

Friday Times

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6 Handmade 'choola', girgian boxes unique to Kuwaiti homes in Ramadan



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Ramadan KAREEM

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Fajr	03:31
Dhur	11:44
Asr	15:20
Magrib	18:30
Isha	19:55

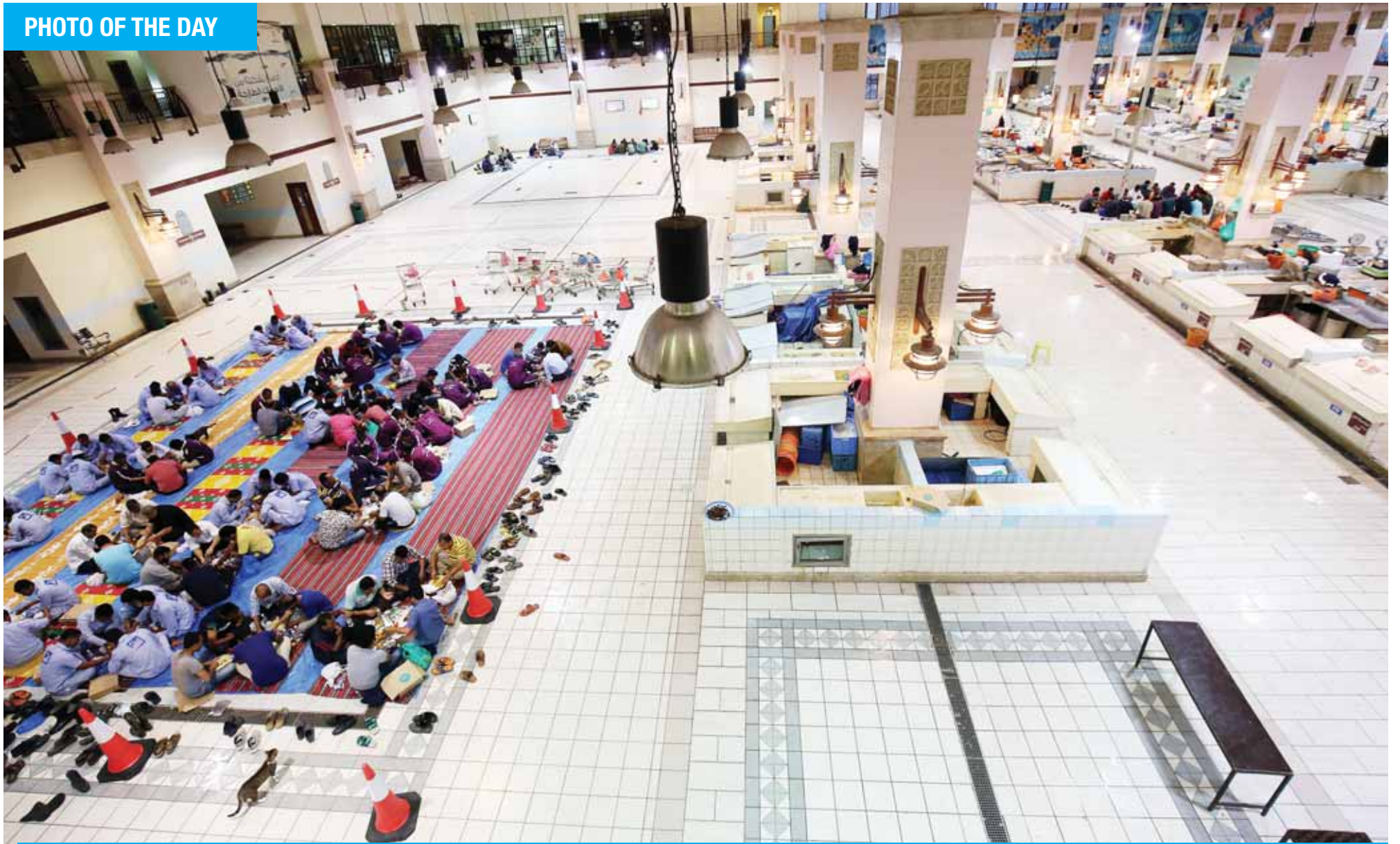


Ramadan scenes from the souq

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Local

PHOTO OF THE DAY



KUWAIT: Workers break their fast at the fish market in Sharq during the holy month of Ramadan. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Eating during daytime in Ramadan

Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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With the beginning of Ramadan, the information department of the interior ministry in Kuwait reminded the public of the importance of respecting the feelings of all fasting people by not eating openly during daytime, whether on the street, public places or workplaces. Law no. (44/1968) stipulates imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month and a fine not exceeding KD 100 or one of these two penalties for violators.

According to the law, any person who is forced, instigated or assisted in such an action may be subjected to the penalty of closing of the store which is used for this purpose for a period not exceeding two months.

This law, which has been on the books for years, became a matter of debate this year among some people, while the MoI stressed the importance of preserving the

sanctity of this holy month by observing public order, respecting the feelings of fasting Muslims, not going against the customs and traditions prevalent in society and the need to refrain from eating during the daytime in Ramadan.

A number of clerics believe that workers whose jobs are under the sun can eat and drink if fasting will cause harm to them. They should preferably do this discreetly to respect the sanctity of this month and take into consideration the feelings of fasting people.

However, there is a clear difference between many clerics about breaking the fast. Some people reject this view even for workers, and call for workers to work only at nighttime. This issue has become a subject of debate not only in Kuwait, but also in Tunisia, about the right to refrain from fasting. Some insist on this right, while others reject it.

In 2018, some young Tunisians carried out a protest, considering abstaining from fasting as an individual liberty, drinking water and smoking cigarettes openly in order to assert their right to break the fast without fear.

In another example, the Egyptian government launched security campaigns in 2009, 2014 and 2016 to counter the phenomenon of people breaking the fast, resulting in the

arrest of dozens of citizens. They were freed after paying a fine of 50 pounds.

But a large number of Arab countries, including Kuwait, impose a penalty on those who openly break the fast in Ramadan, ranging from fines to imprisonment. I believe that such matters should be based on public morality, whether there is a law or not, but we must take into consideration that we are also home to many non-Muslim expats.

We cannot require them not to drink or eat during the day in Ramadan, but perhaps it is better not to eat during the day openly so as not to cause arguments or go to jail. Non-Muslim people need to respect the feelings of fasting Muslims and should not deliberately drink and eat in front of them.

I believe that it is necessary to verify the identity of the person in case they are caught doing such an action in order to maintain social peace and stability.

I want to alert all non-Muslims on the importance of taking this matter seriously so as not to be exposed to problems and avoid eating and drinking publicly during the daytime in Ramadan. The government must punish companies that deploy workers during the day because of the extreme heat and risks involved.

Kuwait Times

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Local



Business is booming in Ramadan



For food merchants around Kuwait, business is always booming in Ramadan. Other businesses also flourish as shoppers look for many different things to buy during the holy month. Whether it is vegetables, dates, meats, groceries, sweets, the 'fanoos' or traditional lantern and other decorative items, people can always find what they need as markets typically stay open well past midnight throughout the holy month.

— Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and Joseph Shagra



Local





Handmade 'choola', girgian boxes unique to Kuwaiti homes in Ramadan

By Ben Garcia

Ramadan generates higher revenues for businesses, not just for food items, but also non-food products like 'choolas' (braziers) and girgian boxes. Stoves and cooking ranges are the bestselling non-food items during Ramadan, as they are frequently used in Kuwaiti households. The handmade 'choola' is unique to many Kuwaiti homes. Like girgian boxes, the choola is handmade, and decorated with beautiful designs.

"I have got many orders from companies and individuals ahead of Ramadan. For us, Ramadan is something unique and special," said Adnan Tinwala, a shop owner at Souq Safafeer (tin market) in Kuwait City. "Our sales are increasing every Ramadan - by 30 percent to even 100 percent," he said.

Girgian boxes are ordered a few months before Ramadan by many retailers. "We need to deliver the girgian boxes one or two weeks before Ramadan so that they can be displayed," Tinwala said. Girgian bags are known to many children in Kuwait, but girgian boxes are used by adults to store girgian gifts. "Kids are into smaller bags of gifts, but adults want it bigger. The boxes are colorfully designed. Those ordering such boxes are private companies and government ministries," he said. "The bigger the box, the higher the price - small girgian boxes will cost you KD 3, while

larger boxes cost around KD 15."

The boxes are made of wood and corrugated tin, and embellished with designs distinct to Kuwait. "The design and combination of colors are unique to Kuwait - they are very Kuwaiti and popular," Tinwala added. His shop is known to some in the market by the name of his father Sameer. "He is into the electrical and construction supply business. Eight years ago, my father added this business. I've been running this shop for the last six years, one year after I graduated from college in India," he told Kuwait Times.

Adnan admires his father because of his never-say-die attitude. Sameer started working in Kuwait as a carpenter in the wood-working industry in Shuwaikh industrial area. One day, his friend offered him a shop, which he stocked with electrical and construction products. Sameer still runs that shop. Eight years ago, he diversified his business by opening the box workshop in Souq Safafeer, a traditional iron and tin market in Kuwait City.

Souq Safafeer's history can be traced back to the early 1950s. It eventually became known to many in Kuwait as a popular destination for people seeking corrugated tin, iron or stainless steel products like braziers, cargo trunks, storage lockers, barbecue stands, cooking pots and even caskets for the dead.



KUWAIT: Adnan Tinwala works on a handmade 'choola' at his shop in Souq Safafeer.





Local

Amir receives Saudi Minister of State; phone call from Oman Deputy Premier



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Saudi Minister of State and Saudi cabinet member Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahad Al-Saud. — Amiri Diwan photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Saudi Minister of State and Saudi cabinet member Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahad Al-Saud.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, with the attendance of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, received on Wednesday the visiting Saudi Minister of State and Saudi cabinet member Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahad Al-Saud and his accompanying delegation. The Saudi minister

congratulated His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince on the holy month of Ramadan. Deputy Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and several sheikhs attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a phone call from Omani Deputy Prime Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sayyid Fahad bin Mahmoud Al-Said on Wednesday. During the conversation, the Omani senior official expressed his best wishes for His Highness the Amir, and the peoples of Kuwait and Oman, as well as the en-

tire Muslim nation on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan. His Highness the Amir thanked the Omani Deputy Prime Minister for the kind call, expressing hope for even closer ties between the two sisterly countries and wishing the Sultanate of Oman more prosperity under the wise leadership of Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al-Said. —KUNA

Kuwait calls for self-restraint in Libya

NEW YORK: Kuwait reiterated its appeal to warning parties in Libya to practice self-restraint and respect international humanitarian law; not to target civilians and civic installations, as well as return to the UN-sponsored political dialogue. This came in a speech by Kuwait's acting permanent Representative to the UN Counselor Bader Al-Munayikh at the Security Council session on the briefing by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Libya. Munayikh praised the ICC efforts in achieving justice and ensuring impunity in accordance with international law, as well as lauding the important role by the chairman of Libyan UN Support Mission Special Representative of the Secretary General in Libya Ghassan Salame in applying humanitarian truce to stop the fighting and ensure humanitarian aid reaches those in need. He added that the great responsibility for justice lies within the Libyan authorities through their sovereignty and jurisdiction according to the first article of the Rome Statute. He also welcomed the assistance provided by some countries, as well as by regional and international organizations.

Separately, Kuwait underlined the importance for all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure the unity, stability and territorial in-

tegrity of the country through the respect of its national constitution and judiciary. In a speech on the country's state of affairs, Kuwait's representative at the United Nations called on factions there to ensure the implementation of the Dayton peace accord and relevant Security Council resolutions.

Putting an end to its three-and-a-half year war, Talal Al-Fassam said the agreement remains the "foundation" for Bosnia and Herzegovina's institutional stability and sustained peace. On this, he commended the country's various ethnic communities, led by the European Union, for their efforts in attaining stability. He also welcomed positive developments assumed by the country in advancing on some of its Euro-Atlantic integration commitments and its adoption of tax laws that have led to the completion of the IMF review. These accomplishments will undoubtedly reflect positively on its security and stability, and support the necessary reforms for European integration, he suggested.

In the meantime, Fassam expressed Kuwait's concern regarding the continued escalation of provocative rhetoric and divisive statements, urging politicians to uphold the people's national interests above all other considerations. Adopting a "narrow" focus on the interests of one ethnic minority over the other "undermines the opportunity for progress and stability," he said. Therefore, he urged political parties to form a government and ministerial council as quick as possible, and for the parliament to adopt laws enabling the judiciary to tackle organized crime, corruption and fundamentalism. — KUNA

Zain partners with MyHome app

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced the signing of a partnership agreement with MyHome, a leading Kuwaiti mobile application for maintenance services. Through this partnership, Zain offers its customers who use the app with an exclusive discount of 15 percent during the period from 1 - 31 May 2019.

Zain's partnership with MyHome comes under the umbrella of the company's strategy that closely focuses on enriching its digital partnerships ecosystem. This strategy aims at expanding the portfolio of innovative services and solutions - including mobile applications - Zain offers to meet the needs and aspirations of its customer base and business community, considered the largest in the Kuwaiti market.

MyHome offers users a wide range of maintenance services, making it easier and more efficient to complete maintenance jobs. Users can simply choose the needed maintenance category, specify the issue, or ask for an assessment. Users can also attach photos and a description of the issue if needed for a more accurate service. Once the issue has been specified, users can then choose the time and place, then select a payment method they prefer, whether cash or via a bank card directly and securely through the app.

Services offered in MyHome include air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, satellite, hourly cleaning, specialized cleaning, appli-



ances, cameras, painting, pest control, gardening & palm trees, locksmith, aluminum, shutters, carpentry, mobile devices repairs, decor & gypsum board, handyman services, flooring, furniture assembly, networking and mobile garage services.

By signing such digital partnerships, Zain seeks to meet its customers' needs and aspirations through the offering of the latest innovative services and technologies. The company is always keen on offering the most advanced tools to enhance its customers' experience, and offer them an unmatched telecommunications experience on its largest network in Kuwait.

Zain's strategy is centered around digital transformation leadership and empowering the community to enjoy a smarter portable lifestyle, as well as using advanced technology to enable an easier and more flexible life. The company places itself as an active partner in creating the future of smart life in Kuwait.

Manpower authority to restrict hiring of expats older than 65

4,500 expats deported in four months

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Manpower plans to impose new conditions on transactions for expats older than 65 who hold no university degrees, said informed sources. The sources added that some labor departments had already started banning visa transfers from one company to another for this particular category. The sources added that according to Public Authority of Civil Information (PACI) statistics, the total number of expats older than 65 is 23,500 in the private sector, 2,250 as domestic helpers, 9,516 housewives, 488 retirees with special income and 1,094 unemployed.

The sources said 10,217 expats older than 65 hold university degrees or higher, while 8,914 are illiterate, 8,599 can only read and write, 6,082 have completed high school, 5,618 intermediate school and 4,302 only have a primary school education.

In a related development, well-informed sources told local Kuwaiti daily Al-Qabas that security authorities deported 4,500 expats since the beginning of this year until the end of

April. The sources added they were deported for various reasons including violating residency laws or involvement in criminal cases. "The process of deportation has grown faster than ever," the sources underlined. However, concerned sources stressed that Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and his Undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Nahham have given strict instructions not to be abusive in deportation or deport any expats without due legal cause.

Meanwhile, the residency investigation department has issued arrest warrants against 800 expats, mainly Arabs, who had been recruited and brought to Kuwait by fake companies, said informed sources, noting that two Kuwaiti officials of those companies have been arrested and a travel ban had been imposed to prevent other suspects from leaving the country.



Mail workers on strike for five days

4,944 hired

Central Statistical Commission (CSC) statistics showed that 4,944 unqualified Kuwaitis (with primary or lower education) have been appointed in various government bodies in 2018 and 2019. Statistics added that the number of citizens holding PhD degrees increased by 266 this year to become 4,091 while those holding master's degrees rose up to 7,601 this year. Statistics also showed that the majority of citizens prefer education-related jobs, as over 3,000 Kuwaitis joined educational facilities, while only 271 took up jobs in the medical field in the same period.

Mail workers on strike

Expats working at the mail sector of the ministry of services have been on strike for five days now without any response from the concerned authorities, said informed sources, noting that

mail traffic at Kuwait International Airport and various mail centers around Kuwait is completely paralyzed. The sources added that piles of undelivered parcels have been accumulating at those centers due to the strike which happened because the contracted company has not paid its employees' salaries for months.

Sheep export ban

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) decided to ban the export or re-export of all local and imported sheep until Aug 31 or until the ban's reason is over - whichever comes first. A statement MoCI issued in this regard justified the decision on the desire to provide local markets with enough local and imported sheep supplies.

New ambulances

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah said 79 new ambulances will join service within a week once the needed paperwork is done by auditing bodies. He also announced that a number of health programs will be launched soon, including one for heart transplants.



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem speaks to reporters yesterday.

Cabinet won't attend Sunday's session: Speaker

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem announced yesterday that the Cabinet will not attend the special session on May 12. "Today, the Cabinet informed me it would not attend the session due to lack of coordination," Ghanem stated to reporters. In this case, the session will not be held, he said, adding he has called to hold the special session in accordance with bylaw processes. The Cabinet usually attends parliamentary special sessions when coordination is made with it on subjects of discussion

or session scheduling, noted Ghanem. Furthermore, the top lawmaker said that he would not attend the session, anyway, adding his deputy Eisa Al-Kanderi would be his substitute in running the session if it is held.

Ghanem also mentioned that a number of MPs have requested allocating two hours in next session for discussing the regional situations surrounding the country, noting that coordination is currently underway with the Cabinet in that regard. The current state of situations in the region has a direct impact on the situations inside the country, he said, adding MPs would shoulder great responsibility towards issues threatening Kuwait's security and stability. Meanwhile, Ghanem announced the parliament is to hold intensified special sessions, up to over six, in June for reviewing budgets and completing approval on a number of bills. — KUNA

Chinese medicine center ready in 3 months

KUWAIT: Director of the Natural Medicine and Rehabilitation Hospital Dr. Salah Al-Shayji said yesterday that the development and rehabilitation of the Chinese Medicine Center would be completed within three months, adding that it will be upgraded with new and advanced treatment facilities. Shaeyji said in a press statement on the sidelines of a

visit by an official Chinese delegation to view the new Chinese medicine center that Kuwait is "the first Gulf country to have a center specialized in Chinese medicine." He explained that the Chinese Medicine Center allows citizens and residents the possibility of treatment through Chinese needles and Chinese recipes for all cases. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Members of the Chinese delegation pose for a group photo with Kuwaiti officials.



Pope changes Church law to make reporting sex abuse obligatory

North Korea fires missiles as US envoy visits Seoul



SIBIU, Romania: (Left to right) European Council President Donald Tusk, Ireland's Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, France's President Emmanuel Macron, Denmark's Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, Lithuania's President Dalia Grybauskaitė, Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban wave to the crowd as they take part in a family photo session prior to meeting at a EU summit in Sibiu, central Romania. — AFP

European powers reject Iran 'ultimatum'

Macron stands by nuke deal, convinces Iran to stay

SIBIU, Romania: European powers denounced Iran's threat to resume nuclear work yesterday but vowed to save a landmark deal with Tehran despite US pressure. Iran said it would defy some limits it accepted under the 2015 agreement, and threatened to go further if Europe, China and Russia fail to deliver sanctions relief within 60 days. Tehran says it is responding to unilateral US sanctions imposed after President Donald Trump ripped up what he called a "horrible" deal, dealing a severe blow to the Iranian economy.

Europe has stressed the importance of the deal-in which Iran agreed to curb its nuclear ambitions in return for sanctions relief-for its own security, and EU president Jean-Claude Juncker said it would be on the agenda at yesterday's summit in the Romanian town of Sibiu. French President Emmanuel Macron appealed for calm, saying Europe must work to convince Iran to stick with the deal. "We must not get jumpy or fall into escalation," Macron said.

EU diplomatic chief Federica Mogherini and France, Germany and Britain-the three European signatories to the deal-voiced "great concern" at President Hassan Rouhani's dramatic intervention. "We strongly urge Iran to continue to im-

plement its commitments under the JCPOA in full as it has done until now and to refrain from any escalatory steps," they said in a joint statement, referring to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action as the deal is known. "We reject any ultimatums and we will assess Iran's compliance on the basis of Iran's performance regarding its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA."

Macron warned that leaving the deal would "unstick what we have achieved". "That's why France is staying in, and will stay in and I profoundly hope Iran will stay in," Macron said as he arrived for the summit. The EU statement stressed the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) role in monitoring Iran's compliance with the deal-suggesting no concrete action is likely until the inspectors' next report at the end of May.

Mogherini said she had "a lot of concern" about this week's developments but stressed that Iran was so far still "fully compliant" with the deal. "We will continue to see the compliance of Iran to its commitments to the JCPOA through the lenses of the assessments that the IAEA will continue to do," she told reporters in Sibiu. But there are tensions within the EU, with some countries

under domestic pressure to take a tougher line on Tehran, particularly after Iranian intelligence was accused of mounting assassination plots in France, Denmark and the Netherlands.

Europe and Washington have been at loggerheads over how to deal with the Islamic republic since Trump took office. In recent days, the US deployed an aircraft carrier strike group to the Gulf-raising military tensions alongside the diplomatic discord.

EU scrabbling

Trump hit back at Tehran's threats by tightening the economic screws further, slapping sanctions on the Iranian mining industry to add to swingeing measures on oil exports-the country's main money-maker. "Tehran can expect further actions unless it fundamentally alters its conduct," Trump said in a statement. Since the US pullout, Europe has sought to keep Iran in the deal by trying to maintain trade via a special mechanism called INSTEX to clear payments without falling foul of American sanctions.

The European statement reiterated its commitment to helping the Iranian people enjoy the benefit of sanctions relief, condemning the US

reimposition. Europe is "determined to continue pursuing efforts to enable the continuation of legitimate trade with Iran" including through INSTEX. But their efforts have borne little fruit so far, with Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei dismissing them as a "bitter joke".

EU haggling

Macron and Germany Chancellor Angela Merkel will discuss Iran with their EU colleagues at yesterday summit, which was called to start the race for the top jobs in Brussels and to sketch a future without Britain. The 27 national leaders are meeting just two weeks before European Parliament elections that could usher in a new wave of populists to haunt EU decision-making.

The 28th head of government, Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May, will be absent as the others discuss a five-year strategy to reinvigorate the union and argue over who should lead it. The meeting will seek to agree a "Sibiu Declaration"-a short document with 10 overarching commitments to reform in various areas, known tongue-in-cheek by some Brussels diplomats as the "10 Commandments" for the next EU Commission. —AFP

International

Fears of jihadist 'academies' increase as Iraqi jails fill up

Prisons turn into breeding grounds for jihadist recruitments

BAGHDAD: As Iraq tries thousands of locals and foreigners accused of joining the Islamic State group, experts warn its jails could once again become "academies" for jihadists. Prison was a pivotal moment for many prominent jihadists—not least of them Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, IS's Iraqi supremo who remains at large despite the collapse of his "caliphate" in March.

Baghdadi was held in Camp Bucca, a sprawling US-run complex in the southern Iraqi desert, where he is thought to have essentially "come of age" as a jihadist leader. "For many members of such groups, prison was one of multiple 'stages' of jihad," said Hisham al-Hashemi, an expert in Iraqi jihadist movements. They ran their own religious studies courses and even planned attacks on civilians or ordered assassinations of security forces from within the prison walls.

"The cells become the equivalent of academies—even if there's just one prisoner with extremist thoughts, he can recruit the rest," Hashemi told AFP. Iraq has already condemned hundreds of its own nationals as well as scores of foreigners to life in prison for joining IS. It has begun trial proceedings for another 900 Iraqis recently repatriated

from neighboring Syria and has offered to try foreigners stuck in legal limbo there, too.

Breeding grounds

But its prison system is the subject of fierce criticism. Advocacy groups accuse security forces of using circumstantial evidence to detain people on terrorism charges, extracting confessions under torture and keeping suspects in overcrowded cells with no access to lawyers. Cells built to hold around 20 detainees are often packed with 50, a source working in the jails told AFP, and prisoners are often caught smuggling phones or passing on information during family visits, especially to their wives.

Those arrested for petty crimes are often held with hardened jihadists, which has facilitated recruitment in the past, said security analyst Fadel Abu Raghif. "Most of those detained were Islamic jurists and thinkers. They're able to argue, provide evidence, brainwash and persuade people," he told AFP. Those recruited in jail are typically not religiously orthodox to begin with, but have instead been drawn by "rhetoric playing on a narrative of oppression",

Abu Raghif added. In the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's toppling by US-led forces in 2003, insurgent groups seized on the feeling of marginalization among the country's Sunnis as fodder for recruitment. More than fifteen years later, observers fear that same perception of persecution is back. The Soufan Center, a New York-based think tank, said Iraq "suppressed, but never actually addressed" the grievances of its Sunni communities.

The deployment of the mostly-Shiite Hashed al-Shaabi paramilitary units in Sunni-majority areas recaptured from IS "has fuelled sectarian resentment among local populations", the Center wrote this month. That anger could pave the way for a repeat of the mid-2000s: "As happened before with Camp Bucca, these detention centers are becoming breeding grounds for radicalization."

No repeat of Bucca

Iraq's government has declined to provide figures on detention centers or prisoners, including how many are facing terrorism-related charges, although some studies estimate 20,000

are being held for purported IS links. Some facilities have shut down in recent years, including the Abu Ghraib complex that became infamous for prisoner abuse during the US-led occupation. Others were rocked by riots and prison breaks that allowed detainees accused of "terrorism" to escape.

Now, with more repatriated fighters expected to arrive in the coming months, observers fear an already-strained system will be flooded. "The prisons that are being used definitely are insufficient in capacity to hold potentially, thousands of extra people that will be transferred," warned Belkis Wille of Human Rights Watch. HRW has called on the international community to help Iraq improve its judicial processes and revamp its jails—but Iraq, Wille said, may have something else in mind. "The authorities are very conscious, and do not want something like Abu Ghraib or Bucca to happen again," she told AFP. "It is a part of the reason why so many of the suspects are getting the death penalty or life (in) prison. I think the intention is that these people would not come out of prison, so you would not have the same dynamic."—AFP

Kabul aid groups reel after nine killed in Taliban attack

KABUL: Humanitarian groups were reeling yesterday from yet another attack targeting aid workers in Afghanistan, as authorities confirmed nine people had been killed in a Taliban assault in Kabul a day earlier. The targeting of Counterpart International, a US-funded non-profit group working with marginalized people, highlights the continued vulnerability of aid groups across Afghanistan, where some organizations have been forced to suspend operations or pare their presence.

