The Wizards gave up the game's first 10 points but wound up leading for the final 38:20. Trevor Ariza added 14 of his 23 in the third quarter when Washington outscored the Nets by a 33-19 margin. D'Angelo Russell scored 28 points and had seven assists for Brooklyn, which lost for the fourth time in its past six home games. The Nets heard some boos from fans after the final buzzer.

BULLS 109, GRIZZLIES 107

Zach LaVine scored 30 points on 12-for-19 shooting to help Chicago win at Memphis. Lauri Markkanen contributed 22 points and 10 rebounds for the Bulls in his fourth straight double-double and 10th consecutive 20-point outing. Otto Porter Jr. scored 20 points as the Bulls won for the fourth time in five games. Avery Bradley recorded 23 points and seven assists and Mike Conley scored 21 despite a 7-for-21 shooting effort for the Grizzlies. — Reuters

NBA results/standings

LA Lakers 125, New Orleans 119; San Antonio 105, Detroit 93; Dallas 110, Indiana 101; Atlanta 131, Minnesota 123 (OT); Boston 92, Portland 97; Brooklyn 116, Washington 125; Miami 126, Golden State 125; Sacramento 140, Milwaukee 141 (OT); Utah 111, LA Clippers 105; Memphis 107, Chicago 109; Charlotte 113, Houston 118.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference				
W	L	PCT	GB	W	L	PCT	GB	
Milwaukee	47	14	0.770	-	Golden State	43	18	0.705
Toronto	45	17	0.726	2.5	Denver	42	18	0.700
Indiana	40	22	0.645	7.5	Oklahoma City	38	22	0.633
Philadelphia	39	22	0.639	8	Portland	38	23	0.623
Boston	37	25	0.597	10.5	Houston	36	25	0.590
Brooklyn	32	31	0.508	16	Utah	34	26	0.567
Detroit	29	31	0.483	17.5	San Antonio	34	29	0.540
Charlotte	28	33	0.459	19	LA Clippers	34	29	0.540
Orlando	28	34	0.452	19.5	Sacramento	31	30	0.508
Miami	27	33	0.450	19.5	LA Lakers	30	31	0.492
Washington	25	36	0.410	22	Minnesota	29	32	0.475
Atlanta	21	41	0.339	26.5	Dallas	27	34	0.443
Chicago	17	45	0.274	30.5	New Orleans	27	36	0.429
Cleveland	14	47	0.230	33	Memphis	24	39	0.381
New York	13	48	0.213	34	Phoenix	12	50	0.194

Sports

Leaders Liverpool face derby test as title race heats up

Derby day in London too as Tottenham host Arsenal

MANCHESTER: Premier League leaders Liverpool will need to maintain their excellent recent record against Everton in Sunday's Merseyside derby if they are to hold their advantage over second-placed Manchester City. Liverpool are unbeaten in 18 matches against their neighbours - separated only by a park - since a defeat in October 2018, and the current 33-point gap tells its own story.

Juergen Klopp's side has laboured and drawn too many games of late, allowing City to come within one point, but the Reds were back to their devastating best on Wednesday, crushing Watford 5-0 at Anfield. "The win gives us more confidence," said Senegalese striker Sadio Mane who scored twice.

"We know playing against Everton is never easy. But we are a great team and we are used to playing this kind of game." Everton ended a run of three defeats with a 3-0 victory at Cardiff City on Tuesday, but Marco Silva's side will need the performance of their season to create an upset at Goodison Park.

Liverpool's single point lead may have vanished by then after Manchester City's trip to Bournemouth tomorrow. Belgian midfielder Kevin de Bruyne says it is vital Pep Guardiola's side, who won the League Cup on Sunday and are still in the FA Cup and Champions League,

do not over-think their workload.

"The schedule is so tough. We are there in every competition and playing well and winning so we just need to keep going," he said. "If you come here and don't enjoy the pressure it's better to leave." Eddie Howe's Bournemouth are without a win in four games.

The North London derby may not have title implications, after Tottenham's defeats to Burnley and Chelsea left them nine points off top, but with fourth-placed Arsenal just four points behind Mauricio Pochettino's side there is plenty at stake. "It's never easy to be positive after a defeat ... it will be tough but we need to move on quickly and try to be ready to compete tomorrow," said the Argentine manager. "It's always important and the fixture is so tough for us but we need to be sure we are going to be ready to compete at our best," he said.