Wednesday's attack came during the holy month of Ramadan, and as US and Taliban officials were meeting in Qatar for peace talks—throwing into question the progress of ongoing negotiations. Interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said the death toll from a car bomb and follow-up attack in central Kabul had risen from five to nine. Among the victims were three workers—a driver, a watchman and a technical advisor—from anti-poverty group CARE, whose offices are next to Counterpart.

"This attack reflects the increasing dangers of humanitarian work in conflict-affected countries such as Afghanistan and the unfortunate daily reality of violence for many Afghan families," CARE said in a statement. Afghanistan was once a hub of foreign aid but deteriorating security in recent years has seen international groups shrink their footprint, making it even more difficult to deliver desperately needed help to the war-torn country's most vulnerable citizens.

Last year was particularly deadly. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 30 aid workers were killed in 2018, compared to 19 in 2017, and 16 in 2016. British aid group Save the Children suspended operations across Afghanistan following a 2018 Islamic State group attack on its compound in the eastern city of Jalalabad that killed three employees and wounded several others.

Ann Hudock, Counterpart's president and CEO, said attackers had targeted "innocent civilians, development professionals who



KABUL: Afghan security forces stand at the site of an attack by Taliban militants, a day after the assault on a compound housing an international aid organization, in Kabul. — AFP

dedicate their lives to improving the lives of Afghanistan's most vulnerable, including women, youth, and the disabled". The Taliban, known for their brutal repression and isolation of women before their ouster in 2001, said they targeted Counterpart because it promoted the "inter-mixing" of men and women.

Insurgent spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said on Twitter the aid group had mentored "Kabul admin workers in various aspects of brutality, oppression, terror, anti-Islamic ideology & promotion of western culture". Counterpart International, founded in 1965, is primarily funded by the US State Department and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Mujahid accused the group of being "involved in harmful western activities inside Afghanistan".

Wednesday's attack began with an immense blast from a car bomb in a busy commercial area. The explosion felled trees and shredded dense concrete blast walls on the street outside. The blast radius extended hundreds of meters (yards) in all directions, blowing out windows in nearby homes and businesses. In addition to the nine dead, 20 civilians were wounded in the attack, which saw four Taliban gunmen storm the Counterpoint compound after the blast. They were all killed after Afghan commandos led an hours-long clearance operation. — AFP

Amnesty slams UAE trial of Lebanese Shiites

BEIRUT: The terrorism trial of eight Lebanese Shiites detained in the United Arab Emirates is unfair and based on fabricated confessions obtained under torture, Amnesty International said yesterday. A verdict is expected on May 15 in the trial of the eight men, who are all Shiite Muslims and were arrested in the UAE between December 2017 and February 2018. Amnesty International said the charges of planning attacks in the Emirates on orders of the Iranian-backed Lebanese organization Hezbollah were trumped up.

"These men were tortured, they were forced into making confessions," Sima Watling, a researcher for the Britain-based rights group, told AFP. She said the defendants had lived in the United Arab Emirates for years but were denied regular access to their families or to a lawyer. One of the eight is Abdel Rahman Talal Chouman, who had lived in the UAE for more than 15 years and been working as a safety and security trainer with Emirates Airline.

During an April 3 session at the state security chamber of the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi, he described how he was tortured for six hours at a time and forced to sign a confession he was not even given a chance to read. "He had documents in his laptop for training his colleagues on scenarios of possible attacks... these were part of the accusation that he was planning an attack on the airport," Watling said.

"If the authorities take these confessions in this trial as being the truth, they are not abiding by international law," she said. All of them have been held in solitary confinement, more than two weeks of which can amount to torture, according to United Nations standards for the treatment of prisoners. The detained men are from Lebanon's Shiite community and are accused by the Emirati authorities of collaborating with Hezbollah. —AFP

International

Macron defends Saudi arms sales with new shipment in focus

Macron assures arms exports not to be used against civilians

SIBIU, Romania: French President Emmanuel Macron defended his country's arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates yesterday as campaigners focused attention on a new shipment set to leave from the northern port of Le Havre. Human rights groups have regularly denounced France for continuing to supply the Gulf states despite allegations of war crimes and civilian deaths during their military operations in neighboring Yemen.

"Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are allies of France and allies in the fight against terrorism. We accept responsibility for that," Macron told reporters when asked about the arms sales. Speaking as he arrived for a meeting of EU leaders in Romania, Macron said that arms exports were overseen by a government committee that had demanded guarantees that the weapons would not be used against civilians. "We received that," he added.

Macron has faced mounting pressure from critics in France over the deliveries, particularly after a recent leaked intelligence report showed that French weapons were being widely used in the Yemen conflict. Leftwing lawmakers stormed out of parliament on Tuesday in protest after Genevieve Darrieussecq, secretary of state for the armed forces, said there was "no proof these weapons are being used against civilian populations".

The conflict in Yemen has lasted more than four years and killed tens of thousands of people, many of them civilians, relief agencies say. The fighting has triggered what the United Nations describes as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with 3.3 million people still displaced and 24.1 million—more than two-thirds of the population—in need of aid.

For the past week, NGOs such as the Campaign Against Arms Trade and Human Rights Watch have tracked the movements of a Saudi cargo ship that has travelled between Belgium, Britain and France. French Defense Minister Florence Parly confirmed Wednesday that French weapons would be loaded onto the ship, the Bahri Yanbu, when it docks at the French port of Le Havre.

It was anchored around 30 kilometers from the port on the Channel coast yesterday afternoon, tracking website Marine Traffic showed. The French campaign group Christian Action for the Abolition of Torture (ACAT) filed a suit in a Paris court on Thursday seeking to prevent the ship from loading its cargo. The group is seeking to use a 2014 international treaty regulating the arms trade which stipulates that signatory countries should not export weapons if they know they might be used to commit war crimes.

"It is entirely true that for several years—at its height, five or six years ago in contracts that



SIBIU, Romania: This picture shows the French minehunter 'Cassiopee' sailing toward Le Havre harbour. —AFP

were signed at that time—France has sold weapons to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia," Macron added yesterday. "The majority of these weapons that were sold have been used

inside their territories or at the border," he added. "But I want to be clear: we need to be with our allies in these difficult times and the war against terrorism is a priority for us." —AFP

Election candidate breaks down over vicious pamphlet

NEW DELHI: An Oxford-educated candidate contesting India's election broke down yesterday after a savage anonymous pamphlet accused her of being a prostitute and of having sex with a fellow teacher. An emotional Atishi Marlana, a candidate at national level in Sunday's vote, told a news conference that the accusations were "obscene and derogatory". The pamphlet said that as a primary school teacher, Atishi "was caught red handed while having sex and in a compromising position with another teacher".

It said she was married to a Christian—"i.e. a Beef Eater"—and was pregnant by an illegitimate member of a low-caste, and therefore a "prostitute". Atishi, a former Rhodes scholar to Britain's Oxford University, is standing as a candidate for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which won control of Delhi in state elections in 2015 on an anti-corruption platform. Both Atishi and AAP head and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal accused Gautam Gambhir, a former international cricketer and candidate for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), of being behind the pamphlet.

He strenuously denied the accusation on Twitter. "I declare that if its proven that I did it, I will withdraw my candidature right now," wrote Gambhir. "Never imagined Gautam Gambhir to stoop so low," chief minister Kejriwal had earlier tweeted. "Atishi, stay strong. I can imagine how difficult it must be for u. It is precisely this kind of forces we have to fight against." The row comes weeks after Atishi accused Gambhir of possessing two voter identification cards and appealed to election authorities to disqualify him. —AFP

South Africa ANC takes early lead in election results

PRETORIA: South Africa's ANC surged into the lead in early official results yesterday with 55 percent of the vote in the first electoral test of President Cyril Ramaphosa's bid to reinvigorate the ruling party. With just over a fifth of voting districts tallied, the Election Commission put the African National Congress well ahead, with its closest rival the Democratic Alliance trailing with a distant 26 percent. The Economic Freedom Fighters, founded six years ago by former ANC youth leader Julius Malema, was sitting at eight percent.

Ramaphosa, 66, took over last year after the African National Congress (ANC) forced then-president Jacob Zuma to resign after nine years dominated by corruption allegations and economic problems. The party that wins the most seats in parliament selects the country's president, who will be sworn in on May 25. "The outcome of this election will be a major boost for investors... and investor confidence, it's about confidence and about the future," Ramaphosa said after voting on Wednesday.

The ANC's reputation was badly sullied under Zuma. "We apologize for our mistakes." Support for the ANC has fallen in every election since 2004 with the party taking 54 percent in 2016 municipal elections, compared with 62 percent in 2014's national vote. Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC) were swept to power with a landslide in the country's first multi-racial polls that marked the end of apartheid in 1994.

Most opinion surveys suggest the ANC will secure nearly 60 percent of the vote, thanks to Ramaphosa's appeal and a fractured opposition. Dirk Coetzee, a professor at UNISA's political science department, said "the higher the percentage for the ANC, the more it will give him (Ramaphosa) bargaining power". "If Ramaphosa gets below 50 percent he will be very vulnerable" to challenges from rivals within the ANC, he added.

'The poor are getting poorer'

The ANC has been confronted by deepening public anger over its failure to tackle poverty and inequality in post-apartheid South Africa. "We have given them 25 years but the poor are getting poorer and the rich richer," said voter Anmareth Preece, 28, a teacher from Coligny in North West province. "We need a government that governs for the people, not for themselves." The economy grew just 0.8 percent in 2018 and unemployment hovers around 27 percent—soaring to over 50 percent among young people.

Of the 47 opposition parties in the race, only the main opposition centrist DA and the radical-left EFF are major players. The DA is hoping to shed its image as a white, middle-class party. Its first black leader, Mmusi Maimane, is contesting his maiden general election since taking the helm in 2015, and is expected to make modest gains on the DA's 2014 vote share of 22 percent. Malema's EFF was predicted to make major gains, growing from 6.3 percent to a forecast 11 percent. The partial results show it at eight percent.

"The ANC has taken people for granted. There is some arrogance which has crept in," said voter Mandla Booi, 45, in Port Elizabeth on the south coast. The EFF, which appeals mainly to young voters and the poor, has campaigned on a policy of seizing land from white owners to give to blacks. Enforced land redistribution is also ANC policy—alarming some investors. About 26.8 million voters were registered to cast their ballots at 22,925 polling stations countrywide. —AFP

Montenegro convicts pro-Russian politicians of violent coup plot

Moscow denies involvement, rejects allegations as 'absurd'

PODGORICA, Montenegro: A Montenegro court yesterday handed jail sentences to two opposition politicians and a dozen others, including Russians and Serbians, over their alleged plot to overthrow the government in 2016 and halt a bid to join NATO. Pro-Russian opposition leaders Andrija Mandic and Milan Knezevic were given five years in prison for being part of a "criminal organization" whose aim was to "violently overthrow" the government and "prevent Montenegro from joining NATO," judge Suzana Mugosa said.

Two alleged Russian intelligence officers tried in absentia were handed the heaviest sentences of 12 and 15 years respectively. Moscow, who had opposed the tiny Balkan state's efforts to join NATO at the time, has denied any involvement in the plot and rejected the allegations as "absurd". Nine Serbians were also convicted, including a former police general and anti-NATO activist. Since the trial opened a year and a half ago, Montenegro's pro-Russian opposition has decried it as a "staged political trial" and government-backed "witch hunt" aimed at destroying their political camp.

Their coalition was the main opposition force against current President and then-prime minister Milo Djukanovic at the time

of the coup, which was allegedly going to be carried out on general election day in October 2016. "Without this so-called coup d'etat, the regime would certainly be in opposition today," opposition leader Mandic said at the trial's close in March. He accused Djukanovic of taking advantage of a "wave of anti-Russian hysteria to attack" his opponents. Ahead of the verdict, the opposition warned that a conviction of its leaders would risk "irremediably destabilizing Montenegro". The politicians are expected to appeal the ruling.

Questions remain

Prosecutors have recently moved towards "minimizing" initial claims of "Moscow's official role in the plot", Montenegro-based analyst Sergej Sekulovic said. The first verdict nevertheless gives "credibility" to the prosecutor's indictment and "strengthens the position of the government, which from the beginning has held an identical position to that of the prosecutor," he added. In the years since the alleged coup attempt, Djukanovic was elected President in 2018, Montenegro joined NATO and the government continued its negotiations for accession to the European Union.

The opposition's Democratic Front coalition remains weakened. Observers say the months-long trial still left many questions unanswered. The weapons that the plotters allegedly planned to use were never shown in court. According to the indictment, dozens of cases of automatic weapons and three cases of ammunition were thrown into a lake in a neighboring country.

Prosecutors later said that a Serbian who provided the weapons ultimately destroyed them at the request of Montenegro justice. "Without these weapons, the story of a violent overthrow of power is unconvincing," Dragan Soc, a lawyer and Montenegro's former justice minister, told AFP ahead of the ruling. "Firm material evidence" was missing, he added. One of the prosecution's key witnesses, Serbian national Aleksandar Sindjelic, also reversed his testimony.

Sindjelic initially told the court the Democratic Front was "financed by money from Russia" that would have aided the coup. But in March, just before the end of the trial, he told a Serbian television channel that there had been no "plan of violence in Podgorica", only a anti-NATO "protest". The court did not bring him back to the witness stand, saying his reversal was expressed outside any judicial framework. — AFP

Putin hails military might on WWII Victory Day

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin vowed to ensure Russia's military strength as the country yesterday marked World War II Victory Day, an event that has become increasingly important over his two-decade rule. The president's speech to thousands of soldiers and veterans on Red Square came at the start of an annual parade that sees hundreds of pieces of military hardware roll through the streets of Moscow.

"The lessons of the past war are relevant once again. We have done and will do all that is necessary to guarantee the high capabilities of our armed forces," he said. Those in the modern Russian army remember the "oath" of Soviet soldiers who fought Nazi Germany, he added: "I die but I will not surrender". Putin asked the crowd to observe a minute's silence as the Kremlin clock chimed under grey skies.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, 88, and Hollywood actor Steven Seagal, who has been a vocal supporter of Putin, were at the commemoration along with Russian dignitaries. The two-day public holiday to celebrate the 1945 victory comes amid heightened tensions with the West and fears of a new Russia-US arms race. Parades and celebrations took place in towns and cities across Russia, from the European exclave of Kaliningrad to the Far Eastern Sakhalin island, near Japan.



MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a wreath laying ceremony marking the 74th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany, just outside the Kremlin in Moscow. — AFP

Toy weapons

In Moscow, flag-waving crowds lined the streets to catch a glimpse of tanks and personnel. Among them were children dressed in miniature military uniform, a practice that has become popular in recent years but also sparked controversy. Victory Day paraphernalia including replica soldiers' caps and toy weapons have been available to buy in Russian supermarkets in the days leading up to the event.

Thousands were also set to take part in the "Immortal Regiment" march, in which people carry pictures and medals of relatives who fought in the war. Victory Day parades only became an annual event after the collapse of the USSR and the Immortal Regiment tradition began in 2012. Since then the march has been heavily promoted in state media and city services offer to print out pictures of Soviet soldiers free of charge.

Almost half of Russians said they were planning to attend a Victory Day event this year, according to state pollster VT-SIOM. In recent years Moscow has stepped up military activity abroad, intervening on behalf of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria's civil war and backing separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine. Around 750 personnel took part in a Victory Day parade at the Russian airbase in Syria's Hmeimim yesterday, the defense ministry said in a statement.

Russia has also said it would build up its military presence in the Arctic, seeking to assert its influence in the strategic region. State television broadcast marches from around the former USSR, including from the unrecognized republic of Lugansk—a Ukrainian breakaway region run by the Moscow-backed separatists. The conflict in eastern Ukraine has cost some 13,000 lives over the last five years. — AFP

'Bollocks to Brexit': Lib Dems unveil new slogan

LONDON: Britain's Liberal Democrats yesterday unveiled "Bollocks to Brexit" as their stark new campaign slogan in the European Parliament election campaign. The centrist party, which performed well in council elections last week, is seeking to beef up its credentials as the traditional pro-European party. "We've been the pro-Europe party for 50 years," party leader Vince Cable said in an interview with The Guardian.

The Liberal Democrats are facing competition from Change UK, a new group of former Conservative and Labour MPs who also oppose leaving the EU and want a second referendum on Brexit with an option for Britain to remain in the EU. The "Bollocks to Brexit" slogan has until now been used only by campaigners, including flamboyant businessman Charlie Mullins who has put up a giant poster with the phrase above the offices of his company Pimlico Plumbers.

The word "bollocks"—used in British English—means both rubbish and testicles and was made world-famous by the Sex Pistols punk album "Never Mind The Bollocks". The Guardian said "more squeamish" Liberal Democrat candidates would be able to use campaign literature containing the more toned-down slogan "Stop Brexit".

Pro-Brexit campaigner Darren Grimes was not amused, saying that the party was "so desperate for attention that it's willing to stick two fingers to the millions who voted for, and believe in, Brexit". The main national parties opposing Brexit, the Liberal Democrats, Change UK and the Greens, have failed to form an alliance ahead of the May 23 vote. The Brexit Party, led by Nigel Farage, is topping the polls with a simple message that the government has betrayed the result of the 2016 Brexit referendum. — AFP

International

Pope changes Church law to make reporting sex abuse obligatory

Dioceses to create system to report sexual abuse by clerics

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis yesterday passed a measure to oblige those who know about sex abuse in the Catholic Church to report it to their superiors, following a global clerical pedophilia scandal. Every diocese in the world will now be obliged to have a system for the reporting of abuse, under a new law published by the Vatican—but the requirement will not apply to secrets revealed to priests in the confessional. It is time to learn from the “bitter lessons of the past”, Francis said in the text of the legal decree. It follows a series of clerical assault cases in countries ranging from Australia to Chile, Germany and the US.

The “Motu Proprio”, a legal document issued under the pope’s personal authority, declares that anyone who has knowledge of abuse, or suspects it, is “obliged to report (it) promptly” to the Church, using “easily accessible systems”. “Though this obligation was formerly left up to individual consciences, it now becomes a universally established legal precept” within the Church, said Andrea Tomielli, editorial director of the Vatican’s communications department. The law only applies within the Church and has no force to oblige individuals to report abuse to civil authorities. Under the new measure, every diocese around the world is obliged by June 2020 to create a system for the reporting of sexual abuse by clerics, the use of child pornog-

raphy and cover-ups of abuse.

Confessions still secret

The document focuses particularly on the sexual or psychological abuse of children and vulnerable adults, but also targets sexual abuse and violence resulting from an abuse of authority—such as the exploitation of nuns by priests. Pope Francis admitting publicly in February that priests have used nuns as “sexual slaves”—and may still be doing so. Victims’ groups have long called for Francis to put in place concrete measures to tackle clerical child abuse, including immediately firing any cleric found guilty of even a single act of abuse, or of covering it up.

They also want all abusers or suspected abusers to be reported to police, and any abuse-related files handed over to them. Some have called for priests who hear of abuse during confessions to be forced to report it. The new law stops short of that. Catholics believe that within the confessional the penitent is talking to God, and everything in the confession is secret. A priest who reveals such secrets is automatically expelled from the Church. The new law follows a historic Vatican summit on child sexual abuse by priests in February, which saw much self-re-priming by the Church and horror stories from abuse survivors. —AFP



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis blesses a child as he arrives for the weekly general audience at St. Peter’s square in the Vatican. —AFP

Rideshare drivers strike as Uber poised to go public

NEW YORK: Thousands of Uber and Lyft drivers turned off their apps in a US-wide strike Wednesday over pay and working conditions, casting a shadow over this week’s keenly anticipated Wall Street debut of ride-hailing leader Uber. Uber is expected to launch its initial public offering (IPO) on Friday giving it an estimated valuation of some \$80 billion, one of the biggest tech listings in recent years but rather lower than its earlier hopes of around \$100 billion.

The launch will be a major milestone for the company, which has raised billions and disrupted the taxi industry in cities around the world. It will also come in the rear-view mirror of a troubled market debut for Uber’s largest US rival Lyft, which has lost more than 15 percent of its value since its March IPO. Strikes that took place Wednesday highlighted a dilemma for rideshare firms, which have faced challenges from regulators and traditional taxi operators for using a business model relying on independent contractors.

One group protested outside the New York Stock Exchange, where Uber is set to

list shares, with some signs reading “Invest in our lives—Not their stocks.” Similar actions took place in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Diego, Washington and in Uber’s home town, San Francisco. Protests were held in Britain as well with drivers in London, Birmingham, Nottingham and Glasgow called on to log off apps and demonstrate outside Uber offices, according to the Independent Workers’ Union of Great Britain.

Rideshare companies maintain that drivers are able to thrive and maintain work flexibility, and that their business model would not work if drivers were treated as wage-based employees. Uber and Lyft did not immediately comment on the protests.

“While we aim to provide an earnings opportunity comparable to that available in retail, wholesale, or restaurant services or other similar work, we continue to experience dissatisfaction with our platform from a significant number of drivers,” Uber said in a filing with securities regulators. “In particular, as we aim to reduce driver incentives to improve our financial performance, we expect driver dissatisfaction will generally increase.”

Uber envisions becoming the “Amazon of transportation” in a future where people share instead of owning vehicles. If all goes to plan, commuters could ride an e-scooter to a transit station, take a train then grab an e-bike, ride share or e-scooter at the arriving station to complete a journey using the Uber smartphone app. Of course, shared car rides would be an option, eventually driven by computers instead of humans. —AFP

Guaido’s deputy arrested in Venezuela

CARACAS: Venezuelan intelligence agents Wednesday detained a senior leader of the opposition-dominated National Assembly, the first arrest of a lawmaker since the failed uprising against President Nicolas Maduro last week. Edgar Zambrano said agents had towed him and his car to prison after he refused to get out of the vehicle. Zambrano is deputy to National Assembly speaker Juan Guaido, who is recognized as the country’s leader by more than 50 states, and who organized the April 30 revolt.

“We warn the people of Venezuela and the international community: the regime has kidnapped the first vice-president” of the National Assembly, said Guaido, who heads the body and has been in a power struggle with Maduro since declaring himself acting president in January. “They are trying to destroy the power representing all Venezuelans, but they will not achieve it,” Guaido said.

Shortly before his arrest, Zambrano said on Twitter that agents of the SEBIN intelligence agency had circled his vehicle outside the headquarters of the Democratic Action party. “As we refused to get out of our vehicle, they used a tow truck to forcibly take us directly to the Helicoide,” a notorious political prison and the headquarters of the secret service, he tweeted. The United States, European Union and

several Latin American states criticized Zambrano’s arrest.

Inexcusable

On the Twitter account of its now-closed embassy in Caracas, Washington called the detention “illegal and inexcusable.” It warned of “consequences” if he is not immediately released. Early yesterday US President Donald Trump—whose country was among the first to back Guaido—said he was “discussing the terrible abuses by Maduro.” Trump did not mention Zambrano but said the US will stand with the people of Venezuela “for however long it takes!”

Along with the US, Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Peru protested his arrest while the EU said it was “another flagrant violation of the country’s constitution.” Separately, Venezuela’s Supreme Court indicted three more lawmakers for backing Guaido’s uprising, which set off two days of clashes between security forces and protesters. Attorney General Tarek William Saab says the clashes left six people dead.

The three lawmakers—named as Freddy Superlano, Sergio Vergara and Juan Andres Mejia—are accused of high treason and conspiracy. This brings to 10 the number of opposition lawmakers indicted for supporting Guaido, following a court announcement on Tuesday that seven others will be prosecuted. Soon after the announcement, the Constituent Assembly—which effectively acts as a regime rubber stamp—stripped the seven of their parliamentary immunity. Guaido was himself stripped of immunity on April 2. The Constituent Assembly, which Maduro created to sideline the National Assembly, has said it would suspend the immunity of any lawmakers who backed the uprising. —AFP

Amid plague of US mass shootings, 'heroes' emerge

Police forces encourage people to run, hide, fight during shootings

WASHINGTON: With no end in sight to the mass shootings that have traumatized the country in recent decades, Americans are now finding hope in the actions of "heroes" who have sacrificed their lives to save others amidst hails of bullets. Kendrick Castillo became the latest example of this bravery after the 18-year-old confronted one of the gunmen who attacked his school outside Denver on Tuesday.

It cost him his life, but allowed other students time to hide under their desks or flee the shooting that also wounded eight people, classmate Nui Giasolli said in an interview Wednesday on NBC television. "They were very heroic. I can't thank them enough," Giasolli said of Castillo and the three students who joined him in battling the unidentified attacker, one of two police say stormed the school.

The US Marine Corps also spoke up in praise of Brendan Bialy, who was set to join the force this summer and was among the trio who confronted the gunman. "Brendan's courage and commitment to swiftly ending this tragic incident at the risk of his own safety is admirable and inspiring," the corp's local recruiting district said. Less forthcoming were solutions to the mass shootings that have seen gun-wielding assailants kill people in schools, offices and public places across the United States in recent decades.

The frequency of the killings has prompted police forces nationwide to encourage people caught

in the shootings to "run, hide, fight," said political scientist Robert Spitzer. "The spread of these heroic stories, including the fact that people who intercede are often successful in stopping a shooter even though they are not themselves armed has encouraged more people to act," Spitzer told AFP. And in a country where repeated administrations have failed to stop the violence, "it has encouraged not just action but the hope that doing so might matter."

Unstoppable

A week before the shooting outside Denver, public attention focused on Riley Howell, a 21-year-old environmental studies major who charged a gunman that opened fire on his university campus in Charlotte, North Carolina. Howell's attack took the shooter "off his feet," local police chief Kerr Putney said, and gave officers time to intervene and end the tragedy. But it also made Howell, shot three times, one of two victims of the killings.

"(He) did exactly what we trained people to do," Putney said after the shooting. "You're either going to run, hide and shield or you're going to take the fight to the assailant." Gregg Carter, a sociology professor at Bryant University, said police have also grown confrontational amid the proliferation of shootings. "Law enforcement tactics have changed from a slow 'wait and see' stance...