Arsenal have won their last three games including Wednesday's 5-1 crushing of Bournemouth. Injury-hit Manchester United host lowly Southampton at Old Trafford after maintaining their unbeaten league record under caretaker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer with a 3-1 win at Crystal Palace on Wednesday.

With a number of absentees, the Norwegian could give a start to 17-year-old James Garner who made his debut with a substitute appear-



LIVERPOOL: Watford's Spanish midfielder Gerard Deulofeu (L) vies with Liverpool's Dutch midfielder Georginio Wijnaldum (R) during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Watford at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England on Wednesday. Liverpool won the game 5-0. — AFP

ance at Selhurst Park. "We've been waiting for that chance. Of course, now with Nemanja (Matic) and Ander (Herrera) injured, there'll be more chances for Jimmy. We might even see him

on Saturday against Southampton again," he said. New Leicester boss Brendan Rodgers will take charge of the Foxes for the first time on Sunday at his former club Watford. — Reuters

Juventus face younger, more versatile Napoli

MILAN: Napoli coach Carlo Ancelotti is convinced his team can still compete with dominant Juventus-although it may not be this season.

Thirteen points clear at the top of Serie A, Juventus visit second-placed Napoli for what over the last few seasons has become the outstanding Serie A fixture and, more often than not, a top-of-the-table clash.

Juve's lead is so commanding that even a Napoli win is unlikely to knock them off course for an eighth successive title, something which may have taken some of the sting out of the bitter north-south rivalry which surrounds the fixture. The Turin side will also have more than half an eye on the second leg of their Champions League last-16 tie against Atletico Madrid 10 days later when they will try to overturn a 2-0 deficit.

They may also be without Serie A top-scorer Cristiano Ronaldo who suffered a knock on his left ankle in Sunday's 1-0 win over Bologna.

"The table doesn't lie, it is partly to Juve's credit and partly due to our failings," Napoli coach Carlo Ancelotti told *Il Stampa* on Thursday. "Juventus will come here to wrap up the Scudetto race by exploiting their char-

acteristics: solid defence, counterattack, competitive spirit, speed. There are no secrets between these two teams."

Even so, it promises to be a fascinating match, not least because Napoli still have to chance to stop Juventus repeating their feat of 2011-12 when they won the title unbeaten.

It is also an intriguing test for Ancelotti who has gradually rebuilt the side he inherited from Maurizio Sarri last May.

Napoli can still produce the fluid game which was a hallmark of Sarri but Ancelotti's approach is less dogmatic.

He has been more willing than Sarri to give younger players such as Kevin Malcuit, Fabian Ruiz, Adam Ounas and Piotr Zielinski a run in the team and keener to vary Napoli's tactics-their defence, in particular, has improved noticeably. The team which starts on Sunday may have only four or five survivors from the side who won 1-0 in Turin in April-the last time Juventus lost a Serie A match.

As Ancelotti pointed out, Napoli have not done badly this season, winning 17 out of 25 league games, but simply have not been able to keep up with the relentless pace set by Juventus, who have dropped only six points.

He compared Napoli owner Aurelio De Laurentiis to Silvio Berlusconi who was AC Milan's owner when Ancelotti enjoyed a successful spell there between 2001 and 2009.

"De Laurentiis is similar to Berlusconi in that he runs the company like a big family. And I feel like one of the family," he said.

"Winning at Napoli is an unfulfilled wish and, sooner or later, it will happen. I am sure about that." — Reuters

Victory can save season, says Sarri after Kepa axed

LONDON: Maurizio Sarri believes Chelsea's crucial 2-0 win over Tottenham can save their season after his decision to drop Wembley rebel Kepa Arrizabalaga paid off on Wednesday. Pedro's second half strike and a farcical own goal from Kieran Trippier were a much-needed boost for Sarri as the Chelsea manager fights to avoid the sack following a turbulent first season in charge.

Sarri's standing had been severely undermined by Kepa after the rebellious keeper sparked an astonishing meltdown from the Italian when he refused to be substituted during Sunday's League Cup final.

Sarri was furious when Kepa ignored his decision to take him off after he required treatment for cramp in the closing stages of their penalty shoot-out defeat to Manchester City. Kepa apologised for his behaviour, but the 24-year-old was punished with a fine of one week's wages before Sarri attempted to regain control of his squad by selecting Argentine veteran Willy Caballero in his place at Stamford Bridge.