COLORADO: Students hug as Sen Michael Bennet (D-CO) speaks during a candlelight vigil at Highlands Ranch High School in Highlands Ranch, Colorado. — AFP

to a 'move in quickly but alertly' approach since then," he said. As has become typical with American mass shootings, calls to regulate firearms more tightly followed the recent killings. "Lawmakers must stand up to the NRA so students can stop standing up to shooters," non-profit Every-

town for Gun Safety tweeted after the Denver shooting, referring to the National Rifle Association. But such appeals have faltered in the face of resistance from elected officials, the strong attachment many American feels to their firearms, and the NRA's powerful lobbying. — AFP

Congress battles White House over Russia report

WASHINGTON: The Russia probe plunged Washington into turmoil on Wednesday as Donald Trump's son reportedly was ordered to testify before a Senate panel and the White House refused to release material on investigations into the president. A day after the top Republican in Congress called the Russia probe "case closed," Trump's conflict with his Democratic opponents escalated to new heights as a House panel voted to hold the nation's Attorney General Bill Barr in contempt for refusing to turn over key documents.

Following a day of drama that included Trump asserting executive privilege for the first time in his presidency, the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee took the surprise step of issuing a subpoena to Donald Trump Jr to testify as part of its investigation into Russian election interference, US media reported. It was the first known legal summons issued to a member of the president's family to force testimony in the ongoing investigation, and comes after special counsel Robert Mueller declined to accuse Trump's 2016 campaign of criminal conspiracy to collude with the Russians.

Trump Jr, 41, has testified voluntarily in private once to the committee, and was peppered with questions about a June 9, 2016 meeting at Trump Tower in New York that he and other campaign officials had with a Russian lawyer who had offered them dirt on Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. Committee aides would not confirm the subpoena or what they

want to discuss with the president's eldest son, who currently helps run the Trump Organization. Citing a person close to Trump Jr, The Wall Street Journal reported he had offered to answer questions in writing from the committee, and planned to fight the subpoena, which demands he testify in person.

'Constitutional crisis'

The White House has been seeking to shield a large swathe of material—including redacted portions of Mueller's report—subpoenaed by lawmakers seeking to exert their oversight responsibility. The rare move to invoke executive privilege came as the House Judiciary Committee took its most substantive step yet against a member of the Trump administration by approving a contempt motion against Barr. "This was a very grave and momentous step we were forced to take today," committee chairman Jerry Nadler said after the party-line vote.

Nadler said the contempt citation will proceed "rapidly" for a full House vote but did not offer a timeline. He accused Trump and the White House of stonewalling by preventing America's congressional representatives from conducting oversight of the executive branch. "It's an attack on the essence of our democracy," Nadler said. "We are now in a constitutional crisis." The Department of Justice swiftly shot back, branding the contempt vote "inappropriate political theatrics." Hours earlier, Trump made clear he would assert his executive privilege to keep Mueller's full report under wraps. "Neither the White House nor Attorney General Barr will comply with Chairman Nadler's unlawful and reckless demands," White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said. Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd stressed that Trump had moved to keep "the entirety of the subpoenaed materials" from the eyes of Congress. — AFP

Mexico border reunions cancelled as US refuses permits

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico: US authorities have denied permits and forced the cancellation of the "Hugs not walls" event which since 2016 has allowed families separated by illegal migration to reunite for a few minutes on the border with Mexico, organizers said. Some 150 families had already registered to take part in the seventh "Abrazos No muros" meeting, scheduled for Saturday on the border between Mexico's Ciudad Juarez and the US city of El Paso in Texas.

"(US) border agencies and institutions created all possible obstacles and invented all possible pretexts to prevent this important and historic family reunion on the border," organizers the Border Network for Human Rights (RFDH) said in a statement on Wednesday. "Everyone clearly followed the xenophobic script of (US President Donald) Trump," it added, noting that both the police and the US Border Patrol had hampered the initiative.

RFDH director Fernando García regretted the cancellation of the event, which he said since 2016 has brought together members of 1,500 families from various areas of the US, Mexico and Central America. "Today, in this America, led by this administration, a family hug and a fraternal embrace represent a threat to national security. This is beyond irrational," García said.

Armando Bustamante, 24, who lives in Ciudad Juarez, had expected to embrace his mother, who has lived in El Paso for nine years as an undocumented immigrant, and celebrate Mother's Day, which is marked on Friday in Mexico and Sunday in the US. The student said he had been able to hug his mother twice since he began taking part in the event.

"It's a pity that I'll have to wait for another event to take place and in that way be able to see my mother ... even if it was just for a couple of minutes," Bustamante told AFP, hoping that US authorities would authorize another date for the event. In recent months, thousands of migrants have arrived in Mexico, primarily Central Americans fleeing poverty and violence at home. President Trump has described them as a threat to national security, demanding billions of dollars from Congress to build a wall on the southern border. — AFP

International

India's disparate opposition senses growing chance to topple PM Modi

Modi, BJP leaders brush off opposition threat

NEW DELHI: India's disparate opposition parties are aiming to firm up an alliance as they sense a chance of unseating Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a staggered general election draws to a close. The seven-phase election, the world's biggest democratic exercise, began on April 11 and winds up on May 19. Votes will be counted and the result announced on May 23. Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) went into the election as front-runner, buoyed by his image as tough and decisive after he ordered a military strike on Pakistan over a militant bomb attack in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

But his opponents have maintained their focus on farm distress and unemployment, issues that helped the main opposition Congress party defeat the BJP in state assembly elections in three rural states late last year. Now the opposition believes the tide is turning. "We've all collectively recognized the reality that the BJP is losing significant votes, therefore we are mutually exploring the formation of a cohesive and durable government that will fulfill the aspirations of India," Congress spokesman Sanjay Jha said.

He said the negotiations among opposition parties to work out a "viable alternative" to Modi's government would be finalized before the May 23 result. Taking the lead in preparations to take power is N Chandrababu Naidu, the chief minister of the southern state of

Andhra Pradesh, and formerly a BJP ally, according to his regional Telugu Desam Party (TDP). Naidu has been in touch with leaders of most opposition parties, meeting some in person, TDP officials said.

Modi and other BJP leaders brush off the opposition threat. BJP President Amit Shah goaded the opposition yesterday to name its prime ministerial candidate, amid criticism of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the scion of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that has dominated India's politics for much of its history since independence from Britain in 1947. Congress's Jha, asked if Gandhi would be candidate for prime minister, said there was "no talent deficit" in the opposition.

Many choices

Congress was criticized for failing to strike an election alliance with many anti-Modi regional parties, some of them caste-based and run by politicians with much more experience than Gandhi. They include Mamata Banerjee, the chief minister of West Bengal state, and Mayawati, a former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh state. Naidu has been negotiating with both of them as well as the chief of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), based in the eastern state of Odisha.

Political strategists have said that the BJD,



NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi gestures as he delivers a speech during a rally ahead of Phase VI of India's general election in New Delhi. — AFP

the fifth largest party in the 545-seat lower house of parliament, could emerge as king-maker. The BJD has also been wooed by Modi, according to two sources with knowledge of the matter, but the party said it would

only make a decision after the results are out. TDP spokesman Lanka Dinakar said he was confident the BJD would join with the opposition. "We have many choices to replace Modi," he said. — Reuters

Prison riot leaves four dead in Myanmar

YANGON: Four prisoners were killed during a riot at a northern Myanmar jail, officials said yesterday, coming on the heels of an amnesty which saw more than 6,000 inmates released—including high-profile Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo. The unrest at Sagaing region's Shwe Bo prison began on Wednesday evening, said chief minister Myint Naing. "They were demanding for equal rights. They became anarchic," he said, adding that everything was now "under control".

Myint did not say how the prisoners died. Military

spokesman Zaw Min Tun said border affairs officials were called in to "control" the situation. "We heard there was some shooting," he said, adding that there were also reports of unrest in jails in Karen and Kachin states. The violence in Shwe Bo comes days after more than 6,000 people were freed in the latest round of presidential pardons—part of an annual prisoner amnesty granted by Myanmar President Win Myint.

According to local newspaper Eleven Media, prison department director Min Tun Soe said the riots were triggered over the inmate anger at not being included in the amnesty. In total, 23,000 prisoners were released in three rounds of pardons since April 17. The majority of those released are usually serving time for petty drug crimes, but Tuesday's release included Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who were jailed after reporting on the Rohingya crisis in northern Rakhine state. —AFP



YANGON: Prison department officers arrive to enter Shwe Bo prison after a riot at the prison in Sagaing region. — AFP

India court dismisses claim Rahul Gandhi is secret Brit

NEW DELHI: India's top court yesterday threw out a petition seeking to bar Rahul Gandhi from contesting the ongoing general election over claims he is secretly British. The 48-year-old scion of India's Nehru-Gandhi political dynasty is the main challenger to Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is seeking a second term in office after storming to power in 2014. Opponents of Gandhi accuse him of lying about his nationality and allege that he holds British citizenship, citing annual returns filed by a now-defunct British company in which he was once a director.

India does not allow dual nationality and only Indian citizens can contest elections. The Supreme Court called the petition frivolous and an attempt to start a "roving inquiry" into the long-standing claims against Gandhi. "Just because a paper notes his citizenship as British, does he become a British citizen?" a bench headed by chief justice Ranjan Gogoi said. Gandhi, whose mother Sonia is Italian-born and whose father was assassinated former prime minister

Rajiv Gandhi, has always denied holding foreign citizenship.

India's home ministry, controlled by Modi's government, last month shot off a letter to Gandhi asking him to come clean on the issue. The court's ruling comes as in the final days of the country's marathon seven-week election, in which 900 million voters will decide the leader of the world's biggest democracy. The final day of voting is on May 19 with results due four days later. Gandhi and Modi have traded almost daily barbs over corruption, national security and the economy during the campaign.

At a public rally in Delhi on Wednesday, Modi, 68, accused the Gandhi family of using an India Navy warship as its "personal taxi" when Rahul's father Rajiv was the prime minister. "Rajiv Gandhi was accompanied by his in-laws who had come from Italy. Question is whether the security of the country was not compromised by taking foreigners onboard a warship," Modi said.

Rajiv was assassinated in 1991 by a Tamil suicide bomber when Rahul was 20. Modi last week called the former prime minister "corrupt" while on the campaign trail. "Your Karma awaits you. Projecting your inner beliefs about yourself onto my father won't protect you. All my love and a huge hug," Gandhi tweeted in response. The penultimate round of India's election takes place on Sunday with citizens in the capital New Delhi among those casting ballots. —AFP

In happy Bhutan, the PM is a doc on Saturdays

Tshering to focus on healthcare as lifestyle diseases rise

THIMPHU, Bhutan: It's Saturday in Bhutan and Lotay Tshering has just completed urinary bladder repair surgery on a patient at the Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Hospital. But Tshering is no ordinary doctor. During the week, he also happens to be prime minister in the Himalayan kingdom famous for measuring citizens' Gross National Happiness.

"For me it's a de-stresser," said Tshering, who was elected prime minister of the nation of 750,000 people last year in only its third democratic election since the end of absolute monarchy in 2008. "Some people play golf, some do archery, and I like to operate. I am just spending my weekends here," the 50-year-old said. No one at the hospital bats an eyelid as Tshering, wearing a faded lab coat and crocs, walks through the busy corridors. Nurses and hospital attendants continue with their jobs as normal.

A case apart

The Buddhist kingdom is in many ways a case apart, benchmarking itself on happiness instead of economic growth. One of the pillars of Gross National Happiness is conservation of the environment. Bhutan is carbon negative and its constitution mandates that 60 percent of the country remains forested. It is also big on ecotourism and charges a daily fee of \$250 per visitor in high season.

The capital Thimphu has no traffic lights, the sale of tobacco is banned, and television was only allowed in 1999. Archery competitions, with liberal amounts of the local firewater, are a national craze. Phalluses painted on houses to ward off evil are also a common sight. But the "Land of the Thunder Dragon" also has its problems, among them corruption, rural poverty, youth unemployment and criminal gangs.

Tshering, who trained in Bangladesh, Japan, Australia and the United States, began his political career in 2013, but his party failed to make headway in that year's election. After losing, King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck commanded him to lead a team of doctors and travel with the monarch's entourage to far-flung villages to provide free medical treatment. Now as prime minister, he spends Saturdays treating patients referred to him and Thursday mornings offering medical advice to trainees and doctors. Sunday is family time.

Back in the prime minister's office, a lab coat hangs on the back of his chair. This, he said, serves as a reminder of his election pledge to focus on healthcare. Patients don't have to pay directly for healthcare in Bhutan, but Tshering says that much more remains to be done despite important strides in medical treatment.

While the country has seen major improvements in life expectancy, a reduction in infant



THIMPHU, Bhutan: In this photo Bhutan's Prime Minister Lotay Tshering treats a patient at the National Referral Hospital in the Bhutanese capital Thimphu. — AFP

mortality and the elimination of many infectious diseases, the number of lifestyle diseases—including alcoholism and diabetes—is on the rise. "We must now slowly put more focus on secondary and tertiary healthcare," Tshering said.

At the hospital, Tshering's patient, a 40-year-

old man named Bumthap who underwent a five-hour bladder repair surgery, told AFP he was pleased with the results. "Now that I have been operated on by the prime minister, who is considered one of the best doctors in the country, I feel more relieved," he said. — AFP

Suu Kyi tries to save face with Myanmar reporters' release

YANGON: After relentless diplomatic pressure and global outrage, fallen democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi finally decided that a pardon for two Myanmar journalists jailed for reporting on a Rohingya massacre was the only way to resolve an issue that has dogged her government for nearly 18 months. Observers say the unexpected release of the two Reuters reporters was a political decision timed to save face for the country's civilian leader, after a vigorous international campaign that saw Amal Clooney join their legal team, Time magazine put the pair on their cover, and journalism awards and honors pile up—including the prestigious Pulitzer Prize.

A presidential pardon freed Wa Lone, 33, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 29, from prison on Tuesday to a media frenzy and messages of congratulations from the White House to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. The pair spent more than 500 days behind bars under colonial-era state secrets convictions after probing the extrajudicial killing of 10 Rohingya Muslims during a military crackdown. Global attention on the reporters and the damage already done to the country's reputation were "potentially costly" to the government, said independent analyst Richard Horsey.

Nobel Laureate Suu Kyi—already seen as a pariah by many for perceived complicity in the Rohingya's plight—provoked outcry when she refused to intervene, insisting "rule of law" must be followed. The abrupt decision to release the pair this week was made because Myanmar's leaders had "taken into consideration the long-term interest of (the) country", said government spokesman Zaw Htay. Retired Thai diplomat Kobsak Chutikul, who has

worked in an advisory capacity to Suu Kyi's government, told AFP that senior officials had all known a pardon must be granted at some point but "nobody felt this up with her". Political timing was also a factor, observers say. Myanmar is due to go to the polls next year and this was a chance to "get it out of the way" beforehand rather than risk overshadowing the vote, Kobsak said.

Albatross round their necks

Behind the international condemnation, backroom diplomacy appears to have played a key role in convincing Suu Kyi to pardon the reporters. One man waiting among the crowds outside the gates of Yangon's notorious Insein Prison was British health expert Lord Ara Darzi, whose name barely came up during regular media coverage of the saga. A close confidant of Suu Kyi, he has regularly visited the country over the past two years in an advisory role on a Rakhine state commission.

But he has known the leader for years, and hosted her in London after her release from house arrest. "From what I hear, he finally found the opportunity to convince Suu Kyi this was an albatross hanging round their necks," said Kobsak, who served alongside Darzi on another Myanmar government commission. The discussion would have taken place "behind the scenes, in quiet conversations in her house", he added.

Darzi later hinted about his role to reporters at a press conference following the journalists' release. "The lesson is simple: dialogue works even in the most difficult of circumstances," he said. Presidential pardons are traditionally granted around the Myanmar new year in April. Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were freed in the third amnesty in just over a week that saw a total of 23,000 prisoners released. The pair were handed a seven-year jail sentence last September, upheld first by Yangon's High Court and then the country's Supreme Court last month.

Reuters maintained the duo were imprisoned in retaliation for their expose, while legal experts argued the case was riddled with irregularities. — AFP

Sri Lanka Catholic schools to reopen after attacks

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's Catholic Church yesterday announced it will reopen its schools next week for the first time since Easter Sunday bombings killed 258 people. Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith said the schools would open Tuesday after remaining shut following fears of a repeat of the April 21 attacks on three churches and three luxury hotels. "We have decided to open all Catholic schools on May 14," Ranjith told reporters in Colombo following a meeting between the country's 12 bishops and President Maithripala Sirisena in Colombo yesterday.

All state-run schools—more than 10,000 in total—had resumed classes on Monday after police and security forces deployed armed guards. But attendance has been low despite a raft of new security measures, including parking restrictions near schools. Ranjith also said regular Sunday services would resume at all Catholic churches in Colombo from Sunday while a special service will be held Thursday at Negombo, north of the capital.

St Sebastian's church in Negombo where over 100 people were killed will hold an open mass yesterday evening, for the first time since the attack, Ranjith said. The government has blamed a local group, the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ), for the bombings that also wounded nearly 500 people. Islamic State claimed responsibility and the bombers filmed themselves making a pledge of allegiance to the group before the attacks. — AFP

International

North Korea fires missiles as US envoy visits Seoul

Pyongyang defends tests as routine drill

SEOUL: North Korea welcomed a US envoy's visit to Seoul by firing two missiles yesterday, the South's military said, in Pyongyang's second launch in less than a week as it seeks to up the ante in deadlocked nuclear negotiations with Washington. It came after North Korea carried out a military drill and fired multiple projectiles on Saturday, when at least one was believed to be a short-range missile.

The North had not previously fired a missile since November 2017, shortly before a rapid diplomatic thaw eased high tensions on the peninsula and paved the way for a historic first meeting between its leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump. But their second summit in Vietnam in February broke up without an agreement rolling back Pyongyang's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief or even a joint statement, leaving the North frustrated by the stalemate.

Yesterday's launch came hours after the US Special Representative on North Korea, Stephen Biegun, arrived in Seoul late Wednesday for talks with South Korean officials on the allies' approach towards Pyongyang, in his first visit since the Hanoi summit. The North "fired what appeared to be two short-range missiles", Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement, adding they flew eastwards for 270 and 420 kilometers and the South Korean and US militaries were jointly analyzing them. It earlier said the launched appeared to originate from Sino-ri in North Pyongan province, 75 kilometers northwest of Pyongyang.

One of the North's longest-running operational missile bases is in the area, which the Centre for Strategic & International Studies says houses a regiment-sized unit equipped with Nodong-1 medium-range ballistic missiles. Biegun met his South Korean counterpart Lee Do-hoon for breakfast on yesterday but much of his schedule was not made public. The US

envoy is due to meet the South's foreign and unification ministers Friday as the security allies-Washington stations 28,500 troops in the South to defend it from its neighbor-work on their approach towards Pyongyang.

With yesterday's launch, said Hong Min, a senior researcher at the state-run Korea Institute for National Unification, "North Korea is sending a clear message that it will not be satisfied with humanitarian aid" being considered by Seoul. "It is saying, 'We want security guarantees in return for the denuclearization process,'" he added. "Kim could have felt he needed to show a strong military posture to ease complaints following a joint South-US military drill last month."

'Stop nonsense'

Pyongyang, Seoul and Washington had all refrained from explicitly calling Saturday's launch a missile—the South used the term "projectile"—which could jeopardize the ongoing diplomacy by violating UN Security Council resolutions as well as Kim's announcement of an end to long-range missile tests. But experts said at least one short-range missile was involved, with a report on the respected 38 North website suggesting that it was a "direct import" of a Russian-produced Iskander.

"The debris generated by the launch in North Korea is a virtual match of a launch of Iskander conducted by Russia," it said. If North Korea imported Iskanders from Russia, the report added, "it has an existing capacity to deliver warheads to targets in South Korea with great precision". Pyongyang insisted earlier yesterday that Saturday's "routine drill" was conducted within its own waters and added the "flying objects" did not pose any threat to the US, South Korea and Japan. "The firing of the intermediate- and long-range missile and the ICBM was not involved in it," a spokesman for



SEOUL: People watch a television news program showing file footage of North Korea's projectile weapons, at a railway station in Seoul.—AFP

the North's delegation for military talks with the South said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency. He condemned Seoul's criticism of that launch, with KCNA's headline reading: "S. Korean military authorities urged to stop nonsense"

Visits fall

A summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and the North's Kim a year ago was instrumental in lowering the temperature, but since Hanoi the North has blamed Seoul for siding with Washington, leaving inter-Korean relations in limbo. The number of South Koreans visiting the North has slumped this year, figures showed. All civilian communication between the

two countries—which remain technically in conflict after the 1950-53 Korean War ended with an armistice instead of a peace treaty—is banned and South Koreans need government approvals to travel north.

So far this year only 617 have been granted permission, the unification ministry said, little more than the monthly average during 2018, when a total of 6,689 Southern citizens went North to attend government meetings, sports games, cultural and reunions for families separated since the war. "Due to domestic and foreign political events since the US-North Korea summit in Hanoi, it has decreased somewhat since last year," the ministry said in a statement.—AFP

US ends support for Japan crashed fighter jet search

TOKYO: The US Navy has ended operations assisting Japan's search for a stealth fighter jet that crashed in the Pacific, after some of its debris was recovered. "A US Navy salvage team aboard a contracted vessel completed its mission supporting search and recovery operations with the Japan Self-Defense Forces," the US 7th Fleet said in a statement on Wednesday.

Japan will continue searching for the remains of the plane, a defense spokesman said. Some debris has already been recovered from the high-tech F-35A that plummeted into the sea off the coast of northeastern Japan on April 9. But the "all-important" memory that could offer clues into the accidents has not been recovered, and the jet's pilot has also not been found.

Experts say Japan and the US are keen to prevent debris from the plane being recovered

by Russia or China, with Japan's Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya admitting last month there were "a significant amount of secrets that need to be protected" on board. The fighter jet went missing on April 9 while flying 135 kilometers (85 miles) east of Misawa, northeastern Japan, on a training mission.

The plane lost contact about 30 minutes after taking off from Misawa Air Base with three other aircraft. It was the first reported case of a crash by an F35-A, according to Japan's Air Self-Defense Force. Japan is deploying F35-As, each of which costs more than 10 billion yen (\$90 million), to replace its ageing F-4 fighters. They are a key part of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's efforts to upgrade the nation's military capacity to meet changing power dynamics in East Asia, with China rapidly modernizing its military.—AFP

Philippine leader bugged by cockroach during speech

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's unpredictable speeches frequently contain bombshell pronouncements, but the surprise this time came in the form of a cockroach ambling along the leader's shoulder. The bug popped up on Duterte as he was extolling the virtues of the candidates he has endorsed in next week's midterm polls at a campaign rally late Wednesday.

An aide tried and failed to scrape the critter away with some papers, but Duterte brushed it aside as the government broadcast cut to a smiling but bemused audience in the central city of Bohol. Duterte, who was nearing the end of his roughly 90-minute address,

joked that the insect belongs to the opposition party. The leader's critics quickly took to Twitter to mock his close encounter with the roach, which is more frequently seen scurrying over refuse.

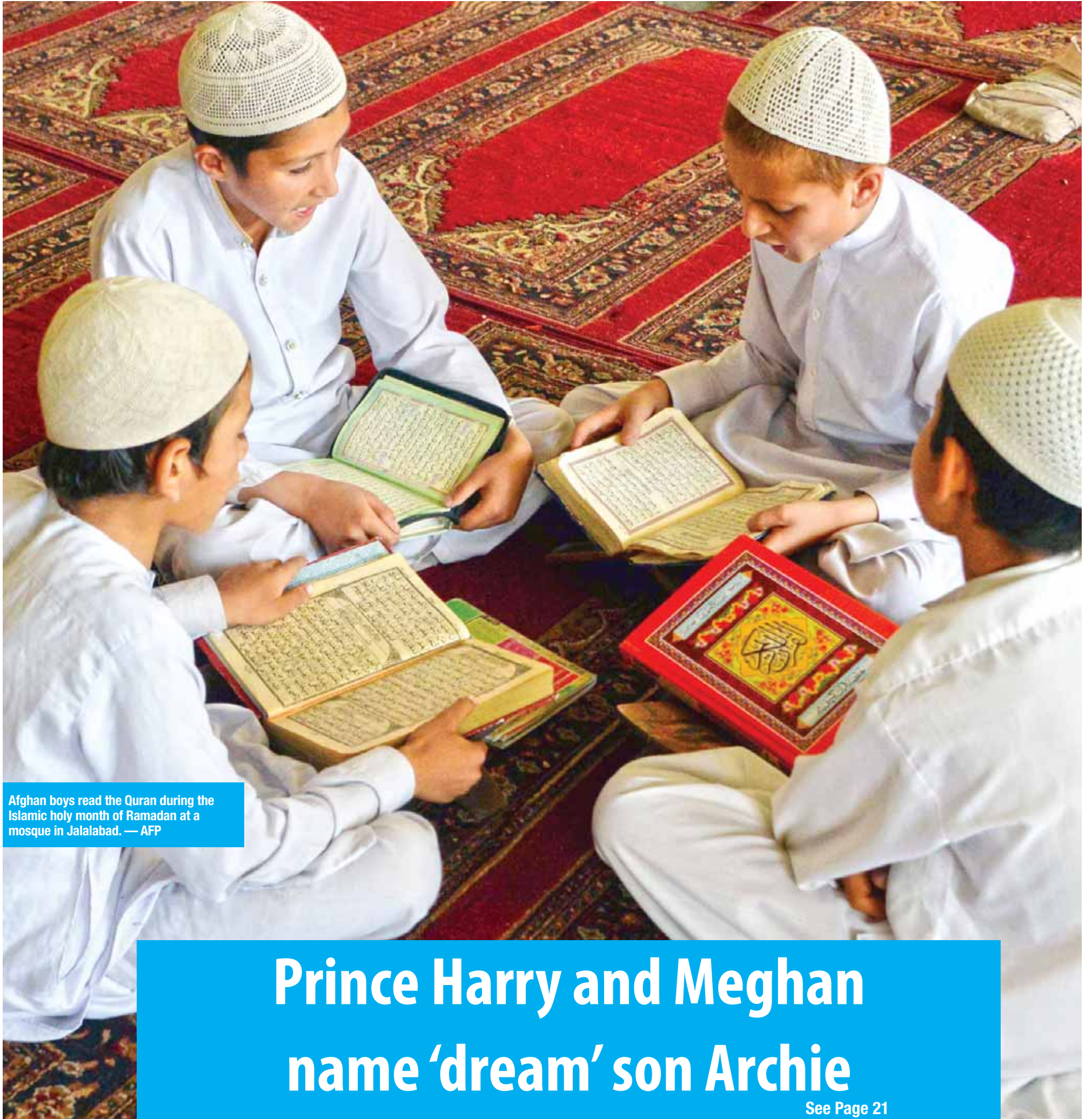
"The cockroach must have realized that Duterte is the trashiest trash it has ever seen," wrote @andy_crush. "And I never thought I would say this but GOOD JOB EXPOSING THAT TRASH, DEAR COCKROACH," @keeyaaaa posted. Duterte is on the campaign trail to rally support for his candidates in next week's midterm polls, in which some 18,000 seats ranging from local councils to the upper house Senate are up for grabs.—AFP

Lifestyle

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Afghan boys read the Quran during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan at a mosque in Jalalabad. — AFP

Prince Harry and Meghan name 'dream' son Archie

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Christine and the Queens found Rihanna song rejection 'validating'



Christine and the Queens found it “validating” to have her song rejected by Rihanna. The ‘Titled’ hitmaker has revealed she penned a track about “sending nudes” for the R&B pop superstar after her team got in contact with her management. And, although she thinks Rihanna was “too fierce” for the “feeble love song”, she is “down with” being rejected if she is “not worthy”. She told TimeOut London: “My team were like ‘Rihanna is searching for you.’ “I was like, ‘What?!’ Then I wrote something but of course she didn’t take it, because I think it was really sad and depressing! “Actually I love the song but I think it was too weak for her, it’s transparent skin, weak, feeble love song. “It was about sending nudes. I liked the song but I think she’s too fierce for it. “It’s okay to be rejected by Rihanna, I’m down with that. It was validating in a way, I was like, ‘Yes, reject me - I’m not worthy!’” Christine also applauded her idol Madonna, who she was spanked on stage by as a fan at one of her gigs and even went on to duet with the ‘Like A Virgin’ in 2016, for being the only female artist who has a “threatening” “godly” presence “but owns it”.

Sylvester Stallone to show ‘Rambo 5’ teaser at Cannes

Sylvester Stallone is to unveil teaser images of “Rambo 5” at the Cannes film festival this month, ahead of the movie’s worldwide release later in the year, according to organizers. Snippets of the film—whose full title is “Rambo V: Last Blood”—will be shown out of competition in a special May 24 career tribute to the 72-year-old American actor who made a name as an action hero in the 1980s. “Sly” Stallone has already visited Cannes several times, notably in 2014 to promote “The Expendables 3” when he turned up with co-stars Arnold Schwarzenegger and Harrison Ford atop armoured vehicles. The title of the latest Rambo movie is a nod to the first one, 1982’s “Rambo: First Blood”, which introduced the muscle-bound survivalist Vietnam veteran to audiences—and kicked off a second lucrative franchise for Stallone alongside his “Rocky” films. A restored version of that first movie will also be shown in the Cannes tribute.



Chris Evans’ ‘Infinite’ to be released next summer



Chris Evans’ past-lives drama ‘Infinite’ is set to be released next summer. Paramount Studios has announced the mystery film helmed by Antoine Fuqua and penned by John Lee Hancock and Ian Shorr, who are adapting D. Eric Maikranz’s 2009 novel ‘The Reincarnationist Papers’, is slated for release on August 7, 2020. The studio also announced their upcoming ‘Coming to America’ sequel starring Eddie Murphy has been moved back four months to December 18, 2020, to make way for ‘Infinite’. The movie is produced by Lorenzo di Bonaventura and Mark Vahradian at Di Bonaventura Pictures, and John Zaozirny. Rafi Crohn is executive producing. The original novel introduces readers to the Cognomina, a secret society of people who possess total recall of their past lives and a troubled young man who becomes haunted by memories of two past lives after joining their ranks.

Wilson played ‘dodgy’ pranks on Anne Hathaway during The Hustle



Rebel Wilson played a few “dodgy” pranks on Anne Hathaway while filming ‘The Hustle’. The 39-year-old actress revealed that while on set of their new comedy film she would often play jokes on her co-star including throwing insults at her and trying to trip her up by “surprising her” while cameras were rolling. Speaking to ‘Entertainment Tonight’ at the film’s Hollywood premiere on Wednesday night at the ArcLight Cinerama Dome, she confessed: “I did because I improvise quite a bit in the movie and I would improvise a lot of insults. “ I also very inappropriately touched her in one take when I should have told her I was gonna do it and sometimes I just like surprising her but when the cameras were rolling, so what’s she gonna do cos she’s gotta stay in character because she’s so professional as an actress she’s not gonna break. “So yeah I did a few dodgy things to her, hopefully she forgives me because at the end of the day I love her she’s gorgeous. — Bang Showbiz

Metallica’s Kirk Hammett takes a tumble on slippery guitar pedal

Metallica’s Kirk Hammett took a tumble at the heavy metal band’s concert in Milan on Wednesday night. The guitar legend was performing his epic ‘Moths to Flame’ solo at the outdoor Snai San Siro Hippodrome in the Italian city when he slipped on his guitar pedal, which was soaking wet from the heavy rain. Kirk laughed off the fall and posted a video of the moment on Twitter. He captioned the clip: “Ummm- I slipped on my wet wah pedal. It rained so much I felt like I was playing guitar in the shower. #MetInMilan @Metallica (sic)” The 56-year-old rocker can be seen really going for it with his playing, before landing on his his back with his legs flung in the air, before carrying on like a professional from the floor and getting back on his feet again. The ‘Enter Sandman’ hitmakers are currently on their ‘WorldWired Tour’ and show no signs of slowing down and plan to keep going for at least 20 years. The band - completed by James Hetfield and Robert Trujillo - have no desire to quit touring or making music like their peers Slayer and are feeling more “energised and rejuvenated” than ever before. Despite wanting to keep the band active, drummer Lars Ulrich, 55, admitted he has “no idea” what Metallica will “sound or look like” further down the line. The stickman said previously: “A lot of people are retiring, and we feel very energized and rejuvenated. I mean, we wanna go [a] long [time].



Prince Harry and Meghan name 'dream' son Archie

Britain's Prince Harry and wife Meghan on Wednesday announced their new "dream" son's name is Archie, hours after showing him off to the world for the first time. "The Duke and Duchess of Sussex are pleased to announce they have named their first born child: Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor," the couple announced on their Instagram account, ending months of speculation. The informal choice defied the bookmakers' predictions and confirmed the couple's determination not to be bound by tradition.

Archie's proud parents emerged in front of the cameras inside Windsor Castle earlier Wednesday to show off their son, ahead of introducing him to great-grandmother Queen Elizabeth II. "He's just been a dream," said a smiling Meghan, 37, in her first public comments since giving birth to the seven-pound, three-ounce (3.26-kilogram) baby, who stayed firmly asleep during his public unveiling. "He has the sweetest temperament. He's really calm," added the Duchess of Sussex, as Prince Harry cradled the newborn, wrapped in a white blanket, by her side.

Royal watchers had been desperate for a glimpse of the new baby, who is seventh in the line to the British throne, ever since the couple announced his birth to their 6.5 million followers on Instagram with the message "It's a BOY!" "Parenting is amazing," said 34-year-old Harry, the day after brother Prince William—two years his senior and with three children of his own—had jokingly welcomed him to the "sleep deprivation society that is parenting". "We're just so thrilled to have our own little bundle of joy," Meghan added. "It's been a special couple of days."

'Nice moment'

Royal fan Margaret Tyler told AFP that Harry appeared to be "absolutely besotted" by his son. "He looks absolutely adorable, he is like a little doll, isn't he?", she said outside Windsor Castle, west of London. "What proud parents he's got." The couple revealed Queen Elizabeth's husband Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, had got a sneak preview in a chance encounter in the corridors of Windsor Castle. "We just bumped into the Duke as we were walking by, which was so nice," said Meghan. "It'll be a nice moment to introduce the baby to more



A handout photograph released by The Duke and Duchess of Sussex shows Britain's Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex (left), and his wife Meghan, Duchess of Sussex (right), accompanied by Meghan's mother Doria Ragland, showing their newborn baby son, Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor to Britain's Queen Elizabeth II (center) and Britain's Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh (left), at Windsor Castle in Windsor, west of London. — AFP

family." Prince Charles, on a visit to Germany on Tuesday, said he was "obviously delighted" and "impatient" to see his fourth grandchild. The heir to the British throne, speaking in German, said he would see the baby "in the coming days when things are calmer". Crowds have gathered outside Windsor Castle all week to wish them well. It was a rare piece of good news for a nation consumed by the protracted Brexit drama. And it has given people a chance to celebrate royal traditions—this time with a young American twist.

Former USTV star Meghan has created a fresh buzz around the century-old House of Windsor. Some fans have also been intrigued by her heritage. "I want to see how he'll look. As Meghan is mixed race, I'm curious", said Zahra Kibue, 34, who lived in Kenya before moving to England a few years ago.

No title

Meghan has also made waves with her modernizing ways and recently raised eyebrows by closing her own car door—a task usually performed by aides. She also ignored tradition by keeping the birth and

recovery process private, unlike sister-in-law Kate, who appeared before the cameras hours after giving birth. The couple have also chosen not to use courtesy titles at present, although he could become a prince when his grandfather, the Prince of Wales, becomes king. The inspiration behind the name is now likely to be the main source of speculation. The name has traditionally been used as a shortened version of the old English and Scottish name Archibald, meaning "truly brave", but has recently become increasingly popular in its own right. It was the 15th most popular boy's name in Britain last year, according to website Baby Centre, using official figures. British bookmakers had a busy few months of betting on the name, with Archie a rank outsider. UK royal names are normally chosen from a relatively restricted pool of those used by past kings and queens. But Meghan and Harry are anything but normal royals, and reports had emerged that the couple were considering an unusual name that was relevant to both Britain and the US. — AFP

BBC radio presenter sacked for 'racist' royal baby tweet

Veteran British broadcaster Danny Baker was yesterday fired by the BBC after tweeting a picture of well-dressed couple holding hands with a chimpanzee in a suit, tagged with the caption "royal baby leaves hospital". Accusations of racism immediately flooded his timeline, as new royal baby Archie has mixed-race heritage through mother Meghan, and he later took down the picture, apologizing for the "possible connotations". But the BBC announced Baker, 61, would be leaving his job as presenter on Radio 5 Live. "This was a serious error of judgment and goes against the values we as a station aim to embody," said the broadcaster.

"Danny's a brilliant broadcaster but will no longer be presenting a weekly show with us." Baker, who made his name as a music writer

during the punk era, began his radio career in 1989 and has also presented television quiz shows. He hit back at his sacking, saying the BBC "threw me under the bus" and that the racial implications of his tweet "never occurred to me because, well, mind not diseased". "Would have used same stupid pic for any other Royal birth or Boris Johnson kid or even one of my own. It's a funny image," he said. But ITV news anchor Charlene White said the tweet was "unacceptable".

"To post a pic picturing a 3-day old baby of mixed heritage as a monkey, then claim it was a joke? That's old-school prejudice and racism at its peak," she wrote. Meghan and husband Prince Harry showed off Archie to the world for the first time on Wednesday after his birth on Monday. — AFP

Prince Harry given baby romper at first workday as father

Prince Harry was given a baby outfit for his son Archie by Princess Margriet of the Netherlands yesterday as the new dad went back to work to mark a year until the 2020 edition of the Invictus Games he founded for wounded military personnel. Harry, the Duke of Sussex, said he had "no idea" whether his son, whose birth was announced on Monday, would attend the sporting event in a year's time—but he now has the baby onesie emblazoned with its logo.

The baby will "put it on", Harry said, drawing loud cheers from the crowd. Harry and his wife Meghan announced on Wednesday they had named their newborn, the seventh-in-line to the British throne, Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor. The prince's trip to the Netherlands was his first public outing since he appeared before the cameras on Monday to announce the birth and the couple showed off their son before a small group of the media at Windsor Castle on Wednesday. His Invictus Games were first held in London in 2014, inspired by his military service, having completed two tours in Afghanistan. The games, during which veterans take part in sports including wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball, and indoor rowing, will be held in The Hague next year.

Harry, who was greeted by cheering fans and children in The Hague, mingled with veterans as they practiced in a gymnasium, stopping at one point to try his hand at archery. Dutch veteran Ronald van Dort, 37, who lost both his legs when he served in Afghanistan in 2008, told Reuters the presence of Prince Harry and his commitment to the Invictus Games were very important to war veterans. "He has served himself, he knows what it's like", Van Dort said. — AFP



Britain's Prince Harry holds an item of baby clothing during the presentation of The Invictus Games The Hague 2020 in The Hague yesterday. — AFP



Veteran British broadcaster Danny Baker.



A man reads an information board at the entrance of a martial arts school in Havana.

Havana's Chinatown

dreaming of a new lease on life

Nestling alongside Havana's old town, surrounded by colonial buildings and swept by the exhaust trails of passing 1950s American convertibles, stands a large arch with an ornate roof. It's the entrance gate to Havana's Chinatown, once the biggest in Latin America, whose residents are now dreaming of recovering its past glory. Here, taxi drivers joke that it's the only Chinatown in the world without any Chinese, a testament to the assimilation of a migrant community that first arrived in Cuba in the middle of the 19th century. "Since its creation, it was an open Chinese neighborhood that produced this mix between the Chinese and the country's original population," said Teresa Maria Li, director of the local House of Traditional Chinese Arts.

Li comes from a family with a Chinese grandfather and a Spanish grandmother. "First of all I feel Cuban. But deep inside I have the Chinese gene and I defend it vigorously, with a sense of belonging." After lunch at Lung

Kong old people's association, pensioners sit around a table playing mahjong, a tile game similar to the western card game rummy. These are some of the last remaining Cuban residents who are 100 percent Chinese. Their descendants have embraced the local culture, and are more Cuban than Chinese.

The first wave of Cantonese migration arrived in 1847 to work as "coolies," agricultural laborers who replaced African slaves in the sugar plantations. The next wave, though, had money and were fleeing discrimination and an economic crisis in California. They built a thriving neighborhood with hundreds of thousands of people, as well as restaurants and theaters—Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier christened it the "Yellow City."

But the migratory flow dried up with Cuba's 1959 communist revolution. Those fleeing Mao Zedong were met by Fidel Castro. They didn't hang around. "Calculating the number of descendants is impossible. There are first to fifth generation Chinese. Those



Chinese descendants look at a show of dancers at the House of Chinese Arts and Traditions in Havana.



View of the entrance of the Chinese neighborhood in Havana.



Bicitaxis drive near the Chinese neighborhood in Havana.

fully Chinese ... there are 121 in the whole island," Maria Teresa Montes de Oca Choy, Asian history professor at Havana University, told AFP.

GDP boost

The influx of rich Chinese migrants from California provided a boost to Cuba's gross domestic product but in 1959 Castro's "nationalization law affected all Chinese. Small businesses had considerable Chinese capital," said Montes de Oca. But once the Soviet Union fell and Cuba spiraled into an economic crisis in the 1990s, some old Chinese restaurants reopened, although like most of the city they remain run down. With Havana celebrating its 500th anniversary, authorities have committed to restoring many parts of the city, including Chinatown.

As well as resurfacing the roads and improving street lighting, there will be traditional Chinese cultural activities too. In Manrique street, around 30 children are learning wushu-traditional Chinese martial arts. Next door, in what was once a Chinese cinema, nandao (broadsword) brandishing wushu master Roberto Vargas Lee is teaching adults.

The grandson of Chinese citizens he studied martial arts in China in the 1990s. His wife is from Shanghai and his mother was part of the former Cantonese Opera in Havana. "Some people tell me I don't look very Chinese, others ask me when I arrived from China. It's like the Tao says: everyone can look at the same thing, but see it differently," says Vargas.

'There's a mix'

While Chinese-Cubans are just as spontaneous as the rest of the population, they are less likely to leave open their door for unexpected visitors. "It's true that there are certain cultural differences, but we've adapted to that," said Carlos Alay Jo, a 60-year-old restaurant owner born in Cuba to a family from Guangzhou. "We reflect a lot about things, we're more reserved. There's a mix," he added, quoting his father, who taught martial arts to several top ranking officers in the Cuban army. Nearby, at a printer's, the next edition of the bilingual Kwong Wah Po daily newspaper, which began as a monthly 80 years ago, is being prepared.

Until recently it was printed on an 1849 American press-one of the oldest in the world-that was even equipped with Chinese characters. Times have changed, though, and the latest edition will be printed with modern methods, while there are no longer any fully Chinese members of the editorial team. With so few fully Chinese people left in Cuba, professor Montes de Oca admits that renovating a "Chinatown without Chinese people" could be a fallacy, but she insists that the locals "feel proud of having had a Chinatown and would love to have one again."—AFP



Chinese descendants play mahjong at the Chinese neighborhood in Havana.



A Chinese descendant plays mahjong at the Chinese neighborhood in Havana.



Picture of Chinese characters taken at the Chinese printing house in the Chinese neighborhood of Havana.



A man works at the Chinese printing house in the Chinese neighborhood of Havana.



Chinese descendants remain at a retirement home in the Chinese neighborhoods of Havana.



An old American car drives near the Chinese neighborhoods in Havana.

Lifestyle | Feature



The facade of new International Spy Museum is seen ahead of its opening in Washington, DC. — AFP photos



Visitors participate in an interactive exhibit about the raid to kill Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden at his Abbottabad, Pakistan, compound as they tour the new International Spy Museum.



Visitors tour the new International Spy Museum.

Ingenious gadgets, real-world quandaries at Washington's all-new Spy Museum



Visitors tour the new International Spy Museum.

A lipstick pistol, a button-hole camera, a lethal umbrella and an authentic waterboarding table: the espionage world's heroic, ingenious and sordid sides are all on show in Washington's all-new, much-expanded International Spy Museum. The hugely popular showplace that once conjured James Bond and Austin Powers as much as it did actual life-and-death Cold War intrigue has grown and, in the tailwind of 9/11 and the War on Terror, grown up. Relocated in a gleaming new steel and glass building double the size of its former premises, the Spy Museum still amazes and charms with the tales and gadgets of the undercover world going back centuries. But now it also depicts the complex and often unsettling challenges of the world of shadows, with visitors asked in clever interactive games and simulated situation rooms to decide: could I be an intelligence agent?

Disguises, microdots, suicide

The Spy Museum has been one of the US capital's most popular private destinations since it opened in 2002. The new premises opens officially on Sunday, just ahead of the summer tourist season. On show, as before, is the iconic Aston Martin DB5 from 1964's James Bond thriller "Goldfinger." But now there is also room for an equally sleek 1980s Amber surveillance drone, the precursor of the Predator. There is a British World War II one-man submarine, and an actual section of the CIA/MI6 tunnel that penetrated East Berlin in the 1950s to tap Soviet communications. And there are gadgets galore: a pregnant woman disguise from the CIA and a suicide needle hidden in a silver dollar coin, for use by Francis Gary Powers, the U2 spy plane pilot shot down by the Soviet Union in



Visitors tour the new International Spy Museum.



Examples of ciphers are seen at the new International Spy Museum.



A view of new International Spy Museum is seen.

Lifestyle | Feature



A visitor takes photographs of devices containing hidden surveillance equipment as she tours the new International Spy Museum.

1960. There are historical encryption machines, including Germany's Enigma, and a display on the microdot technology central to spying for decades last century.

Among all manner of odd items throughout the museum are a saboteur's exploding lump of coal, pills that CIA operatives entering Cuba could use to sedate barking dogs and the sketchbook of a KGB agent operating undercover in New York in the 1950s. "The objectives of spies have not changed over the centuries," said Craig Melton, whose massive collection of espionage gear is the core of the museum. "The only thing that has changed is the technology, and how they accomplish the objectives."

Could you be an agent

The museum's coverage is global, and mostly without judgment. China's theft of US secrets and technology is on display; so is the theft, centuries ago, of China's silkworm and tea cultivation know-how by Westerners. Woven in between are engaging, well-designed interactive exhibits and challenges that press the question: what would the visitor do? One tests a person's lock-picking ability, while another takes visitors through a series of tests of memory, judgment and observation in a simulated spy operation.

In yet another, visitors take the role of CIA analysts in the 2011 situation room where, holding deeply imperfect intelligence, they must decide whether to advise President Barack Obama to approve a raid on the Abbottabad, Pakistan compound possibly housing Osama Bin Laden. Complex issues are engaged and not whitewashed. The museum puts on show the spying world's failures, including a display of the actual intelligence that, if it had drawn more attention, might have helped prevent Al-Qaeda's September 11, 2001 attack. And, with a waterboard on display and a video discussion of actual participants, there is a disquieting debate on the CIA's use of torture after 9/11.



Examples of bugged devices are seen in an exhibit in the new International Spy Museum.

'The essence of espionage'

The museum has its roots in the 7,000-piece collection of Melton, a navy veteran and engineer who, beginning in the 1960s traveled the world to amass. He advertised that he was a buyer of any spy technology, and he sought out and befriended agents and officials from all sides of the Cold War game. "As the wall fell in Berlin, I was there," he said, and the collection's extensive spyware from East Germany's Stasi service is the result.

Weeks after the Soviet Union crumbled in December 1991, he traveled to Moscow. "I went and knocked on the door of KGB headquarters and said I'm here to buy spy equipment," Melton said. While he raised some suspicions, many realized he was a genuine collector who didn't talk about politics. "I like gadgets, they like gadgets," he said. "Cameras, microdots, coding machines, short range transmitters: that's the essence of espionage."

The pride of his collection is gruesome, but he spent four decades seeking it: the ice axe that Joseph Stalin's assassins used to murder Leon Trotsky in Mexico in 1940, in the climax of an intense three-year intelligence operation. Melton is hugely proud of the new museum, but somewhat wistful about the new digital age, in which computer technology has replaced many espionage tools. "I think we are past the golden era of spy devices. This is now the most powerful spy device in the world," he said, pointing to his smartphone. — AFP



An umbrella similar to the one the KGB used to kill dissident Georgi Markov is seen in an exhibit.



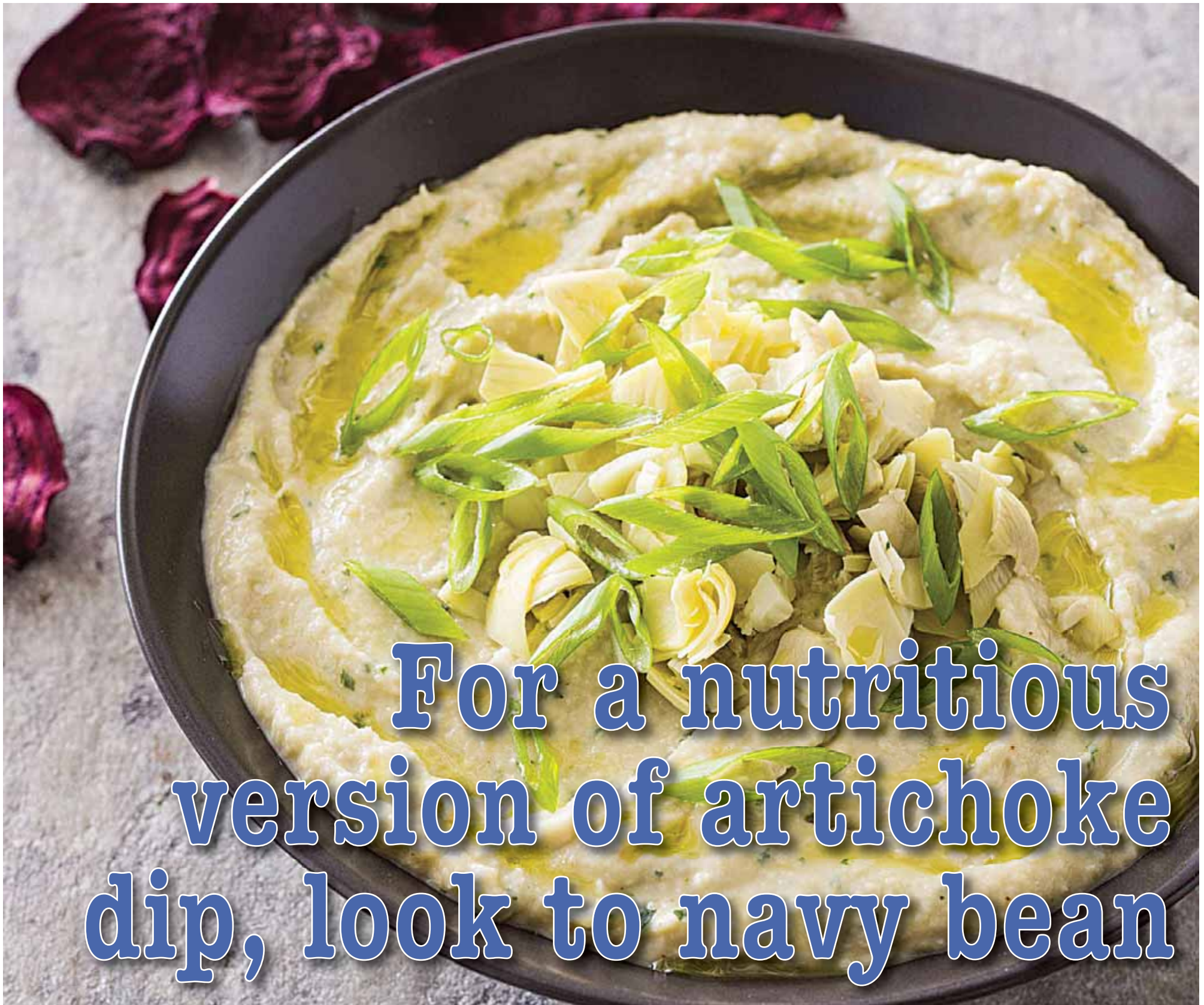
H. Keith Melton, a spy book author who donated thousands of items to the International Spy Museum, talks about an axe used in the assassination of Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky in Mexico, shown in an exhibit at the new International Spy Museum.



Visitors tour the new International Spy Museum.



An Aston Martin used in the James Bond movies is seen in an exhibit in the new International Spy Museum.



For a nutritious version of artichoke dip, look to navy bean

Most artichoke dips could justifiably be called mayonnaise and cheese dips, given what goes into them. To create a more nutritious rendition, we looked to bean dip to provide a creamy base that contributed protein and fiber instead of saturated fat. We thought that the vegetal artichokes (high in vitamins K and C and various minerals) would partner well with the earthy-sweet but mild beans, adding some needed character. We chose navy beans for their velvety texture, rinsing them to remove excess sodium. Using canned beans and jarred artichoke hearts kept the recipe easy. To increase the creaminess of our dip and add a filling burst of protein, we incorporated Greek yogurt. Finally, a healthy dose of lemon juice, garlic,

parsley, and scallion added fresh flavor and brightness. Serve with vegetables, whole-grain crackers, or whole-grain chips.