Caballero kept a confident clean-sheet while Kepa languished on the bench and Chelsea produced a committed display that suggested Sarri's players still back their beleaguered boss. With Arsenal and Manchester

United both winning on Wednesday, Chelsea remain in sixth place-three points outside the top four-but there is now a little hope for Sarri after a difficult period.

Asked if the result could be a springboard for a positive end to the season, Sarri said: "We hope so. Most important we need the consistency of performances and results. "It was really very important because we are fighting for the top four."

Sarri revealed Kepa would still be his first choice goalkeeper going forward and he insisted he was never concerned about the mounting sense of crisis around his club. "The problem wasn't so big as you write. In this job you are under pressure every day, or if you are lucky every six weeks," he said.

"Kepa made a big mistake and then paid with the club. In this match he has to pay for the team. It was only a message for all the team. "Now we stop the question, it is behind us and in the future Kepa will be with us."

Successive defeats at Burnley and now against their bitter London rivals have left third placed Tottenham's title bid in tatters. They have lost four consecutive away matches in all competitions for the first time in 10 years and lie nine points adrift of leaders Liverpool.—AFP

Sports

Suarez double sends Barca past Real Madrid and into Copa del Rey final

We are sad, we wanted to play in the final: Solari

MADRID: Luis Suarez scored twice on Wednesday as Barcelona inflicted another defeat on Real Madrid to move within touching distance of winning a record fifth consecutive Copa del Rey. Madrid were the better side for at least half of a wild Clasico at the Santiago Bernabeu but three goals conceded in 28 chaotic, second-half minutes sent Barca through to the final with a 3-0 victory, 4-1 on aggregate.

Suarez would have had a hat-trick had Raphael Varane not beaten him on the line to Ousmane Dembele's cross, Varane's own-goal coming between the Uruguayan's smart finish and a mischievously chipped penalty. He now has 11 goals in 13 games against Madrid.

"We have other players apart from Leo Messi that can score goals," Barca coach Ernesto Valverde said. "Luis' numbers are incredible, historic for Barca. We know he is always there." By then, Barca were coasting and after thrashing Madrid 5-1 at the Camp Nou in October, they will return for Saturday's La Liga game boasting an accumulative score of 9-2 from the clubs' three meetings this season.

But this was not the humiliation of four months ago and if the result can be put to one side, Santiago Solari might take heart from the handful of golden opportunities his team wasted before their opponents began their spree. "We are sad, we wanted to play in the final," Solari said. "But we got out with our heads held high, we did everything we could but we didn't take our chances, and they did." Vinicius Junior was most guilty, the 18-year-old showing his both his

talent and youth in equal measure. Gareth Bale, left on the bench again, might have wondered what he would have done with some of the chances that went begging.

There was a scattering of whistles for Bale when he came on with just over 20 minutes left but there was little he could do about Barcelona quickly extending their lead from one goal to three. For Valverde's side, a record sixth consecutive Copa del Rey final, with either Valencia or Real Betis, who play on Thursday, awaiting them on May 25.

After beating Sevilla 4-2 on Sunday, the Catalans appear to have rediscovered their groove. "It was a complete performance," said Suarez. "We knew it would have to be."

The first half was a scrap, full of heavy touches and lunging challenges with a handful of chances to counter-attack squandered by loose passes. Ivan Rakitic plunged into Casemiro and Toni Kroos charged into Lionel Messi. Vinicius offered the best moments down the left, terrorising Barca's backline but failing to find a finishing touch. He wanted a penalty for a clumsy challenge by Nelson Semedo but the contact was probably not enough, and then three chances were passed up.

First, he fired over after his opponents backed off and then was sent clear through a gap vacated by Gerard Pique, who had lost the ball upfield. A heavy touch took Vinicius wide and while he squared for Karim Benzema, Marc-Andre ter Stegen made the block with his foot. Soon after, he shot high again from six yards, before beck-



MADRID: Barcelona's Spanish midfielder Sergio Busquets (R) vies with Real Madrid's Croatian midfielder Luka Modric during the Spanish Copa del Rey (King's Cup) semi-final second leg football match between Real Madrid and Barcelona at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on Wednesday. — AFP

oning the groaning crowd by swinging his arms. Barca should have capitalised on a wayward Sergio Reguilon backpass but otherwise they, and Lionel Messi, were a little flat, lacking either the precision or spark to create a clear chance.