NAVY BEAN AND ARTICHOKE DIP

Ingredients
 Servings: 6-8
 Start to finish: 50 minutes
 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest plus 2 tablespoons juice
 1 small garlic clove, minced
 1 (15-ounce) can navy beans, 2 tablespoons liquid reserved, beans rinsed
 1 cup jarred whole artichoke hearts packed in water, rinsed and patted dry, 2 tablespoons chopped
 1/4 cup fresh parsley leaves

1 scallion, white and light green parts cut into 1/2-inch pieces, dark green part sliced thin on bias
 1/4 teaspoon ground fennel
 Pinch cayenne pepper
 1/4 cup organic plain 2 percent Greek yogurt
 Cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil

Preparation

Combine lemon zest and juice and garlic in bowl and let sit for 15 minutes. Pulse garlic-lemon juice mixture, beans, their reserved liquid, whole artichoke hearts, parsley, white and light green scallion pieces, 3/4 teaspoon salt, fennel, and cayenne in food processor until finely ground, 5 to 10 pulses, scraping down bowl as needed. Continue to process until

uniform paste forms, about 1 minute, scraping down bowl as needed.

Add yogurt and continue to process until smooth, about 15 seconds. Transfer to serving bowl, cover, and let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. (Dip can be refrigerated for up to 1 day; bring to room temperature before serving.) Season with salt to taste. Sprinkle with reserved chopped artichokes and dark green scallion parts, and drizzle with oil to taste before serving.

Nutrition information per serving:

109 calories; 34 calories from fat; 4 g fat (1 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 0 mg cholesterol; 328 mg sodium; 14 g carbohydrate; 5 g fiber; 1 g sugar; 5 g protein.

Chickpeas make a great foundation for this veggie burger



Buttery, nutty chickpeas make a great foundation for a satisfying veggie burger. A touch of curry powder adds a hint of warm spice. Panko are crispy Japanese-style bread crumbs, they help hold the patties together. Process the chickpea mixture just until there are some finely chopped chickpeas (to help the patties hold together) and some larger pieces (for a satisfying texture). Do not over-process the mixture or the burgers will have a mushy texture. To keep the patties from falling apart, wait until they are well browned on the first side before attempting to flip them.

Follow this recipe with your kids CRISPY VEGGIE BURGERS

Ingredients
Servings: 2
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 20 minutes
Prepare Ingredients:

1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas
1 large egg
2 tablespoons plain Greek yogurt, plus extra for serving
2 teaspoons plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, measured separately
1/2 teaspoon curry powder
1/8 teaspoon salt
Pinch pepper
1/3 cup panko bread crumbs
3 scallions, sliced thin
4 leaves lettuce
4 hamburger buns
Gather Cooking Equipment:
Colander
Can opener
3/4-cup dry measuring cup
Medium bowl
Whisk
Food processor
Rubber spatula

Ruler
10-inch nonstick skillet
Spatula

Preparation

Set colander in sink. Open can of chickpeas and pour into colander. Rinse chickpeas with cold water and shake colander to drain well. Measure out 3/4 cup chickpeas; reserve remaining chickpeas for another use. In medium bowl, whisk egg, yogurt, 2 teaspoons oil, curry powder, salt, and pepper until well combined.

Place 3/4 cup chickpeas, panko, and scallions in food processor. Lock lid in place. Hold down pulse button for 1 second, then release. Repeat until ingredients are roughly chopped with some large pieces remaining, 5 to 8 pulses.

Remove lid and carefully remove food processor blade (ask an adult for help). Transfer chickpea mixture to bowl with egg mixture. Use

rubber spatula to gently stir ingredients until just combined. Use your hands to divide chickpea mixture into 2 lightly packed balls. Gently flatten each ball into circle that measures 4 inches across.

Add remaining 2 teaspoons oil to 10-inch nonstick skillet and swirl skillet to coat evenly with oil. Place patties in skillet and cook over medium heat until well browned on first side, 4 to 6 minutes. Use spatula to gently flip patties (ask an adult for help). Cook until well browned on second side, 4 to 5 minutes. Turn off heat. Put 1 lettuce leaf inside each bun. Use spatula to slide burgers into buns. Serve with more yogurt (for dipping or spreading inside buns) if you like.

Nutrition information per serving: 726 calories; 189 calories from fat; 21 g fat (3 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 108 mg cholesterol; 1166 mg sodium; 106 g carbohydrate; 17 g fiber; 16 g sugar; 30 g protein.

A practical guide to visiting JORDAN during Ramadan



During Ramadan, the day's fast is traditionally broken with dates and water



Life during Ramadan follows the prayer and fasting schedule, so some businesses will have reduced hours

Visiting Jordan during the month of Ramadan is an extraordinary opportunity to experience local life and culture, and it's unlike any other time of the year. The holy month is known as a period of spiritual discipline for Muslims, but it's also incredibly festive with family gatherings, decorative lights, late-night eats and entertainment. For the most part, the tourism industry is business as usual. However, some services - such as alcohol sales - and opening hours are noticeably affected, so it's wise to be prepared. Here's what travelers can expect to encounter in Jordan during Ramadan.

Ramadan is the most sacred month for Muslims. According to Islamic tradition, it is

believed that God revealed the first verses of the Quran during the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, so each year, Muslims observe this with sawm (fasting) from sunrise to sunset for the entire month. But there's more to Ramadan than forgoing food and drinks during daylight hours. Many Muslims contribute to charities, participate in additional prayers, spend time with family and devote themselves to reading and listening to recitations of the Quran.

A typical Ramadan day in Jordan

For Muslims, daily life during Ramadan follows the prayer and fasting schedule. Travellers are not required to participate, but if you'll be visiting Jordan during the



Families gather for iftar, the meal that breaks the day's fast, and travelers can often join in

will help you properly plan your trip.

A typical Ramadan day starts with suhour, the meal eaten before the sunrise and first prayer. Between sun up and sun down, Muslims abstain from eating, drinking (even water) and smoking. During the day, locals may be napping, preparing food for iftar (literally meaning 'breakfast', the meal eaten after sunset), praying and focusing on their spiritual practice, so many shops, businesses and government offices have reduced hours of operation. A couple of hours before sunset, the streets come alive - and can get quite crowded - as families stream out to shop for tamarind juice, sweets and other iftar supplies. It's also common to deliver a meal to those less fortunate. At sunset, the muezzin calls Muslims to Salat Al Maghrib, the prayer that immediately follows sunset, and then it's time to break the fast. Some will simply drink water and eat dates so they can go directly to prayer before sitting down for the big iftar meal. Others will eat iftar and then pray.

Iftar is often shared with family and friends and is followed by sweets, tea, Arabic coffee and shisha. While many locals are at home with loved ones during this time, visitors may find the streets noticeably quiet. Some restaurants and hotels - such as Jafra, Wild Jordan and The Four Seasons Hotel - offer special iftar meals.

Although this might seem like the end of the day, during Ramadan it's just the beginning. With everyone well fed and awake post-iftar, it's time to head out to restaurants and cafes where entertainment, such as live music and magicians, awaits. During Ramadan it's not uncommon to stay out into the wee hours and return home for or after suhour - and then start all over again.

What to expect during Ramadan in Jordan

Travelers are not obligated to follow the fasting and prayer schedule, but it may affect your plans. Here are a few things to keep in mind if you're travelling to Jordan during the Muslim holy month (and check out our top tips for visiting Jordan year round).

You're welcome

Muslims are the majority in Jordan, but followers of other faiths peacefully coexist here as well. Some may even participate in Ramadan activities, just as non-Christians might join in on Christmas celebrations.



Some touristic sites such as Petra stay open during Ramadan, but it's best to check with the businesses or your tour guide first

participate in Ramadan activities, just as non-Christians might join in on Christmas celebrations.

Call ahead

Many businesses, shops, restaurants, cafes, historical sites and government offices reduce their opening hours during Ramadan. Guides may reduce their availability to allow time for resting, fasting, prayer and family. Check with your tour operator well in advance to avoid any scheduling issues.

Be respectful

Whether or not you are fasting, the majority of the country will be. If you eat or drink during daylight hours, try to do so behind closed doors, in a restaurant or hotel. Some restaurants and even some of the coffee and tea kiosks in touristic places like Petra keep their regular business hours, and most hotels serve food and drinks throughout the day. Liquor stores across the country are closed during Ramadan, but some bars, restaurants and five-star hotels are permitted to serve alcohol. As each property has its own policies, call and ask before making plans.

It's also important to keep in mind that some Muslims do not or cannot fast for a variety of reasons such as chronic health conditions, pregnancy and age (young children and the elderly). If you see Muslims eating or drinking during the day, respect their privacy and don't press them for their reasons.

Fasting takes a great deal of discipline and adjustment, particularly during the first week, so, naturally people might seem gruff, but they're likely just hungry! Be understanding.

No hijab required

The law in Jordan does not require women to wear hijab, and this freedom of choice still applies during Ramadan. However, modest dress is the norm in this Muslim-majority

country, so it's best to be mindful of what you wear no matter the time of year you visit. Both men and women should plan to keep their knees, shoulders and chest covered when travelling elsewhere in the country. If you can't leave home without low-cut and shoulder-baring shirts, mini-skirts or short shorts, reserve these looks for the resorts and private beaches only. If you'll be visiting a place of worship, women will be expected to also cover hair and neck.

Embrace the nightlife and enjoy the atmosphere

Streets, shops, restaurants and homes are often decorated in lights during this holy month. Take a pre-sunset stroll and soak in the festive and friendly energy while families buzz about gathering Ramadan goodies. The country comes alive in the evenings during Ramadan, and it's common to stay out late into the night. Follow the locals' lead and check out the entertainment. Enjoy live music at a shisha cafe or stop by a pop-up Ramadan tent to play cards, sip coffee and watch a big-screen TV.

If you are invited to eat an iftar or suhoor meal with locals, you'll get a true taste of the joyous spirit and unique flavours of Ramadan. You are not expected to bring a dish or gift, but desserts - such as qatayef (a nut or cream-filled sweet dumpling) or kunafeh (a Palestinian pastry made with cheese and sprinkled with pistachios and syrup) - are always welcome at family gatherings.

—www.lonelyplanet.com



Jordan's reputation for hospitality makes it a welcoming place to visit during Ramadan

Comic

Word Search

Fish 3 - Word Search

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

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| BASS | MARLIN | STEELHEAD |
| BLUEFISH | PADDLEFISH | SUNFISH |
| BONITO | PIKE | TILAPIA |
| CISCO | POMPANO | TUNA |
| CREVALLE | ROCKFISH | WEAKFISH |
| GOLDFISH | ROOSTERFISH | |
| GRAYLING | SHAD | |
| HADDOCK | SHEEPSHEAD | |

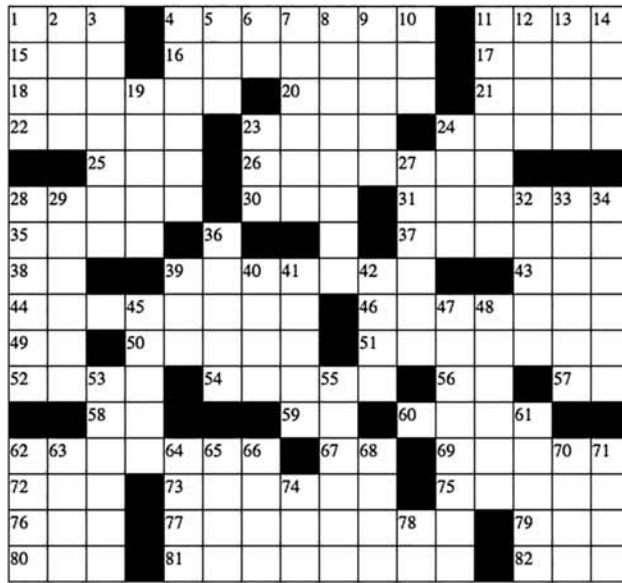
Yesterday's Solution

Fish 2 - Solution

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

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|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| AMBERJACK | GROUPE | TARPON |
| BLUEGILL | LINGCOD | TROUT |
| BOWFIN | PERCH | WALLEYE |
| BURBOT | PICKEREL | WHITEFISH |
| CARP | POLLOCK | YELLOWTAIL |
| CHAR | PORGY | |
| COBIA | SNAPPER | |
| DOLPHIN | SOLE | |

Crossword 2204



ACROSS

- A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school.
- A musical instrument consisting of graduated steel plates that are struck by hammers activated by a keyboard.
- A capacity unit used for measuring fresh herring.
- South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
- Of heavy boots.
- The lean flesh of a fish similar to cod.
- A traditional Moslem headdress consisting of a long scarf wrapped around the head.
- Agency of the United States government charged with mediating disputes between management and labor.
- Slightly open.
- Relating to or having the characteristics of bees.
- A master's degree in business.
- The face veil worn by Muslim women.
- A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
- A rapid bustling commotion.
- Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- East Indian annual erect herb.
- A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
- The local time at the 0 meridian passing through Greenwich, England.
- Concerning or affecting a particular person or his or her private life and personality.
- A department of Greece in the central Peloponnese.
- An associate degree in nursing.
- A point located with respect to surface features of some region.
- The basic unit of money in Paraguay.
- City in southwestern Colombia in a rich agricultural area.
- Jordan's port.
- A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
- Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
- A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- A brittle silver-white metalloid element that is related to selenium and sulfur.
- A compact mass.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Monaco or its people.
- A metric unit of weight equal to one thousandth of a kilogram.
- A region of central Europe rich in deposits of coal and iron ore.
- Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
- A port city in southwestern Turkey on the Gulf of Antalya.
- An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
- Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.
- An early Christian church designed like a Roman basilica.
- A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
- Take in solid food.
- The father of your father or mother.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
- Flesh of fish found in colder waters of northern Atlantic coast of the United States.
- A percussion instrument with wooden bars tuned to produce a chromatic scale and with resonators.
- Thorny shrub or small tree common in central Argentina having small orange or yellow flowers followed by edible berries.
- The longest division of geological time.
- 16 ounces.
- The cardinal number that is the sum of eight and one.
- A town in west central Florida on the Gulf of Mexico.
- The state of aggregation of soil and its condition for supporting plant growth.
- A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
- Type genus of the Chalcididae.
- A Hindu prince or king in India.
- A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
- A student who studies excessively.
- An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
- Type genus of the family Myacidae.
- A large bundle bound for storage or transport.
- The capital of Lesotho.
- (Greek mythology) Goddess of wisdom and useful arts and prudent warfare.
- (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
- A complex inorganic compound that contains ammonia molecules.
- An isolated fact that is considered separately from the whole.
- The capital and largest city of Yemen.
- A pass between mountain peaks.
- Related to or located at the back.
- The sound of sheep or goats (or any sound resembling this) v l.
- Mentally or physically infirm with age.
- The brightest star in Virgo.
- A town in southeastern New Mexico on the Pecos River near the Mexican border.
- Small space in a tissue or part such as the area between veins on a leaf or an insect's wing.
- East Indian tart yellow berrylike fruit.
- Decorate with, or as if with, gold leaf or liquid gold.
- The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
- Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits.
- Open-heart surgery in which the rib cage is opened and a section of a blood vessel is grafted from the aorta to the coronary artery to bypass the blocked section of the coronary artery and improve the blood supply to the heart.
- The sixth month of the civil year.
- An independent agency of the United States government responsible for aviation and spaceflight.
- A female domestic.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- God of love and erotic desire.
- United States sculptor and architect whose public works include the memorial to veterans of the Vietnam War in Washington (born in 1959).
- A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

TV Listings



01:30 The Drowning
03:10 Overdrive
04:45 Honeymoon From Hell
06:20 The Drowning
08:05 The Tuxedo
09:55 Overdrive
11:40 Honeymoon From Hell
13:25 Boone: The Bounty Hunter
15:00 The Tuxedo
16:45 Mine
18:40 Sometimes The Good Kill
20:20 The Darkest Hour
22:00 The Taking Of Pelham 123
23:55 Mean Dreams



00:45 North Woods Law
01:40 Intruders
02:35 League Of Monkeys
03:25 Lone Star Law
04:15 North Woods Law
05:02 Wildest Middle East
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees
06:36 Animal Battlegrounds
07:25 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life
08:15 Wild Australia
10:05 Wildest Europe
12:50 League Of Monkeys
13:45 The Vet Life
14:40 Fish Or Die
15:35 Intruders
16:30 The Jeff Corwin Experience
17:25 Animal Cops Philadelphia
18:20 Sharkbite Beach
19:15 Evan Goes Wild
20:10 Extinct Or Alive
21:05 Wildest Middle East
22:00 Intruders
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees
23:50 Evan Goes Wild



00:15 EastEnders
00:45 The Last Post
01:45 Holby City
02:40 Mum
03:10 Bad Move
03:35 Back
04:00 Death In Paradise
04:55 Doctors
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Call The Midwife
07:55 Father Brown
08:40 Death In Paradise
09:35 Holby City
10:25 Doctors
11:30 EastEnders
12:00 Bad Move
12:25 Father Brown
13:10 Death In Paradise
14:05 Holby City
14:55 Bad Move
15:20 Five By Five
15:25 EastEnders
15:55 Doctors
18:30 The Coroner
19:20 The Coroner
20:10 The Last Post
21:05 The Level
21:55 Doctor Foster
22:50 Shakespeare & Hathaway: Private Investigators
23:40 Doctors



00:00 Homicide Hunter
01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
01:55 Homicide Hunter
02:50 It Takes A Killer
03:45 Live PD: Police Patrol
04:30 The First 48
05:15 Homicide Hunter
06:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
07:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
07:20 The First 48
08:50 Homicide Hunter
10:30 Homicide: Hours To Kill
11:25 Homicide Hunter
12:20 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol
13:45 Live PD: Police Patrol
14:10 It Takes A Killer
15:05 Homicide Hunter

16:00 The First 48
17:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
18:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Homicide Hunter
21:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
22:00 PD Cam
23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol



00:15 Ridiculousness Arabia
00:45 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
01:15 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
01:45 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
02:15 Friends
02:40 Are We There Yet?
03:05 I Used To Be Fat
03:50 Impractical Jokers
04:15 Police Interceptors
05:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
05:30 House Of Food
06:20 Catch A Contractor
07:05 Friends
07:30 Police Interceptors
08:20 House Of Food
09:10 Catch A Contractor
10:00 Takeshis Castle Thailand
10:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
11:50 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
12:18 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
12:50 Friends
13:15 Police Interceptors
14:10 Impractical Jokers
14:35 Friends
15:00 Takeshis Castle Thailand
15:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
16:40 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
17:08 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef
17:35 Are We There Yet?
18:00 Friends
18:30 Are We There Yet?
19:00 Police Interceptors
20:00 Catch A Contractor
21:00 Friends
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
22:30 Impractical Jokers
22:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand
23:45 Ridiculousness Arabia



00:30 Space Dealers
01:20 America's Cutest Pets
02:10 Bad Dog
03:00 Ultimate Survival
03:50 How It's Made
04:40 Weather Gone Viral
05:30 Space Dealers
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 America's Cutest Pets
11:10 Bad Dog
12:00 Mysteries At The Museum
12:50 Weather Gone Viral
13:40 Space Dealers
14:30 How It's Made
15:20 React To That
16:10 Xtreme Waterparks
17:00 My Cat From Hell
17:50 Bad Dog
18:40 The Carbonaro Effect
19:05 Breaking Magic
19:30 The Next Great Magician
20:20 The Carbonaro Effect
21:10 Ultimate Survival
22:00 How It's Made
22:50 Xtreme Waterparks
23:40 The Next Great Magician



00:00 Steven Avery: Innocent Or Guilty?
01:00 Dead Silent
02:00 True Conviction
03:00 Body Cam

03:45 Steven Avery: Innocent Or Guilty?
04:30 Reasonable Doubt
06:10 Swamp Murders
07:00 Disappeared
08:50 Bad Blood
09:45 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
10:40 Swamp Murders
11:35 Gone
13:25 Disappeared
14:20 Bride Killa
15:15 Betrayed
16:10 Swamp Murders
17:05 Love The Way You Lie
19:00 Shadow Of Doubt
21:00 Shattered
22:00 Grave Mysteries
23:00 Betrayed



00:00 Alex & Co.
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:40 Alex & Co.
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:35 Violetta
05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 Rolling With The Ronks
06:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
06:25 Raven's Home
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 A.N.T. Farm
07:20 Shake It Up
07:45 K.C. Undercover
08:10 Bizaardvark
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
09:25 Tangled: The Series
10:15 Bizaardvark
11:05 Liv And Maddie
11:55 K.C. Undercover
12:45 Tangled: The Series
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
14:00 101 Dalmatian Street
14:15 Shake It Up
14:40 K.C. Undercover
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:10 A.N.T. Farm
15:35 Penny On M.A.R.S.
16:00 101 Dalmatian Street
16:15 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
16:50 Raven's Home
17:15 Stuck In The Middle
17:40 Bizaardvark
18:05 K.C. Undercover
18:30 Bunk'd
18:55 Descendants Wicked World
19:00 Raven's Home
19:25 Liv And Maddie
19:50 K.C. Undercover
20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
20:20 A.N.T. Farm
20:45 Bizaardvark
21:10 Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure
21:35 Stuck In The Middle
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:50 Lolirock
23:10 Evermoor Chronicles
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 The Lion Guard
00:25 Chip And Dale's Nutty Tales
00:30 Trulli Tales
01:00 PJ Masks
01:50 The Hive
02:00 Zou
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 The Hive
03:40 Zou
04:25 The Hive
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster
05:35 The Hive
05:45 PJ Masks
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons
07:00 Disney Muppet Babies
07:20 Paprika
07:40 PJ Masks
08:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
08:15 Puppy Dog Pals
08:30 Vampirina

08:45 Fancy Nancy Splits
09:00 Sofia The First
09:30 Elena Of Avalor
10:00 PJ Masks
11:00 Disney Muppet Babies
11:20 Paprika
11:40 Doc McStuffins
12:20 Vampirina
13:20 Gigantosaurus
13:40 Paprika
14:00 Claude
14:30 Paprika
14:40 Doc McStuffins
15:20 Puppy Dog Pals
16:00 Disney Muppet Babies
16:30 Elena Of Avalor
17:00 Gigantosaurus
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
18:00 Fancy Nancy
18:30 Vampirina
19:00 PJ Masks
19:30 Puppy Dog Pals
20:00 The Lion Guard
20:25 Muppet Babies Show And Tell
20:30 Elena Of Avalor
21:00 Gigantosaurus
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
22:00 Fancy Nancy
22:30 Vampirina
23:00 PJ Masks
23:30 Puppy Dog Pals



00:15 Dual Survival
01:05 Sinking Cities
01:50 How Do They Do It?
02:35 What On Earth?
03:20 Fast N' Loud
04:50 How Do They Do It?
05:35 Garage Gold
06:00 Storage Hunters UK
06:20 Garage Gold
06:45 Dual Survival
07:35 Deadliest Catch
08:20 Gold Rush
09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier
09:55 Salvage Hunters
10:45 How Do They Do It?
11:30 Fast N' Loud
13:05 Storage Hunters UK
13:30 Garage Gold
13:55 Salvage Hunters
14:40 Railroad Australia
15:30 Wild Mexico
16:15 Street Outlaws: No Prep Kings
17:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier
17:50 Gold Rush
18:40 How Do They Do It?
19:25 Fast N' Loud
21:00 Wheeler Dealers
21:50 Street Outlaws: No Prep Kings
22:40 Street Outlaws: No Prep Kings
23:30 Deadliest Catch



00:15 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
00:35 Boyster
01:25 Counterfeit Cat
02:10 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
03:00 Boyster
03:50 Dude That's My Ghost
04:40 Counterfeit Cat
05:00 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
06:29 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest
07:00 Phineas And Ferb
08:00 Gravity Falls
09:00 Milo Murphy's Law
10:00 Big City Greens
10:29 Kick Buttowski
11:00 Gravity Falls
12:00 Space Chickens In Space
12:29 DuckTales
13:00 Lab Rats
14:00 Phineas And Ferb
15:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
15:29 Space Chickens In Space
16:00 Big City Greens
16:29 Big Hero 6 The Series

17:00 Milo Murphy's Law
17:29 DuckTales
18:00 Phineas And Ferb
19:00 Lab Rats
20:00 Big City Greens
20:29 Supa Strikas
21:29 Star Wars Resistance
22:00 Milo Murphy's Law
23:00 Dude That's My Ghost
23:50 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja



01:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
02:00 E! News
03:00 WAGs Miami
04:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop
08:55 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
11:40 E! News
12:35 Live From The Red Carpet
14:25 Very Cavallari
15:20 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
19:00 E! News
20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
22:00 Botched



00:10 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:30 The Family Chase
03:25 The Jonathan Ross Show
04:20 One Night With My Ex
05:15 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
06:15 Chopping Block
07:10 The Family Chase
08:05 The Jonathan Ross Show
09:00 One Night With My Ex
09:55 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
10:55 Chopping Block
11:50 The Family Chase
12:45 Emmerdale
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Chopping Block
15:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
16:00 Big Star's Bigger Star
16:50 Wedding Day Winners
17:55 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
18:50 Emmerdale
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
21:00 Big Star's Bigger Star
22:00 Wedding Day Winners
23:10 Emmerdale
23:40 Coronation Street



00:15 How The States Got Their Shapes
00:35 How The States Got Their Shapes
01:00 Ancient Aliens
01:45 Ancient Top 10
02:30 Million Dollar Genius
03:15 Ancient Aliens
04:45 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
05:30 What Really Happened
06:15 Clash Of The Gods
07:00 Ancient Aliens
07:45 Ancient Top 10
08:30 Million Dollar Genius
09:15 Ancient Aliens
10:45 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
11:30 What Really Happened
12:15 Clash Of The Gods
13:00 Ancient Aliens
13:45 Ancient Top 10
14:30 Million Dollar Genius
15:15 Ancient Aliens
16:45 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
17:30 What Really Happened
18:15 Ancient Aliens

19:00 Ancient Top 10
19:45 Million Dollar Genius
20:30 Ancient Aliens
22:00 The Greeks
22:45 What Really Happened
23:30 Clash Of The Gods



00:20 Swamp People
01:05 Pawn Stars South Africa
01:50 American Pickers
02:35 Storage Wars
03:25 Ax Men
04:15 Mountain Men
05:05 Forged In Fire
06:00 Detroit Steel
06:45 Swamp People
07:30 Pawn Stars South Africa
08:15 American Pickers
09:00 Storage Wars
09:45 Ax Men
10:30 Mountain Men
11:15 Forged In Fire
12:00 Detroit Steel
12:45 Ice Road Truckers
13:30 Hot Rods And Muscle Cars
15:00 Big Easy Motors
18:00 Detroit Steel
18:45 The King Who Tricked Hitler
19:30 The Curse Of Civil War Gold
20:15 The Curse Of Civil War Gold
21:00 Knight Fight
21:50 Knight Fight
22:40 Football Godfathers
23:30 Big Easy Motors
23:55 Big Easy Motors



00:10 Nazi Megastructures: America's War
01:00 Primal Survivor China
02:00 To Catch A Smuggler
03:00 Beyond Magic With DMC
04:00 Nazi Megastructures: America's War
05:00 Mine Kings
06:00 The Witch Doctor Will See You Now
07:00 How To Win At Everything
07:30 How To Win At Everything
08:00 Surgery Ship
09:00 Mine Kings
10:00 Disaster Earth
11:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
12:00 The Lost Tomb Of Alexander The Great
13:00 The Witch Doctor Will See You Now
14:00 Money Meltdown
14:30 Money Meltdown
15:00 How To Win At Everything
15:30 How To Win At Everything
16:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
17:00 Lost Treasures Of The Maya
18:00 Disaster Earth
19:00 How To Win At Everything
19:30 How To Win At Everything
20:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
20:50 Lost Treasures Of The Maya
21:40 Disaster Earth
22:30 How To Win At Everything
22:55 How To Win At Everything
23:20 King Fishers



00:30 Monster Fish
01:30 Man vs Monster
02:30 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER
03:30 Fishing For Giants
04:30 Lion Ranger
05:30 America's Wild Spaces
06:30 Snakes In The City
07:30 Fishing For Giants
08:30 Lion Ranger
09:30 America's Wild Spaces
10:30 Snakes In The City
11:30 World's Weirdest
12:30 Betty White Goes Wild!
13:30 Monster Fish
14:30 Man vs Monster
15:30 America's Wild Spaces
16:30 Snakes In The City
17:30 Incredible Insects
18:30 Nambica, Sanctuary Of Gi-

Stars



Aries (March 21-April 19)

The stars movement has you in the mood for stuff. Moreover, you want these goodies and you want it now. Costs isn't much of a deterrent but it should be. Practicality should be in this mix too. You have to live in the real world where credit matters. Knowing what you want is one thing but you need to make plans for how to get it without consequences. Talk with others about what you need. They'll be a good sounding board for which to bounce ideas off. Besides that, you like the comradery too. Others like you for your boundless energy, especially your neighbors, and for your desire to help them as well, if only in spirit.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

At work and at home, you're able to communicate better than you have in the last few days. Getting your point across makes the problem you're working on much easier when you can describe and make sense of the cure for this issue. Furthermore, people understand your thoughts more easily today. You really care for others at work and at home. Moreover, they sense this care and know you have their best interests in mind. Clear, concise information is gathered by your brain before you open your mouth when addressing volatile issues at work. Though you're not as full of pep, vim and vigor as you generally are, you give your best in a very good manner today.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Taking things apart and putting them together again is the way your mind works now. This is all in the attempt to see how and what makes things work. Ambition is one of those qualities you have now so that you don't mind the small things such as the minor details. You can work on those minutiae, like a puzzle, all day long and not tire. Putting your thoughts into substance and seeing how it works gives you a sense of accomplishment. Curiosity is piqued by anything out of the ordinary now. Something coming from your inquisitiveness can assist in what you're working on now. Every little bit helps.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a good time to redecorate or at least do a modicum of color change and to buy some of your favorite items to display. Also making a trip to see an art gallery is right up your alley too. Beauty and value play a bigger role in your life. Communication skills have you talking with others with enthusiasm and making good points even at work. The past may be seen clearly now too. This is a good time to make money. Maybe you should but a lottery ticket since you're in such a good mood. Seeing things in a beautiful manner adds to your joy.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

If need be you can write and communicate in that manner with ease. That's a good quality to have. You have quick answers to give. Your intelligence and originality show, making your coworkers happy you're working with them. Inventions are easily come up with by you now. A word of warning about the job today is that you need to work by yourself and take advantage of what you hear in passing. Get home to your partner. Take a few minutes to yourself first and then spend quality time with your lover and children.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may choose the hardest path in order to get to what you want at this time. If it's not hard, you think it can't be right or isn't worth it. Quit fighting your own intuition. Instead use it to help yourself. You have a driving need to be cared for in a much deeper way than most can fathom, even you. Close relationships take on more importance. Today, you'll feel ill at ease because someone you know well will try to retard your progress with others by questioning your choices and doing it in a public manner. That's not the smartest thing they can do but it takes all kinds. Keep calm.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This could be a period that has been running and will run for a little while where you can make money, the kind you like. Even though you feel good about your life and the situation you're in, you may also be emotionally frustrated too. Arguments with someone you love may prompt this frustration and seep over into other parts of your life. Work now to keep your mind off those hinderances. Use making money to your advantage. Even though some blocks may hinder you keep on keeping on. You'll get what you want.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Don't give anything away today because you may find you need it later. Being too generous with others does two things. First it takes from you and your family. Second, it doesn't always help the person you're assisting. Possibly that person needs to learn from his or her experience on their own. Speaking in such a way now that you command attention is your forte now, but it's done in a soft-spoken manner. A need to be out and socializing with friends has you walking a fine line. Though you want to be with them, you know that you don't want to have to listen to some of them whine. That can cause problems you don't want to have to adjust later when you call them on it.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Mental discipline comes easier at work today than it did yesterday. Work projects slide along at a smooth pace giving you ample opportunity to make your mark and look good doing so. You're in a great mood, know who you are, know what you need to accomplish at work and feel wonderful. Being thankful for work and your life is your motto today. You're reflecting on your life and what it's been like for the past few years. This is probably brought on by the love of your life. Your relationship is bringing new meaning to having a true friend. Enjoy the thinking process it takes to make up your mind.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Yesterday's desire to go after something that made you the least bit afraid of the situation has doubled down today. You'll find that you still feel this way. Moreover, you want something that is entirely different from anything you've seen before or that others have either. You feel as if you can do anything you set your mind too. The stars are helping now. That should be some comfort. Someone you respect greatly gives you good advice without condemning your choices or saying you shouldn't have. Great material gain could be had at this time. Thanking the powers that be is something you're full of today because you know what this is worth.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Your current situation may have you reevaluating your life. If this is work, it's not easy for you to make the decision you know you'll probably have to make. Changing jobs isn't easy for you but you're being made to go into that direction, you think. Otherwise your sense of values is lost. Although you get along well with people on the job, you are constantly reminded that you're hanging on by a hair's breadth. You may feel frustrated and cut off from those you once considered work friends or acquaintances. Times there are possibly coming to an end. Think good thoughts.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Because of yesterday and its issues, you may find yourself being easily irritated by others. Try to ignore it because it will get you nowhere quick. Work with the flow today. Make it easy on yourself. This isn't the best day for being adventurous. Wait for a better day. Help others out with their issues but stay away from anything that is emotionally flammable. Say the least you can get away with for the moment. Let others see your worth with watching your practical applications at work. Don't tell them you're worthy. Let them notice on their own.

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	Niger	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



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Friday, May 10, 2019

DR. MOHAMMAD AL HAJRY
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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.

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ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

SPECIALIZED IN:

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- ◆ 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

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Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SHANTI MOL XAVIER** daughter of Pulickal Xavier, holder of Indian Passport No. K4659425, issued at Kuwait on 26/04/2012, permanent resident of Pulickal House, Puliyanmala P.O, Idukki DT, Kerala, India and presently residing Bldg 15, Block 10, Salmiya, Kuwait do hereby change my name from SHANTI MOL XAVIER to SHANTI-MOL as Given name and XAVIER as Surname with immediate effect. (C 5528)

I, **Rasheeda Abdul Kareem**, Thannickel House, Pattoth, Koodaranhi P.O. Kozhikode, Kerala. Holder of Indian Passport No. 2311556 residing in Kuwait at present hereby declare the name changes as Given Name: Rasheeda Surname: Abdul Kareem (C 5527) 9-5-2019

I **Akinduro Ayobami Tolu** with Nigerian passport number

A06438366 has changed my name to Adegbola Ayobami Tolu. Hereafter, in all my dealings and documents, I will be known as Adegbola Ayobami Tolu. 7-5-2019

I, **LATCHAIAH GARI PALANI KUMAR** S/o LATCHAIAH GARI NARASA REDDY (Old Name) R/o D.No. 4/36, Latchaiahgaripalli, Naramrajupalli, Akepadu, Rajampet Mandal, Kadapa District, A.P. Pin 516150 have changed my name as LATCHAIAHGARI PALANI KUMAR REDDY S/o LATCHAIAH GARI NARASA REDDY (New Name). (C 5526) 6-5-2019

I, **Zeny Lemniota Azavedo** r/o H.No. 186, Mokim Cuncolim Goa would like to change my name from Zeny Lemniota Azavedo to Zeny Lemniota Azavedo and my mother's name from Lucy Francisca Josefina Caeiro to Lucy Josefina Francisquinha Caeiro as per the birth certificate. (C 5525) 5-5-2019

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot and with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind, with speed of 12 - 50 km/h causing rising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times.

BY NIGHT: Fair and Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind, with speed of 12 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered rain with a chance for rising dust.

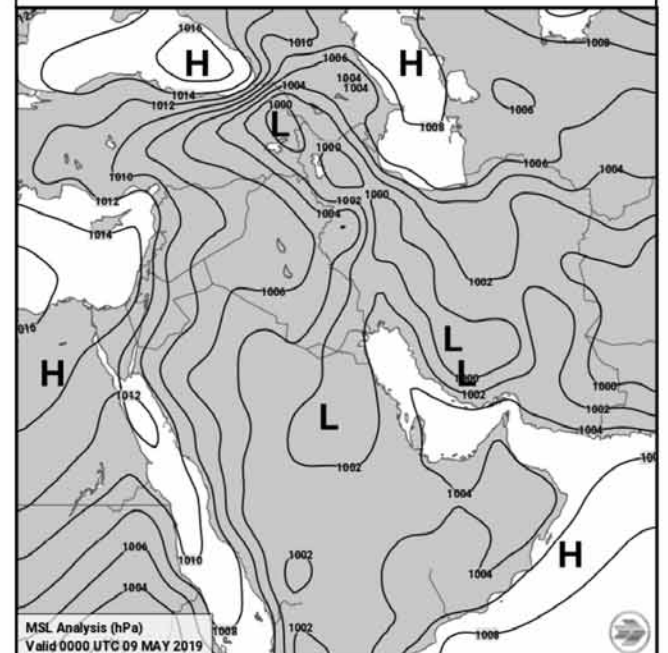
WEATHER WARNING

No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	39 °C	29 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	41 °C	24 °C
ABDALY	40 °C	23 °C
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C
JAHRA	40 °C	25 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	36 °C	26 °C
SALMIYAH	34 °C	26 °C
AHMADI	35 °C	27 °C
NUWAISIB	40 °C	26 °C
WAFRA	41 °C	23 °C
SALMY	40 °C	24 °C

SFC. CHART

09/05/2019 0000 UTC



Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	05/10	Hot and Partly cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery later on	38 °C	25 °C	SE-NW	12 - 40 km/h
Saturday	05/11	Hot	40 °C	27 °C	NW-N	15 - 40 km/h
Sunday	05/12	Hot and Partly cloudy	41 °C	27 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Monday	05/13	Hot and some scattered clouds will appear	42 °C	28 °C	NW	12 - 32 km/h

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr	03:32
Sunrise	05:00
Zuhr	11:44
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:29
Isha	19:54

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	39 °C
MIN. Temp.	24 °C
MAX. RH	38 %
MIN. RH	12 %
MAX. Wind	SE 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Business

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2019

38 India's incredulous economic data:
Economists create own benchmarks



40 Troubled Boeing struggling with
new Mt Everest PR challenge



41 China warns it 'won't capitulate to
pressure' as US trade talks loom



TEHRAN: Iranians walk through Tajrish square in northern Tehran on Wednesday. President Trump tightened the screws further on Iran with sanctions on its mining industry after a frustrated Tehran said it would suspend some promises it made under a nuclear deal rejected by Washington.—AFP

Trump moves to strangle Iran economy

US vows to punish anyone who trades with Iran's mining industry

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday tightened the screws further on Iran with sanctions on its mining industry after a frustrated Tehran said it would suspend some promises it made under a nuclear deal rejected by Washington. On the anniversary of Trump's withdrawal from the accord he denounced as "horrible," tensions were soaring as the United States deployed an aircraft carrier strike group and nuclear-capable bombers to the region and accused Iran of "imminent" attacks.

In an announcement previewed for days, Iran said it would immediately stop implementing some restrictions under the 2015 deal—a move aimed largely at pressing Washington's European allies to step up to preserve the agreement. Tehran said it would abandon even more if the remaining parties to the agreement—Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia—failed to start delivering on their commitments to sanctions relief within 60 days.

President Hassan Rouhani said the ultimatum was intended to rescue the nuclear deal from Trump, whose sanctions have caused severe pain in Iran—which had anticipated an economic boon from the agreement negotiated under then-president Barack Obama.

"We felt the (deal) needed surgery and that the year-long sedatives have not delivered any result. This surgery is meant to save the (deal), not destroy it," Rouhani said at a cabinet meeting broadcast live on state television. Rouhani denounced European countries for seeing the United States as the world's "sheriff" and said their view kept them from making "firm decisions for their own national interests."

Cutting Iranian exports

Trump quickly fired back as he moved to inflict greater economic pain on Iran, imposing sanctions that would punish anyone who buys or trades the country's iron, steel, aluminum and copper.

The White House had already acted forcefully to prevent all countries from buying Iran's oil—its crucial money-maker—and said that the steel and mining sector was the country's second-largest source of foreign revenue, accounting for 10 percent of exports. "Tehran can expect further actions unless it fundamentally alters its conduct," Trump said in a statement. But in a shift in tone, Trump—who talked tough on North Korea before two landmark summits with leader Kim Jong Un—said he was willing to

negotiate face-to-face. "I look forward to someday meeting with the leaders of Iran in order to work out an agreement and, very importantly, taking steps to give Iran the future it deserves," he said.

At a rally in Florida late Wednesday Trump said he hopes that "a fair deal" can be worked out at some point. "We aren't looking to hurt anybody," he told supporters. "We just don't want them to have nuclear weapons. That's all we want." Observers believe it is highly unlikely that Iran's leaders—who have made hostility to the United States a bedrock principle since the 1979 Islamic Revolution topped the pro-Western shah—would want to meet Trump, who has repeatedly threatened the country. But Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif regularly saw his counterpart in the Obama administration, then secretary of state John Kerry, and recently dangled the prospect of a prisoner swap with the United States.

Moving limits on uranium, heavy water

Iran's Supreme National Security Council said it no longer considered itself bound by the agreed restrictions on stocks of enriched uranium and heavy water. It said that after 60 days, it would also stop abiding by limits on

the level to which Iran can enrich uranium and modifications to its Arak heavy water reactor that were designed to prevent the production of plutonium.

Uranium enriched to much higher levels than Iran's current stocks can be used as the fissile core of a nuclear weapon, while heavy water is a source of plutonium, which can be used as an alternative way to produce a warhead. Robert Kelley, a former UN nuclear inspector now with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, said on a practical level, the commitments Iran was dropping had no bearing on its ability to develop an atomic bomb. He added that Iran was simply seeking to "save face" after "striking a deal which was not respected by the other side."

Concern in Europe

The three European parties to the deal tried to save the accord with a trade mechanism meant to bypass reimposed US sanctions, but their attempt was dismissed by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as a "bitter joke." The European powers voiced alarm at Iran's statement and expressed hope that the nuclear deal could be preserved.—AFP

Business

India's incredulous economic data: Economists create own benchmarks

IMF chief economist raises concerns over data reliability

NEW DELHI: Economists and investors are increasingly showing that they have little or no confidence in India's official economic data - presenting whoever is elected as the next prime minister with an immediate problem.

There have been questions for many years about whether Indian government statistics were telling the full story but two recent controversies over revisions and delays of crucial numbers have taken those concerns to new heights. The government itself has admitted there are deficiencies in its data collection.

A study conducted by a division of the statistics ministry in the 12 months ending June 2017 found that as much as 36 percent of the companies in the database used in India's GDP calculations could not be traced or were wrongly classified. But the ministry said there was no impact on GDP estimates as due care was taken to adjust corporate filings at the aggregate level.

Last December, the government held back the release of jobs data but an official report leaked to an Indian newspaper showed the unemployment rate had touched its highest level in 45 years.

Economists and investors are now voting with their feet - by using alternative sources of data and in some cases creating their own benchmarks to measure the Indian economy.

Ten economists and analysts at banks, think-tanks and foreign funds interviewed by Reuters said they were moving to use alternative data sources, or at least official data of a different kind. Among the numbers they prefer are fast-moving indicators like car sales, air and rail cargo levels, purchasing managers' index data, and proprietary indices created by the institutions themselves to track the economy.

Many economists said they were stunned when the government upwardly revised GDP growth for 2016/17 to 8.2 percent from 6.7 percent, although the demonetization of high value notes hit businesses and jobs in that financial year.

"Our response has been to spend time developing an Indian Activity Index, which takes a range of time series data that in the past were strongly correlated with real GDP growth and extract the common signal from them," said Jeremy Lawson, chief economist at Aberdeen Standard Investments, which manages more than \$700 billion in assets.

The preliminary evidence from the index, which includes components like car sales, air cargo and purchasing managers' index data suggests the government has over-estimated GDP growth, he said.

"Our index would suggest that there was stable growth, rather than the rapid acceleration suggested by the GDP figures," he said, referring to three years of data from 2014. Even those close to the government have said the lack of accuracy in the official data makes it much more likely that authorities will miss major swings in activity and be unable to react quickly to head off a crisis. It is also a problem for investors who may be misled into thinking the economy is more robust than it really is.

Missed farm crisis

The economic wing of the Rashtriya Swayemsewak Sangh, the fountainhead of the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, said the government and the Indian central bank missed anticipating a farm crisis that has now gripped the countryside, with low crop prices driving down farmers' incomes.



NEW DELHI: Indian laborers work at a construction site on a roadside in New Delhi. Economists and investors are increasingly showing that they have little or no confidence in India's official economic data - presenting whoever is elected as the next prime minister with an immediate problem. —AFP

"The fact is the government advisers and the monetary policy committee of the central bank could not diagnose the farm crisis, deflationary conditions in rural economy, and ignored the need to boost growth," said Ashwani Mahajan, the co-convenor of the group, Swadeshi Jagran Manch, adding the government was now taking steps to address the problem.

The delayed response has cost Prime Minister Narendra Modi at least some support in the countryside in the current general election - although most political strategists still think he can probably

hang onto power. The opposition and other critics have said Modi suppressed jobs data and "massaged" economic growth numbers in an attempt to show that his government has done better than the previous administration. A spokesman at Modi's office said no official was available for comment as they were busy with the election while a finance ministry spokesman referred to Finance Minister Arun Jaitley's previous comments. In a blog in March, Jaitley criticized economists for doubting the credibility of data and accused them of running a fake campaign against the government. —Reuters

Emirates Airline profit dives 69% in 'tough' year

DUBAI: Emirates Airline reported a 69 percent drop in net profits yesterday on high fuel prices and a strong dollar in what it described as a "tough" year. The Dubai carrier posted \$237 million in net profits for the financial year ending in March compared to \$765 million in the previous year, it said in a statement.

"2018-19 has been tough, and our performance was not as strong as we would have liked," the chairman and chief executive of Emirates Group, Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al-Maktoum, said in a statement. "Higher oil prices and the strengthened US dollar eroded our earnings, even as competition intensified in our key markets," he said. The airline said that the strengthening of the US dollar against most of the currencies of its key markets eroded \$156 million from profits. Its fuel bill increased by 25 percent to \$8.4 billion, its biggest-ever. Emirates said it transported 58.6 million passengers, almost unchanged from the previous year. The region's—and one of the world's—biggest carriers said that despite the drop in profits, it invested \$3.9 billion last year in new aircraft and equipment, and in acquisitions. In February, Emirates cut 39 aircraft from its order for the Airbus 380 superjumbo, reducing it to 123 and leading the European manufacturer to scrap production of the world's largest passenger airliner. The airline invested part of the savings in orders for 40 A330-900s and 30 A350-900s, a deal worth \$21.4 billion. During the year, Emirates received seven A380s and six Boeing 777-300s and phased out 11 aircraft, expanding its fleet to 270 large planes. —AFP

UniCredit to clean up balance sheet after strong quarter

MILAN: UniCredit, the Italian lender at the center of speculation about consolidation in the European banking sector, said yesterday net profit rose in the first quarter and that it would strive to clean up its balance sheet.

Net profit jumped by nearly a quarter to 1.38 billion euros (\$1.54 billion), beating the analyst consensus. Net profit was boosted by so-called exceptional items, such as the sale of property assets and releasing of provisions after it agreed last month to pay \$1.3 billion to settle US allegations that it processed payments that violated US sanctions on Iran and other countries.

But ING credit analyst Suvi Platerink Kosonen said "the profit improvement was driven by the cost side as operating cost were down by 4 percent year-on-year and loan loss provisions were percent lower year-on-year". Revenues slid 3 percent to 4.95 billion due to a drop in commissions, but the result was better than analysts had expected.

The bank also raised its ratio of funds available to absorb possible losses, the fully-loaded CET1 ratio, to 12.25 percent from 12.07 percent at the end of last year.

UniCredit confirmed its targets for the year, in particular revenues of 19.8 billion, net profits of 4.7 billion, and a CET1 ratio of between 12 and 12.5 percent. "This was the best first quarter results in a decade for the second time in a row, un-

derpinning the success of our current strategic plan," chief executive Jean-Pierre Mustier was quoted as saying in the bank's earnings statement.

The bank also indicated it aimed to work on reducing its non-performing loans and reduce its holdings of Italian government debt. CMC Market's UK analyst David Madden said "today's upbeat update might renew speculation about a possible tie-up between UniCredit and Commerzbank".

There has been media speculation that UniCredit could be interested in merging with Commerzbank after the German bank's failed tie-up attempt with Deutsche Bank.

In a call with analysts, Mustier declined to comment on what he called "rumors and speculation", but he did say that "mergers, especially mergers across borders, are very difficult to achieve".

When Mustier took over the reins at UniCredit in 2016 he launched a vast reorganization plan for the bank. It raised 13 billion from shareholders, sold off assets, cut costs, and eliminated nearly 15,000 jobs as it closed over 900 branch offices. UniCredit is due to unveil a new strategic plan later this year, but the reduction of its stake in online bank and trader Finacobank has already raised questions about which direction the lender intends to go.

"We want to understand the logic behind the sale of the Fineco stake, a gem which has brought us extremely high profits," said Riccardo Colombani, head of the First Cisl trade union.

"We can't wait until December 3 to learn which transformations we should prepare ourselves for," he added. UniCredit shares were trading 0.1 percent higher nearing midday after having spent most of the morning lower. Milan's FTSE-Mib index was down nearly 0.8 percent. —AFP

Business

It's everyday Americans who pay Trump's trade tariffs

Announcement worries businesses and farmers

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has repeatedly boasted that the tariffs he has imposed on trading partners are a financial windfall for the US treasury, but research shows it is Americans that bear the brunt of the impact.

Trump plans to ratchet up tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods to 25 percent on Friday, and said the US will be fine without a trade deal since it is raking in the proceed from the tariffs. But that announcement worries businesses and farmers, and has shaken up investors worldwide. "Tariffs are taxes paid by American businesses and consumers, not by China," said David French, senior vice president of the National Retail Federation.

"A sudden tariff increase with less than a week's notice would severely disrupt US businesses, especially small companies that have limited resources to mitigate the impact," French said. According to Trump the duties have brought in an additional \$100 billion a year paid by China and other countries, but in fact the taxes are paid by the importers, and ultimately passed on at least partially to consumers.

US and Chinese trade officials were set to hold crucial negotiations yesterday and today in Washington, under the threat of the new tariffs.

And while industry and retailers support the Trump administration's desire to change China's behavior and open access to the massive market,

they worry the tactics will begin to cut into their sales as consumers feel the pinch. "We want President Trump to successfully reach a deal with China that puts a check on anti-competitive behavior," said Hun Quach, vice president of the Retail Industry Leaders Association. But he said the middle class will end up paying more for everyday consumer goods.

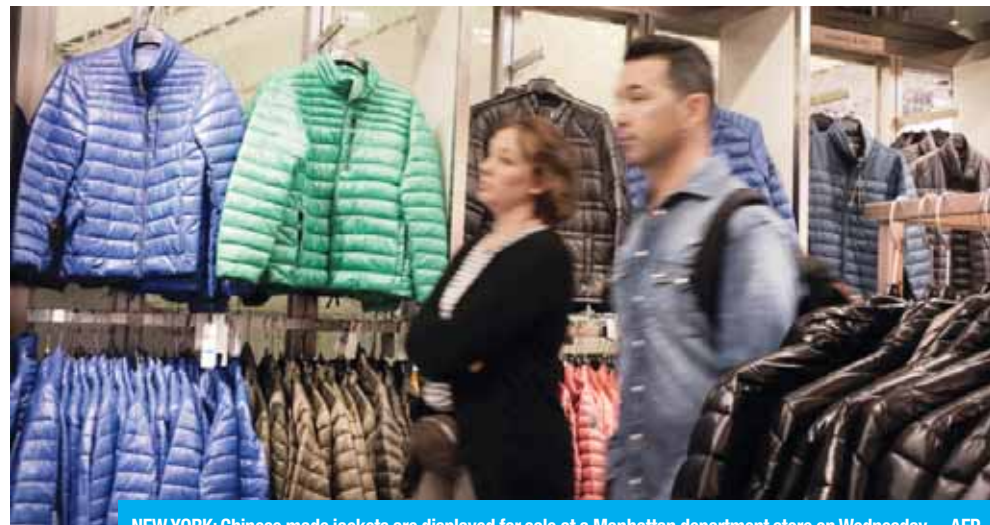
Jobs threatened, expenses up

The Trade Partnership, a private research firm, calculated that increasing existing duties to 25 percent will raise annual expenses for a family of four by \$767 and threaten nearly one million jobs

Trade with China supports seven million jobs in the United States, out of 39 million US jobs related to international trade. The conflict between the economic powers has engulfed \$360 billion in two-way trade. Trump began the tariff war last year because of complaints over unfair Chinese trade practices.

Customs duties affect many intermediate products such as steel, leather, rubber and plastics, as well as finished products from household appliances, to televisions and furniture.