Then, with their first one they scored. Dembele made it, drifting Dani Carvajal one way be-

fore darting the other and pulling the ball back for Suarez to squeeze inside the near post. Madrid came again. Reguilon's header drew another excellent save from Ter Stegen and Vinicius left three Barca defenders sprawled on the floor but could not complete a mesmeric run with a finish. —AFP

'We can do better', says Guardiola as City stay in title hunt

MANCHESTER: Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola accepted his side "can be better" after a 1-0 win over West Ham at the Etihad on Wednesday kept them in the hunt to retain their Premier League title and a remarkable quadruple of trophies. Just days after a penalty shoot-out win over Chelsea at Wembley saw City to victory in the League Cup final, Guardiola's men were indebted to a 59th-minute spot-kick from Sergio Aguero for a victory that left the English champions a point behind leaders Liverpool.

With the League Cup already in their trophy cabinet, a City side also still involved in the FA Cup and Champions League could yet end the season having won a remarkable four major pieces of silverware in the one campaign.

They didn't make life easy for themselves on Wednesday and were indebted to what West Ham manager Manuel Pellegrini labelled a "soft" penalty, awarded when Felipe Anderson made con-

tact with City substitute Bernardo Silva, for giving Aguero the chance to score the lone goal.

"We played so well. You see the result, 1-0, you think it could be better," said Guardiola. "Of course we created an incredible amount of chances. "The first five minutes could be 2-0, with three clear chances. But the performance in the way we defended second balls, we did everything. After 120 minutes (against Chelsea), the tension we played with was amazing. We made an incredible performance. I'm so delighted with the way we play."

Guardiola added: "We could have scored a second one, it could have been easy. Unfortunately it was so demanding. "Every three days is tough. We can better. If we scored the second or third goal but we played a really good game."

Meanwhile Pellegrini, who led City to the title in 2014, was adamant Anderson should not have been penalised for the contact he made with Bernardo Silva. "To be generous, it was a little soft," said Pellegrini. "That is too generous really. It was not a penalty."

The Chilean added: "I'm not happy with the result because it was not a penalty. Bernardo Silva threw himself down when he felt a touch. "Lanzini had the same thing but didn't go down, so the referee didn't whistle. w "They didn't score another goal, we defended very well. (Lukasz) Fabianski's first save was in minute 61 and after that they only had a couple of chances. You don't normally see Man City in the last four minutes trying to delay the game to finish 1-0." —Reuters

Man Utd beat Palace

LONDON: Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was glad to see Romelu Lukaku making the most of playing in his favoured central striker role with two goals in Manchester United's 3-1 win at Crystal Palace on Wednesday.

Lukaku has been asked to fill in on the flanks in recent weeks, with caretaker United manager Solskjaer preferring to employ Marcus Rashford through the middle. But with Rashford not fully fit and named amongst the substitutes at Selhurst Park, Lukaku was restored to his preferred position and responded with a goal in each half to complete a win that maintained Solskjaer's unbeaten run in the Premier League to 11 games since he took charge in mid-December.

And the manager, himself a former United striker, was in no doubt that the positional switch had played a key role in Belgium international Lukaku scoring his first goals in 10 appearances. "He was through the middle today, we created chances for him, he put them away well," said Solskjaer. "He's done loads of running up and down the line, right wing, left wing, he's had a different role because of Rashford's form of course. "Today he got a chance up front, two very good finishes, could have had another one as well earlier on, so very pleased for Rom, he is

a quality finisher."

Solskjaer added he had been impressed by the player's attitude during a period when he has slipped down the pecking order at the club—a situation he also had to endure during his own playing days at Old Trafford.

"He's a professional boy, a good boy, it's great to have him in and around the place, always happy, always working on his finishing," said Solskjaer. "I think he's played more than you think actually, but he's played wide right, wide left, so it's Rash's form that has moved him out there, now with Rash's injury he grabbed the chance." Victory in south London kept United on the fringes of the top four and Solskjaer said had been concerned about the prospect of facing Palace after a testing run of fixtures including the Champions League first-leg clash with Paris Saint-Germain, the FA Cup win against Chelsea and the drawn Premier League clash with leaders Liverpool. Asked to explain the secret behind his side's run of eight successive away wins, Solskjaer—an increasingly strong favourite to succeed sacked former United manager Jose Mourinho on a permanent basis—replied: "I explain it by having good players and preparing well for the games, tactically.—AFP



PRUSZKOW: Britain's Elinor Barker celebrates on the podium after winning the women's scratch competition of the UCI Track Cycling World Championships on Wednesday in Pruszkow, Poland. — AFP

Barker stuns Wild to take world scratch title

See Page 43