A recent study by the New York Federal Reserve Bank shows that taxes imposed since March 2018 on steel and aluminum, and in July on Chinese goods, boosted the consumer price index by 0.3 percentage points last year. Research released



NEW YORK: Chinese made jackets are displayed for sale at a Manhattan department store on Wednesday.—AFP

last month by the University of Chicago and the New York Fed estimated that tariffs imposed on imported washing machines cost American consumers an additional \$1.5 billion a year, raising the price of a washing machine by \$86 and a dryer by \$92. "We want to see meaningful changes in China's trade practices, but it makes no sense to punish Americans as a negotiating tactic," French

of the NRF complained in a statement.

"If the administration wants to put more pressure on China, it should form a multinational coalition with our allies who share our concerns." On Wednesday, official data from China showed a drop in exports in April, but Beijing's surplus with the United States remained stable despite the tariffs. —AFP

Germany's Bosch aims to go carbon-neutral from 2020

FRANKFURT: Car parts supplier Bosch said yesterday it plans to produce zero net carbon emissions "from 2020" and to spend two billion euros (\$2.2 billion) on renewable electricity over the next decade.

"Our calculations show that it's possible, so we're doing it," Bosch chief executive Volkmar Denner said during the German group's annual press conference. "From 2020, Bosch will no longer have a carbon footprint."

"Unavoidable" emissions will be compensated by investments in environmental projects, Denner said, while the group's operations will be made more energy efficient and it will buy more renewable electricity. "Climate change isn't waiting, and we have to react more quickly to reach the objectives of the Paris Accord," he added.

Bosch said it will be able to halve the cost of the measures by saving almost one billion euros over the coming decade thanks to more efficient energy use.

The firm aims to reduce CO2 output from the steady levels seen in recent years by between one and two percent annually. Also yesterday, privately-held Bosch shared some financial information about its performance in 2018, filling in details after a preliminary release in January.

The group's revenues crept up to 78.5 billion euros, while operating, or underlying profit climbed seven percent



The research campus of Robert Bosch GmbH in Renningen, southern Germany. Bosch held its annual press conference yesterday. —AFP

to 5.5 billion. Bosses expect a tough 2019 around the world for the auto industry with falling production, especially in China.

But Bosch itself aims to "slightly increase" sales year-on-year, noting its performance in the first three months had been in line with the first quarter of 2018. —AFP

China consumer and producer inflation rises

BEIJING: Factory and consumer inflation in China picked up in April, a positive sign for the world's number two economy, though analysts warned real demand remained subdued. Beijing has struggled to get prices to rise in recent months, with both measures staying stubbornly low as global growth cools leading to weak demand and a trade war with the US festers. Data released yesterday showed the consumer price index (CPI) — a key measure of retail inflation—rose 2.5 percent on-year last month, up from 2.3 percent in March. The gain came on the back of soaring pork prices—rising 14.4 percent on-year—owing to an outbreak of African swine flu in China that has led to the culling of a million pigs. Prices of other fresh meats, fruit and vegetables also increased. "We believe the rapid spread of African Swine Fever since August 2018 could help push up pork prices by another 40 percent over the next six months," said Lu Ting of Nomura bank.

"The rise of CPI inflation is being driven by a surge in pork prices as a result of a supply shock," he said in a research note. The producer price index (PPI) — an important barometer of domestic demand—climbed 0.9 percent, from 0.4 percent in March. The CPI reading was in line with forecasts in a Bloomberg survey while the PPI reading came in above the forecast 0.6 percent.

Still economists remain skeptical about China's outlook. "Both official measures of inflation picked up last month but this shouldn't be interpreted as evidence of stronger domestic demand," said Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics, noting key drivers of the upswing included higher pork, iron and oil prices. —AFP

Business

Troubled Boeing struggling with new Mt Everest PR challenge

Muddled communications downplay responsibility in disasters

NEW YORK: No amount of public relations spin can repair the reputational hit from two deadly plane crashes. But Boeing may have further damaged itself with muddled communications that downplayed its responsibility in the disasters. Chief Executive Dennis Muilenburg has insisted there was “no surprise or gap” in the design of the top-selling 737 MAX aircraft, even as the company works to correct issues and persuade regulators that a software update should be enough clear the planes to fly again.

The plane has been grounded worldwide since the March 10 crash of an Ethiopian Airlines flight plunged the company into crisis mode. It came on the heels of an October crash of a Lion Air flight in Indonesia, two accidents that claimed 346 lives.

“We own it,” Muilenburg has said of the crisis. But some aviation and public relations experts said the Boeing CEO has tried to walk back that buck-stops-here sentiment by blaming the crashes on a “chain of events” with “no singular” cause. “You can’t follow one consistent train of thought on anything that’s come out of Chicago,” Jim Hall, former head of the National Transportation Safety Board, said of Boeing’s leadership. “I don’t think they’ve been credible or responsible in the information they’ve provided,” he said in an interview. “They certainly haven’t been transparent.”

And aviation expert Richard Aboulafia of the Teal Group said Boeing has been “a little bit more defensive than they need to be.” “They really need to stick with taking ownership.”

But Boeing spokesman Gordon Johndroe said the company was restricted in how much it can divulge because of international protocol on crash investigations.

“As we’ve learned additional information, it’s incumbent on us to be as transparent as possible,” he said. “We know we have work to do to restore the trust of pilots and crews, international regulators and the traveling public.”

Shifting blame?

A common link in both accidents was the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System or MCAS, an automated flight handling program on the MAX that pointed the plane sharply downward based on a faulty sensor reading, hindering pilot control after takeoff, according to preliminary investigations.

Boeing has been working on what it calls a “software update” to the MCAS, which Muilenburg said will “break” a “common link” in both accidents. Dennis Tajer, a pilot and spokesman for the Allied Pilots Association, said he has been encouraged by Boeing’s drafts of the revamped system, which will ensure the



LONDON: A British Airways operated Boeing 747 passenger aircraft prepares to land at London Heathrow Airport, west of London. — AFP

MCAS is linked to two sensors instead of one and will no longer point full-nose down. But he criticized Muilenburg’s statement that the crashes resulted from a “chain of events.”

“They were good when they said ‘We own this,’” Tajer said. “When you say it’s a chain of events, that’s like a dog-whistle to us to blame the pilots.” Scott Hamilton, founder of Leeham Company, an aviation consultancy, also took issue with Boeing’s characterizing of the MCAS problems. “Using Boeing speak this is not a ‘fix’, this is an upgrade to make the system more robust,” he said. “They won’t even acknowledge that this is a fix. And they certainly won’t acknowledge this was a design flaw” due to worries about liability and criminal probes stemming from the accidents. Hamilton said the company was further damaged by a “drip

drip” of news stories that have painted a confusing picture about how the MCAS was supposed to work, why Boeing didn’t respond earlier to signs of problems, and what it told customers and regulators, as well as concerns over a cozy relationship with aviation regulators.

But Scott Farrell, leader of the brand reputation group at Golin, a public relations firm, said Boeing was facing a “classic tug of war between managing a crisis with an eye on the court of law versus the court of public opinion,” he said.

Boeing has “swung too far to the court of law approach.” US airlines have said they expect to return the 737 MAX to service over the summer. Yet carriers may face difficulties with public confidence even after regulators clear it to fly again.—AFP

Dyson driving towards all-terrain electric car

LONDON: James Dyson, famed for his vacuum cleaners, hinted yesterday that his electric car would be more energy efficient than rivals—and with “very large wheels” for city and rough-terrain driving.

Releasing brief details of patents filed 18 months ago ahead of the car’s expected launch in 2021, Dyson said in a memo shared with media: “the patents show a car with very large wheels, giving a low rolling resistance and high ground clearance. “This makes a vehicle suited to city life and rough terrain but could also contribute to increased range and efficiency,” he said, cautioning however that current designs were far from set in stone.

The British engineering entrepreneur acknowledged the patents were deliberately light on specifics but said “they do reveal some of the ways we might improve Battery Electric Vehicles”. He also indicated that Dyson would move away from the status quo whereby electric car manufacturers base designs on existing formats that are adapted for electric propulsion systems. “Such an approach is cost effective, however it tends to miss opportunities for mass-reduction and aerodynamic improvements which would improve the energy efficiency of the vehicle,” he said.

Dyson also noted the drawback of focusing on smaller vehicles to reduce mass and extend driving range. “However, the size and ride comfort of such vehicles tends to limit their attractiveness and utility,” the billionaire inventor added.

The company last year announced Singapore as the site for its first electric car plant, sparking criticism of its Brexit-backing founder for not investing more in British manufacturing. However it has set up an electric-car research hub in the UK.

Electric vehicles are increasing in popularity as governments worldwide drive forward plans to gradually phase out polluting petrol and diesel cars. — AFP

Brazil central bank holds interest rates at 6.5%

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil’s central bank held fire on interest rates on Wednesday despite lackluster growth in Latin America’s biggest economy and uncertainty over President Jair Bolsonaro’s ability to push through a much-needed pension reform.

In a unanimous decision the bank kept the key Selic rate, its main instrument for controlling inflation, at the historic low of 6.5 percent. That is unchanged since March 2018.

The bank expects the rate to stay at that level for the rest of the year, but flagged a possible rise to 7.5 percent in 2020, according to a statement released after its meeting. The government’s proposed overhaul of Brazil’s unsustainable pension system, which Bolsonaro has warned would bankrupt the country if the changes are not adopted, is seen as crucial to the president’s chances of making good on his other promised economic reforms. A parliamentary committee is currently scrutinizing the bill which analysts fear could be diluted after it sparked heated debate in the Congress. — AFP

Business

China warns it 'won't capitulate to pressure' as US trade talks loom

Liu He returns to bargaining table in Washington under tense atmosphere

WASHINGTON: China rejected US accusations of backtracking in trade talks and warned it would not "capitulate to any pressure" as the two sides head into make-or-break negotiations yesterday.

After months of seemingly collegial talks, Chinese trade envoy Liu He returns to the bargaining table in the US capital under a tense atmosphere after US negotiators accused Beijing of renegeing on previously agreed commitments. The United States has raised the stakes with plans to increase tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese goods from 10 to 25 percent on Friday, prompting Beijing to vow to hit back with "necessary countermeasures".

"The US has assigned a lot of labels, such as backtracking, going back on one's word, and so on. Lots of promises have been foisted on China," Chinese commerce ministry spokesman Gao Feng told reporters in Beijing.

"The Chinese side has kept its promises and this has never changed," he added, without specifying what measures Beijing would take but warning that it "has already prepared for all possible situations."

"China will not capitulate to any pressure, and we have the determination and ability to defend our own interests," Gao said.

President Donald Trump tweeted Wednesday that Liu still wanted to "make a deal", but the US leader boasted about tariffs that were "not good for China".

"By the way, do you see the tariffs we're

doing? Because they broke the deal! They broke the deal!" Trump said at a rally in Florida on Wednesday. "So they are flying in—the vice premier tomorrow is flying in. Good man. But they broke the deal. They can't do that. So they'll be paying if we don't make the deal."

The sudden rupture has roiled global stock markets this week and unnerved exporters caught off guard after negotiators on both sides had previously touted progress in the negotiations. Markets in Europe and Asia sank again yesterday.

American officials this week accused their Chinese counterparts of retreating from major planks of an agreement they had been working toward since early in the year that aims to resolve Washington's grievances of industrial theft, massive state intervention in markets and a yawning trade deficit.

"It turns out the Chinese had pulled out an eraser and started taking back things that they had offered," said Scott Kennedy, a China trade and economics expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "They didn't realize when they pulled their concessions off the table that the administration would have the reaction that it did," he told AFP. Kennedy warned that the "possibilities for miscalculation on both sides is pretty high."

Since last year, the two sides have exchanged tariffs on more than \$360 billion in two-way trade, gutting US agricultural exports to China and weighing on both countries' manufacturing



BEIJING: A salesman dressed in Qing Dynasty clothing waits for the customers at the entrance of a shop on a street in Beijing yesterday.—AFP

sectors. US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer released an official notice on Wednesday making the tariff increase a virtual fait accompli. Punitive duties on a vast array of Chinese-made goods, from electrical equipment to machinery to seafood to furniture, will jump to 25 percent at midnight (0400 GMT today). Chinese producers of the impacted goods this

week said the abrupt tariff hike had wreaked havoc on operations and would bring high costs, layoffs and further shifts of production to Southeast Asia. "If the tariffs go up to 25 percent, costs will go up, customers so far have suspended orders, I don't know what will happen," said Emily Wang of Hainan Zhongyi Frozen Food, which exports tilapia.—AFP

US-China trade tensions haunt London's FTSE 100

LONDON: Leading British shares fell to six-week lows yesterday as renewed trade tensions between the United States and China pressured the index. The FTSE 100, whose members generate more than two-thirds of their earnings from abroad, was 0.4 percent lower by 0841 GMT. The midcaps gave up 1 percent.

Industrials, miners and Asia-exposed stocks led the fall on the main index after US President Donald Trump accused China of breaking the deal they had reached in trade talks. Luxury brand Burberry, which is vulnerable to a hit to the Asian economy, gave up 2 percent.

"Considering the ticking trade clock, investors are going to be hyper-vigilant for any signs that the US and China might be able to pull back from the brink," Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell said.

"However, any news likely won't be until this afternoon, leaving the European indices to wallow in thoughts of the worst-case scenario." All but two sectors were in negative territory and the index was on course for its biggest weekly drop since January.

The two categories left unscathed were healthcare and consumer staples as investors flocked to so-called defensive stocks, seen as a safer bet at times of uncertainty.

Energy supplier Centrica, oil heavyweight BP and insurer Admiral all dipped as they traded ex-dividend, heavily weighing on the blue-chip bourse.—Reuters

China's exporters fret over Trump tariffs

BEIJING: With the eyes of the world on Washington for this week's high-stakes trade talks between China and the United States, none will be more focused than those of Chinese exporters who are increasingly worried about the impact of more tariffs.

Companies shipping a range of products from seafood to furniture are among those in the firing line as the economic superpowers try to resolve a trade war that has seen both sides impose levies on hundreds of billions worth of goods. Donald Trump at the weekend raised the pressure on Beijing, saying he would more than double punitive tariffs on \$200 billion of imports today when China's top trade negotiator, Vice Premier Liu He, is in Washington for the two-day meeting.

Firms making their wares in China are already hurting under US punitive duties imposed last year and insiders at several of them told AFP that Trump's latest measures would force them to relocate production and lay off staff.

"We're waiting for the results of the negotiation. If Trump wants to do any-

thing we can't stop him," said an employee at Tongwei Hainan Aquatic Products, which specializes in tilapia and ships most of its product to the US. "Last year the customer couldn't accept higher prices so our factory needed to lower the price to stay in business," the employee said, adding some smaller competitors had shut up shop.

Easy to farm, tilapia is known as "aquatic chicken" in the seafood industry and the cheap fillets that come frozen from China pile up on American dinner tables. Last year 84 percent of US frozen tilapia imports, worth \$435 million, came from China, according to US data.

But Trump's 10 percent tariffs have hampered sales this year, with American imports of the fish roughly halved in January and down in February.

"After the latest tariff news, our customers have suspended shipments and there haven't been any new orders," said Emily Wang of Hainan Zhongyi Frozen Food, which also specializes in tilapia.

The downturn is broader than just tilapia. China's goods shipments to the US fell 10 percent on-year in the first

four months of the year, according to customs data released Wednesday.

Business slipped at China's largest trade show, the three-week Canton Fair, which wrapped up on Sunday. The number of international buyers fell about four percent from last year's fair, organisers said, and export orders fell one percent.

In the US the prices of imports from China have fallen since September, when Washington imposed the 10 percent tariffs, according to research from trade data firm Panjiva. "Our intuition is that Chinese exporters have in some instances lowered the price at which they sell to US buyers in order to share the burden of the tariff," said Christopher Rogers, an analyst at Panjiva.

"It would not be a surprise to see more of the same if tariffs are increased to 25 percent on the \$200 billion of products," he said. Sun, a manager at a large wood door manufacturer in northeast China that ships the vast majority of its product across the Pacific, said his factory had done just that, splitting the cost of the tariffs 50:50 with their American buyers.—AFP

Sports

Hamilton seeks hat-trick as Ferrari aim for revival

BARCELONA: Lewis Hamilton will seek to complete a hat-trick of Catalan triumphs and regain the lead in this year's drivers' world championship as Formula One returns home to this year's first European race at this weekend's Spanish Grand Prix. The defending five-time champion is a single point behind his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas in the embryonic standings, following their unprecedented four successive season-opening one-twins.

But, like his Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff, he is wary of any suggestion that rivals Ferrari are a fading force and knows that the Italian team, armed with an upgraded power unit being introduced two races sooner than planned, will mount a fierce challenge on the track where they shone in pre-season testing.

"The results may seem to paint a clear picture, but the truth is that they're too flattering," said Wolff, who rejected the notion put forward by Ferrari's four-time champion Sebastian Vettel that his team were now the underdogs. "The performance has fluctuated in the first four races. Our opponents were blisteringly quick in the winter testing here so this Spanish Grand Prix will be anything but easy." The pre-season testing at the Circuit de Catalunya, where Sunday's race is to be run, seems a long time ago now as Vettel and his new team-mate Charles Leclerc struggle to rediscover those dominant displays when it matters.

Predictably, most of the teams will arrive in Spain with an array of updates for their cars that may make it more difficult to predict performance, but Ferrari appear to have chosen to adopt

a downbeat approach in advance. "Obviously, Mercedes are very strong at the moment so I am pretty sure they will be very strong as well in Barcelona," said Mattia Binotto, the newly-installed team boss facing the challenge of ending Mercedes five years' domination. "The last four races, on average, we were not quite there," added Vettel. "So we are not the favorites." Binotto added that Ferrari were pushing hard to catch Mercedes. "We will have a new power unit that we are introducing ahead of schedule," he said. "This second specification was due to be taken to Canada and it's only down to a big team effort that we have been able to do this."

Senna, Ratzenberger tribute

Hamilton, almost perversely, has said he wants to see Ferrari lift their performance to ensure a thrilling season of competition for himself and Bottas, as their intra-team rivalry promises to turn into a scrap for the drivers' title. After a winless year in 2018, Bottas has come back determined to prove his pace and power this year - he and Hamilton have two wins each, the Finn adding an extra point to his total by clocking the fastest lap in Australia.

"Lewis has been world champion many times so being his team-mate is great for me," said Bottas, reveling in this year in the competition. "It's a good reference and a benchmark and it also gives us an opportunity to have a very strong team." On the other hand, it's not easy. It's so difficult to get ahead of him, but I know it's possible. I see it as a great opportunity and I would not choose another team-mate even it made my



BAKU: Pole position winner Mercedes' Finnish driver Valtteri Bottas (C) poses with second placed Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton (L) and third placed Ferrari's German driver Sebastian Vettel after the qualifying session for the the Formula One Azerbaijan Grand Prix. — AFP

life easier." While the focus will surely fall on Ferrari, as they bid to end their forlorn start to the season, other teams like Red Bull could also emerge as a threat to them. Max Verstappen, who claimed his maiden victory on his Red Bull debut in Spain in 2016, is expected to challenge

for a place on the podium where, in the first race since the 25th anniversary of the deaths of Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix, a joint Austrian and Brazilian flag is expected to be on display in their memory. — AFP

Neuville take steps into unknown in Rally of Chile

CONCEPCION: Thierry Neuville is preparing for "a step into the unknown" with the first ever WRC rally staged in Chile adding an intriguing new ingredient to his title battle with Sebastien Ogier. The Belgian leads multiple champion Ogier by 10 points going into this sixth leg of the season, the Hyundai driver on a roll after wins in the previous two rallies in Argentina and Corsica.

"It's hard to set too many expectations when it promises to be a rally of surprise," Neuville told wrc.com. "We only discovered the stages for the first time during the recce but it will be a nice challenge. A lot of work awaits us, but I'm looking forward to it. "It's a step into the unknown for everybody."

Starting today the Rally of Chile is staged around the port city of Concepcion, mostly on forest tracks normally choc-a-bloc with trucks transporting wood sandwiched between the Pacific Ocean and the Rio Biobio, Chile's second biggest river. Neuville, who has the disadvantage of setting off first, says there is a "positive spirit" around his team after Hyundai's 1-2 in Argentina.

Ogier had to settle for third last month on the other side of the Andes and is looking for more speed from his Citroen C3. "I hope we'll have slightly better performance here," said the French driver. "From what I can tell by watching the videos available, the roads do seem really quite different to those we had in Argentina. The stages seem to be fairly flowing and fast."

Ott Tanak has been off the pace in the last two rallies, and as a result the Toyota Yaris driver has dropped from the lead to third, 28 points



CONCEPCION: Belgian pilot Thierry Neuville from Hyundai Shell Mobis speaks during a press conference before the WRC Chile 2019. — AFP

behind Neuville. Chile is one of several rallies this year featuring 'retired' former multiple champion Sebastien Loeb, who is behind the wheel of a Hyundai. The French rally star had a minor scare on his recce run on Wednesday when his car collided with a lorry.

"It was nothing serious, we're continuing the day as planned," the nine-time champion posted on Twitter. Ahead of Loeb and company are 17 specials with over 300 kilometres of competition before the finish in Concepcion on Sunday. Chile, which has played host to the Dakar Rally, is the 32nd country to stage a FIA WRC rally. — AFP

Marcel Kittel to take break from cycling

BERLIN: German cycling star Marcel Kittel has terminated his contract with Team Katusha Alpecin (TKA) in order to take a break from the sport, the team announced yesterday. The 30-year-old sprint specialist, who is a 14-time Tour de France stage winner, has not raced since early April amid fitness problems in 2019. "At this moment, I am not able to train and race at the highest level," said Kittel in a statement on the TKA website. "I have decided to take a break and take time for myself, think about my goals and make a plan for my future."

In his last race on April 10, Kittel finished 99th in the Scheldeprijs, a race he has won five times in his career. The German pulled out of the Amgen Tour of California on Wednesday, before announcing his decision to take a break the following day. He said the decision was the biggest challenge of his career, and insisted that he wanted to return to cycling in the future. "It was for me a long decision process where I raised a lot of questions about how and where I want to go as a person and athlete and what is really important to me." — AFP

Sports

Nadal finds his rhythm again, Ferrer ends career in Madrid

MADRID: Rafael Nadal believes he is finding his rhythm again after beginning his bid for a sixth Madrid Open title on Wednesday by beating Canadian teenager Felix Auger-Aliassime in straight sets. The victory also came hours before Nadal's fellow Spaniard David Ferrer played the final match of his career, losing 6-4, 6-1 to Alexander Zverev in his last tournament before retirement.

Nadal has endured a turbulent few weeks after slipping to surprise defeats in both Monte Carlo and Barcelona last month before then being hit by a stomach bug on Sunday. But there was never much sign of an upset in the Spanish capital, where the world number two opened up with a 6-3, 6-3 victory. "Right now every victory is important for me because it gives me the option to play again the next day," Nadal said.

"Two weeks ago maybe playing again was not a chance to improve because I didn't feel like that in training. "Now I am feeling better in matches and I think everyone gives me the chance to get better." Nadal has not arrived in Madrid without winning in either Monte Carlo or Barcelona since 2015 and, after also pulling out of Indian Wells due to a knee injury in March, concern was growing ahead of the French Open later this month.

The 32-year-old, who will be chasing his 18th Grand Slam title at Roland Garros, will now face another young talent in America's Frances Tiafoe, with either Stan Wawrinka or Kei Nishikori waiting in the quarter-finals. "After Indian Wells, I had a big mental drop," Nadal said. "I had to stop for two weeks and mentally I dropped. "I struggled a lot to get fit and recover

that energy, which I now feel again."

Ferrer bowed out after losing to Zverev, calling time on a distinguished career that included 27 ATP titles and a highest ranking of number three in the world. Renowned for his never-say-die attitude, the 37-year-old reached the French Open final in 2014, as well as five more Grand Slam semi-finals. "I couldn't have given more to this sport," said Ferrer, who left his bandana on the "T" of the service box. "I don't know what my legacy will be but I always fought until the last point. Maybe it will be that."

Nishikori and Wawrinka will meet in the third round on Thursday after Nishikori took just over two hours to win 7-5, 7-5 against Bolivian qualifier Hugo Dellien and Wawrinka defeated Argentina's Guido Pella 6-3, 6-4. The Swiss has won his last two matches against Nishikori, including a three-set victory in Rotterdam in February, when he went on to reach his first final since undergoing knee surgery in 2017.

Osaka in control

Juan Martin del Potro lost 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 to Serbia's Laslo Djere in his first match since February as the Argentine continues to work his way back from a knee injury. Nishikori's compatriot and world number one Naomi Osaka is through to the quarter-finals of the women's tournament for the first time after she eased past Belarusian Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-2, 6-3.

Osaka pulled out of the semi-finals in Stuttgart last month with an abdominal injury but has said she is no longer feeling discomfort during matches. "I feel fine, so that's great," Osaka said. "I'm at a really good place right now.



MADRID: Spain's Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Canada's Felix Auger Aliassime during their ATP Madrid Open round of 32 tennis match at the Caja Magica. — AFP

I feel like I'm having fun playing tennis again which is always a good thing for me. I always play well if I have that mentality."

In the last eight, the two-time major champion will face Switzerland's Belinda Bencic who beat Ukrainian qualifier Kateryna Kozlova 6-0,

6-2. A potential semi-final foe for Osaka is world number three Simona Halep, who annihilated Slovakian Viktoria Kuzmova 6-0, 6-0 in 44 minutes. Number two seed Petra Kvitova saw off France's Caroline Garcia 6-3, 6-3 and will now face the Netherlands' Kiki Bertens. — AFP

Folau could play in billionaire's Asian venture

SYDNEY: Australian billionaire Andrew "Twiggy" Forrest could offer Israel Folau a career lifeline in Asia if the star Wallaby's contract is terminated over his homophobic comments, it was reported yesterday. Tonga coach Toutai Kefu has also said he is keen for Folau to switch allegiance to his team, even though the fullback would have to serve a three-year stand-down period to be eligible.

The devoutly Christian player was found guilty this week of a "high-level" breach of the sport's code of conduct after posting an anti-gay statement on social media, leaving his career hanging in the balance. The 30-year-old has limited options if his lucrative Rugby Australia contract is torn up, with the National Rugby League ruling out signing him and many overseas rugby clubs shying away from his anti-gay views. But Sydney's Daily Telegraph reported that Forrest, himself a committed Christian, could find a spot for Folau in his Global Rapid Rugby competition, which is set to kick off next year.

It said the competition was interested in making the fullback a marquee signing for either the Hong Kong-based South China Tigers or the Singapore-based Asia Pacific Dragons. "Global Rapid Rugby has spoken to a number of talented international players and will continue to do so," a spokesman for the competition told AFP when asked about Folau. "No contracts have been offered to any players." He

added that marquee players were likely to be a part of the competition. Global Rapid Rugby, a fast-paced game with radical new rules, was set up by mining magnate Forrest after his beloved Western Force were cut from the Super Rugby competition in 2017.

Play for free

An eight-team, 56-game competition is due to begin in 2020 after its launch was delayed by 12 months because of this year's World Cup in Japan. Instead, some of the teams are involved in a "Showcase Series" travelling throughout Asia and the Pacific. The next match is in Hong Kong on Sunday followed by fixtures in Fiji, Australia and New Zealand. But Forrest could face competition from Tonga for Folau, with Kefu saying he would welcome the prolific try scorer.

"I'd love that. I think he would get a lot of satisfaction out of playing for Tonga," he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. "He could definitely be available for the next World Cup (in 2023)." However, the former Wallabies forward revealed there was a catch if Sydney-born Folau chose to represent his parents' homeland — he would have to do it for free.

"The Tonga Rugby Union has no money, we are 100 percent funded by World Rugby, he said. "We can't afford to pay our players. So our players they play for pride of jersey, they play to representative their families, they play to go to a World Cup." Rugby Australia's code of conduct panel is yet to decide what sanction Folau will face — he could be fired from his four-year Aus\$4 million contract, fined or suspended. No timescale has been given for the decision, with legal experts warning that whatever happens an appeal is likely, potentially followed by a drawn-out court battle. — AFP

First wave of Tokyo 2020 Olympic tickets on sale

TOKYO: The first tickets for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics went on sale yesterday, with Japanese residents able to enter a lottery to watch the sport of their choice. Tickets for the 33 sports range from the cheapest general tickets at 2,500 yen (\$23) to an eye-watering 300,000 yen (\$2,730) for the best seats at the opening ceremony.

Those lucky enough to score the best seats for the showcase men's 100m final will pay 130,000 yen (\$1,200). But half of all tickets will be priced at 8,000 yen (\$73) or less and special tickets priced at 2,020 yen (\$18) are available for families resident in Japan with children, senior citizens, and people with impairments. Prices for domestic residents are "about the same as London 2012 but a little higher than the 2016 Rio Games," Yuko Hayakawa, senior 2020 marketing official said.

The lottery — only for residents of Japan during an initial period — runs until May 28, with successful applicants notified on June 20 and payment due a fortnight later. The website saw high demand upon opening with a queue system in place even though tickets are not sold on a first-come first-served basis and everyone entering the lottery by May 28 having an equal chance of scooping tickets.

Overseas applicants will be able to snap up tickets from June 15 via special "Authorized Ticket Resellers" in each country. Organizers have not offered a precise number of tickets available as various stadium configurations are still being finalized with just less than 450 days to go until the opening ceremony. But they said it would be roughly the same as the 7.8 million tickets they estimated when bidding for the right to host the Games. — AFP

Sports

Warriors hold off Rockets but Durant suffers right leg injury

LOS ANGELES: Golden State pulled out a 104-99 victory over the Houston Rockets on Wednesday as the Warriors survived the loss of superstar Kevin Durant to grab a 3-2 lead in their second round NBA playoff series. Draymond Green and Klay Thompson nailed clutch three pointers late in the fourth quarter for the Warriors but the buzz after the game was not about the win but rather the health of Durant.

The Warriors said he had suffered a right calf strain but Durant is expected to undergo an MRI scan to determine the full extent of the damage. Warriors coach Steve Kerr sounded cautiously optimistic — hoping for the best but also preparing for something worse if it does turn out to be more serious like a ruptured Achilles.

“We are all disappointed for him. Excited about the win but concern for Kevin. He had been on this incredible playoff run. I am proud of the guys and the way they pulled out this win and we will see about Kevin tomorrow,” said Kerr. Durant’s injury occurred innocently enough after he hit a jumper from the right side with just over two minutes left in the third quarter. He took a step forward then grimaced in pain and looked down at his lower right leg.

“He’s done a lot for us. We got to have his back — that is what tonight was about,” said Warriors’ Stephen Curry. Thompson finished with 27 points, Curry 25 and Durant 22 for the Warriors, who continued a run of home wins by the teams in the series. James Harden was the game’s leading scorer with 31 points for the Rockets, who were outshot by the Warriors from the field 46 percent to 42 percent.

Pavelski returns, sparks Sharks to game seven victory

SAN JOSE: Joe Pavelski returned from a head injury with a goal and an assist as the San Jose Sharks punched their ticket to the NHL final four with a 3-2 win over the Colorado Avalanche on Wednesday. Pavelski scored the Sharks first goal and assisted on Tomas Hertl’s tally as his emotional return from a bloody head injury, suffered in game seven against Las Vegas, inspired San Jose to another game seven win on Wednesday. “To come out and score early ... I felt a lot of emotion there for sure,” Pavelski said. “Scored a few like those over the years. Got back and there were all smiles on the bench. It was game seven, a big game.”

Joonas Donskoi snapped a 39-game goal drought, Martin Jones made 14 of his 27 saves in the third period for the Sharks who advance to face the upstart St. Louis Blues in the Western Conference final. It has been two weeks since Pavelski left the ice against the Golden Knights with his head bleeding after being cross checked in game seven of that first round series. The Sharks scored four times on the resulting five-minute major to overcome a 3-0 deficit in the third period and clinch the series.

Pavelski, who led the Sharks with 38 goals in the regular season, skated with the team Monday for the first time since the injury. His return in game seven against the Avalanche was greeted with a deafening roar from the Shark Tank crowd when he was announced as a starter. He scored the opening goal less than six minutes in by deflecting a Brent Burns’ shot from the point past Colorado goaltender Philipp Grubauer. — AFP

‘It’s amazing’

Elsewhere, Milwaukee became the first team to reach the NBA’s final four as the top-seeded Bucks beat the visiting Boston Celtics with a 116-91 series-clinching victory. The Bucks used balanced scoring and a stingy defense to eliminate the fourth-seeded Celtics in five games, avenging a seven-game first round loss to Boston last season.

“It’s amazing. It was a team effort,” said Antetokounmpo. “We did not mess around with the game. We did our job. We defended. We moved the ball. That’s how we were able to close the game.” The Celtics had reached the NBA semifinals against the Cleveland Cavaliers each of the last two seasons. It marks the first time since 1983 that the Bucks have won a playoff series against the Celtics, who won the first game in this year’s series before dropping four consecutive contests.

Milwaukee advances to the Eastern Conference finals, where they will have the home-court advantage over the winner of the other East second round series between the Toronto Raptors and the Philadelphia 76ers. They meet in game six in Philadelphia on Thursday, with the second-seeded Raptors holding a 3-2 lead. Greek giant Giannis Antetokounmpo has had no trouble in this series delivering big points for the Bucks, who will be making their first appearance in the final four since 2001.

Antetokounmpo led seven players in double figures with 20 points and also tallied eight rebounds and a game-high eight assists. Khris Middleton (19 points), Eric Bledsoe (18), George Hill (16), Nikola Mirotic (10) and Ersan Ilyasova



OAKLAND: PJ Tucker #17 of the Houston Rockets and Andre Iguodala #9 of the Golden State Warriors go for a rebound during Game Five of the Western Conference Semifinals of the 2019 NBA Playoffs at ORACLE Arena. — AFP

(10) also scored in double figures for the Bucks, who shot 44.7 percent overall. Milwaukee also outscored the Celtics 45-21 from beyond the arc. Guard Malcolm Brogdon, returning from a heel injury that had sidelined him since March 15, scored 10 points in 17 minutes.

Milwaukee has dominated games by throwing a blanket over Boston’s Kyrie Irving, who

shot one-for-seven from three-point range on Wednesday. He was six-of-21 overall and finished with just one assist.

Irving also shot eight-for-22 and seven-for-22 in the Celtics’ two home losses on Friday and Monday. Irving may have played his final game with the Celtics as he can become a free agent in the off season. — AFP

Lue, Lakers end talks on coaching job

LOS ANGELES: Negotiations between the Los Angeles Lakers and Tyronn Lue for the club’s head coaching vacancy have collapsed, the Los Angeles Times reported on Wednesday. Former Cleveland Cavaliers coach Lue had been in talks with the Lakers for several days about the possibility of replacing the departed Luke Walton.

However the Times cited a person with knowledge of the negotiations on Wednesday as saying that the two sides had broken off discussions after failing to reach agreement on several stumbling blocks. The Times said Lue and the Lakers were unable to agree on the make-up of the coaching staff. Lue was also seeking a five-year contract while the Lakers were only prepared to offer a three-year deal worth \$18 million.

Lue and Philadelphia assistant Monty Williams had both been interviewed twice for the position but Williams moved on after being hired by the Phoenix Suns. Lue was seen as the clear front-runner for the job due to his close links to Lakers star LeBron James. James won an NBA championship with Cleveland under Lue’s guidance in 2016.

Lue, 42, also had a history with the Lakers, where he was a reserve point guard on the 2000 and 2001 championship-winning teams. The Lakers have been in turmoil since a disappointing first season with James on the roster saw them miss the playoffs for a sixth straight season. The faded NBA powerhouse was then rocked by the shock departure of president of basketball operations Magic Johnson on April 9 in a move that stunned the NBA. — AFP

Blatter aims to sue FIFA and Infantino

GENEVA: Former FIFA boss Sepp Blatter plans to sue world football’s governing body and his successor for allegedly spreading “false information” and damaging his reputation, according to a news report published Wednesday. “I will take legal actions against Gianni Infantino and FIFA,” Blatter told Swiss news magazine Weltwoche. “I’ve had it. Enough is enough,” he said.

The 83-year-old former president was suspended from FIFA in 2015 amid a gigantic corruption scandal that rocked world football to its core. But he claimed in Wednesday’s interview that statements issued by FIFA regarding alleged payments he had received contained false information. “The information and the different statements issued by FIFA regarding my income are untrue and have therefore been detrimental to my reputation,” he said. He alleged that FIFA had spread “fake information and a deceitful representation” of the facts.

Among other things, he challenged allegations that following the 2014 World Cup in Brazil he had received a bonus of 12 million Swiss francs (\$12 million, 10.5 million euros). “Information that I received this bonus is false,” he said. He also charged that false allegations had been made about his pension, and lamented that FIFA had failed to hand back his belongings confiscated after his suspension, including a valuable watch collection and personal documents.

Blatter, whose is serving a six-year ban from world football, also insisted that a \$2-million payment he authorized in 2011 to Michel Platini, former head of UEFA and his one-time heir apparent, had been handled correctly. — AFP

Shaw, Pant help Delhi beat Hyderabad in IPL eliminator

VISAKHAPATNAM: Blazing knocks by Prithvi Shaw and Rishabh Pant helped Delhi Capitals knock Sunrisers Hyderabad out of the Indian Premier League on Wednesday and move one step from the final with a tense two-wicket victory. Shaw hit a quickfire 56 while Pant smashed 49 off 21 balls as Delhi chased down their target of 163 in 19.5 overs to win the eliminator in Visakhapatnam.

The left-handed Pant fell in the penultimate over and there was drama in the final six balls with Amit Mishra given out for obstructing the field after running in front of the bowler's throw at the non-striker's end. Number eight Keemo Paul, who took three wickets in the Hyderabad innings, hit the winning boundary to trigger wild celebrations in the Delhi camp.

Delhi, who notched their first ever IPL playoff victory, will take on defending champions Chennai Super Kings in the second qualifier on Friday. "I was a bit nervous, but (Ricky) Ponting sir — head coach — and Sourav (Ganguly) sir — team mentor — believed in me, and I just went out there and played my natural game," said Shaw.

"I think Rishabh Pant just batted beautifully. We will have fun tonight, and then we plan from there. It's a big game (against Chennai), and we are going to prepare hard." The 19-year-old Shaw, often compared to the legendary Sachin Tendulkar, led his team's batting charge with six fours and two sixes in his 38-ball stay. Shaw fell to paceman Khaleel Ahmed who struck twice in the 11th over of the innings including the wicket of Delhi skipper Shreyas Iyer for eight.

Afghan star Rashid Khan also hurt Delhi's chase with his twin strikes in one over, sending back Colin Munro for 14 and Axar Patel for nought. Delhi slipped to 111-5. Pant, who was not picked in the preliminary 15-man Indian World Cup squad, then took the Hyderabad bowling apart with his power hitting to put the chase back on track.

"If you are set on a wicket like this, you have to finish the match for your team. I took it very close, but next time I will finish it for the team," said Pant. "Today, that was special because I didn't try to hit the ball too hard. I was just watching the ball, and I was trying to time the ball." Earlier, Delhi's bowlers restricted the Kane Williamson-led Hyderabad to 162 for eight after being invited to bat first.



VISAKHAPATNAM: Delhi Capitals cricketer Prithvi Shaw plays a shot during the 2019 Indian Premier League (IPL) eliminator Twenty20 cricket match between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals at the Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium. — AFP

Paceman Ishant Sharma led the charge with his two wickets including the prized scalp of Williamson for 28. West Indies bowler Paul returned figures of 3-32 in his four overs. New Zealand's Martin Guptill top-scored with 36 off 19 de-

liveries but fell to the guile of leg-spinner Mishra. Mumbai Indians, who made Sunday's final in Hyderabad after outplaying Mahendra Singh Dhoni's Chennai in the first qualifier, await the second finalist. — AFP

England will be a better team with Archer: Plunkett

LONDON: Liam Plunkett said England would be a "better team" if Jofra Archer made it into their World Cup squad after his fellow fast bowler again impressed on international duty. Archer continued his late bid for a World Cup berth with a hostile opening spell against Pakistan at The Oval on Wednesday. He took one wicket and conceded just six runs in four overs before rain meant there was no result in the first one-day international of a five-match series.

The Sussex fast bowler's display was a rare highlight in a mere 19 overs' cricket before a day/night fixture was finally called off at 7:11 pm (1811 GMT) local time amid concerns over player safety on a heavily wet outfield. Pakistan were 80 for two, with Imam-ul-Haq 42 not out and Haris Sohail 14 not out. Barbados-born Archer was not included in England's preliminary squad for the World Cup but could force his way into their final 15 via his displays in this five-match series.

"He's obviously a class act," Plunkett, one of England's established quicks, told reporters afterwards. "He showed today, he's rocked up and bowled really nicely with pace and smashed the right good areas, picked up a wicket in the first few overs, beating the left-hander (Imam) on the outside

edge." Plunkett, England's other wicket-taker in a four-over spell of one for 27 on what is now his Surrey home ground, added: "It looks easy for him, he ambles in and bowls 93 mph, he makes it look effortless. Questions have been raised about the effect on team morale of catapulting Archer, only recently qualified on residency grounds, into England's World Cup squad. But Plunkett said: "With him in your squad, you're going to be a better team."

"Whoever performs best should be in the squad. If it wasn't Jofra, someone else would be knocking on the door... If they come in and bowl well, they deserve to be there." Archer showed glimpses of his ability while making ODI and Twenty20 international debuts against Ireland and Pakistan last week. On Tuesday, former England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff say "anyone" should be dropped to make sure Archer had a place in the World Cup squad.

Archer seized his latest chance after England captain Eoin Morgan won Wednesday's delayed toss at The Oval. He started with a superb maiden over to Imam, generating movement off the pitch at sharp pace. It was not long before Archer dismissed Fakhar Zaman — the century-making star of Pakistan's 2017 Champions Trophy final win over India at The Oval — for three after he edged to Test skipper Joe Root in the slips. New batsman Babar Azam (16) struck three boundaries before he edged Plunkett to wicket-keeper Jos Buttler.

"I still don't feel at my best," said Plunkett. "I feel I can be better, but if I'm still picking wickets up I'm happy with that." The series continues at Southampton on Saturday, with Plunkett and his team-mates looking to prove their World Cup worth to England selection chief Ed Smith. —AFP

Australia hails players' post-scandal conduct

SYDNEY: Australian cricketers' once-notorious behavior has significantly improved amid attempts to clean-up the game's culture after the ball-tampering scandal, Cricket Australia said yesterday. The men's national team had no conduct citations during 2018-19 season, the first clean sheet in seven years, and code of conduct charges at all levels dropped 74 percent, CA chairman Earl Eddings said.

"Everyone in Australian cricket is well aware that it's not just winning that counts, but how we play the game, and the players have certainly embraced that spirit," Eddings said. He said umpires had also reported they were being accorded more respect from players as the new, less abrasive culture beds in. CA's bid to shed the "ugly Australian" image comes after cricket's standing in the sports-mad nation reached its lowest ebb last year when players cheated by trying to alter the ball with sandpaper in a Test against South Africa in Cape Town.

In the fallout, three top players received lengthy bans, the national coach quit and numerous CA officials left the organization. An independent review commissioned by CA, slammed cricket's "arrogant" culture, criticizing both players and officials for chasing victory with no thought of morality or the spirit of the game. Eddings said lessons had been learned and change was being implemented. —AFP

Sports

Pochettino leads Spurs to pinnacle after years of pain

AMSTERDAM: Seemingly already down and out of the Champions League back in October, and at risk of missing out on next season's competition during a recent slump in results, now Mauricio Pochettino and Tottenham Hotspur find themselves, improbably, through to the final. "No pain, no gain" was the phrase an emotional Pochettino used after Wednesday's stirring comeback to beat Ajax 3-2 in the second leg of their semi-final in Amsterdam, a Lucas Moura hat-trick taking Spurs through on away goals.

But, he added, reverting to Spanish, "it was all worth it" with an all-English showdown against Liverpool to come in the biggest club game of all in Madrid on June 1, just two months after the opening of a new stadium which Spurs had been hoping would propel them to the next level. When Pochettino spoke of "pain", he was not simply referring to this season, but to the five years since he arrived in north London from Southampton, a period in which he has fought to establish Spurs as a top-four force in the Premier League and regulars in the Champions League.

In England, the phrase "to do a Spurs" was never a good thing, but that has changed. "To have brought the club to the final of the Champions League is very close to a miracle," Pochettino said at the Johan Cruyff Arena on Wednesday.

"No-one believed in us at the beginning of the season, we are so close, almost in the top

four and the 1st of June in Madrid playing the final against Liverpool.

"I think this amazing season in our new home and this chapter that we are going to close now — to close the chapter playing a final, and if we win, it would be an amazing book." Doubts were raised about Tottenham's capacity to maintain a challenge at home, never mind abroad, after they failed to make any new signings last summer while so many of their leading players had been involved at the World Cup to the end.

Indeed, Lucas remains their last new signing, bought from Paris Saint-Germain in January 2018. They lost their first two Champions League group games and, after a 2-2 draw at PSV Eindhoven left them with one point from nine, they seemed dead and buried. However, they scraped through, then ousted Borussia Dortmund, edged out Manchester City in an epic quarter-final, and now they have beaten Ajax, coming back from 3-0 down on aggregate and with their talisman, Harry Kane, out injured. "This year has been crazy — and not just for us — but already after three matches in the group stage we were practically eliminated and now we find ourselves in the final," said goalkeeper Hugo Lloris.

Endless possibilities

Spurs' achievement has certainly come against the odds, but at the same time it is a con-



AMSTERDAM: Tottenham's Argentine coach Mauricio Pochettino and players of Tottenham Hotspur jubilate after winning the UEFA Champions League semi-final second leg football match between Ajax Amsterdam and Tottenham Hotspur at the Johan Cruyff Arena. — AFP

firmation of their new status as one of the game's leading powers. They climbed into the top 10 of the most recent Deloitte Football Money

League, just behind bitter rivals Arsenal, with revenue of 428.3 million euros (£369m, \$479m) last year. — AFP

Lucas Moura, from PSG cast-off to Tottenham idol

PARIS: Rejected by Paris Saint-Germain after the world-record signing of Neymar, Lucas Moura propelled Tottenham to heights the French giants could only dream of Wednesday by single-handedly firing Spurs into a first Champions League final. With his side seemingly down and out, trailing 2-0 on the night and 3-0 on aggregate, Lucas produced a career-defining performance as his stunning second-half hat-trick engineered the latest jaw-dropping Champions League comeback to send Spurs through on away goals.

Yet scarcely 18 months ago, he was at a particularly low ebb after finding himself frozen out in Paris despite five trophy-laden years at the club. Mauricio Pochettino and Tottenham offered the Brazilian an escape route in January 2018, and Lucas is close to making good on his promise to take the club to the very top.

Upon his arrival in North London, he said: "I think the team is very, very strong. We can win a lot of things and why not the Champions League?" Just over a year on and Spurs are one win away from becoming European champions after Lucas conjured up a display at the

Johan Cruyff Arena befitting of the late Dutch great. "They are all heroes but Lucas was a super-hero. Unbelievable hat-trick. He deserves it, he is a great guy," a tearful Pochettino said after Tottenham's 3-2 win in Amsterdam set up a June 1 final with fellow comeback kings Liverpool.

Tottenham midfielder Christian Eriksen even called for a statue of Lucas, who dragged Spurs back from the brink with what were remarkably his first Champions League knockout goals. Ajax, 1-0 winners in London, appeared home and dry after surging a further two goals clear in the return leg, but Lucas had other ideas with a quickfire double on the hour.

That gave Spurs hope but they were still heading out until Lucas squeezed a low shot beyond Ajax goalkeeper Andre Onana in the 96th minute to earn his place in Tottenham folklore. "Football gives us moments like this that we cannot imagine," said Lucas. "We need to enjoy it. Look at me — it's the best moment in my life, my career. It's impossible to explain what I am feeling. I am very, very happy and proud of my teammates. "We always believed in this moment, that it was possible. We gave everything and deserved this moment. We are a family. It's impossible to explain — impossible." He became just the fifth player to score a hat-trick in a Champions League semi-final, after Alessandro Del Piero, Ivica Olic, Robert Lewandowski and Cristiano Ronaldo. Billed at his PSG unveiling as a talent on par with Neymar, Lucas left France without truly fulfilling his potential, but he has now shown their loss is very much Tottenham's gain. — AFP

'The fairytale ends': Dutch mourn loss

THE HAGUE: Dutch media yesterday lamented the "insane ending" to Ajax's improbable Champions League campaign after Tottenham's last minute semi-final win. Newspapers sought the positives in the Amsterdam team's return to the front rank of European football after wins over giants Juventus and Real Madrid, but were overwhelmed by the heartbreak of the loss.

Several papers carried the iconic image of Ajax players in their red and white jerseys stretched out in despair on the grass after Spurs' Lucas Moura sealed a last-gasp hat-trick to win 3-2 on the night. That put Spurs through on away goals following a 3-3 aggregate result. De Telegraaf newspaper screamed the front-page headline "Disappointment" while Volkskrant newspaper said "Just No", with both running photos of Moroccan player Hakim Ziyech.

"After the heyday in the seventies and nineties, Ajax is surfing on a new wave of success," Daniel Dwarswaard wrote in the Algemeen Dagblad newspaper. "But the crown on the work is not there. It will feel like an extremely missed opportunity forever, and scar for years," he added. "An insane ending ruined everything."

Many newspapers used the same language to describe the "buttock-clenching" tension as

Ajax let their lead slip away. Bart Vlietstra in Volkskrant said that "the fairytale ended for Ajax in sight of the final", blaming a "tsunami of attack waves" by Tottenham. However he said that "Ajax can look back on a great European campaign, one of the most awesome in the club's history" — and one that could scarcely have been dreamed about at the start of the season.

"There was nothing good about Ajax, just a year ago," wrote Vlietstra, with the team having to go through qualifying to play in the Champions League, the Dutch Eredivisie having lost its automatic spot. The NRC newspaper said that the "dream exploded in the final minutes" but said that the result should be put into a "broader context". Writer Bart Hinke said that assumptions that a Dutch club had nothing to expect from the Champions League "even with the outcome that followed Wednesday evening, can be put into the trash."

"Johan Cruyff should have experienced this," he wrote, referring to the legendary player and coach whose name the Ajax stadium now bears. The question now is what becomes of a squad that, created with a successful youth academy and clever recruitment, is now set to lose key players to giants like Barcelona over the summer. Dutch papers also worried that the Ajax campaign may be a false dawn, noting the gulf with lower placed teams including PSV Eindhoven and Feyenoord, and the shame of the national side's failure to make the 2016 Euros and 2018 World Cup. "The question then is: has the Dutch football crisis now been tackled? That seems a somewhat premature conclusion," wrote Jan-Cees Butter in Trouw newspaper. — AFP

Sports

Magical European nights: Five great Champions League comebacks

PARIS: Tottenham followed in Liverpool's footsteps by pulling off one of the most stunning fightbacks in Champions League history on Wednesday as Lucas Moura's hat-trick snatched a dramatic away-goals semi-final victory over Ajax. Spurs trailed 2-0 on the night and 3-0 on aggregate at half-time of the second leg, but Moura's 96th-minute winner sent them into a final against Liverpool — who also came back from three goals down to shock Barcelona on Tuesday — in Madrid on June 1. Here, we look at five other famous Champions League comebacks:

Barcelona stun PSG

Barcelona were on the right side of history two years ago, becoming the first team to come back from a four-goal first-leg deficit in the Champions League on a dramatic night at the Camp Nou when Neymar punished his future side PSG with two goals. If PSG's demolition of Luis Enrique's Barcelona in Paris was a shock, the fightback was mind-blowing with the crucial last two goals coming in stoppage time. Sergi Roberto came off the bench to write himself into Spanish football folklore with Barcelona's sixth goal in the fifth minute of added time. "I didn't know if I was dreaming — I have never known a noise like that," said a shell-shocked Roberto after the final whistle.

Barca's luck runs out in Rome

Barcelona's luck ran out in dramatic style 12 months after their PSG heroics with Edin Dzeko's away goal at the Camp Nou proving crucial. The Bosnia striker struggled to express his joy at Roma's achievement after his sixth-

minute goal in the return game sparked an incredible turnaround by the Italians. "We did it when definitely nobody believed in us," said Dzeko. There appeared to be no way back for Roma after they were routed in Barcelona. However, after Dzeko's early goal, a Daniele De Rossi penalty set the scene for Kostas Manolas's 82nd-minute header to spark wild celebrations led by Roma president James Pallotta, who jumped into Rome's Piazza del Popolo fountain.

Liverpool's night in Istanbul

Liverpool are no strangers to fightbacks in Europe, producing arguably the most staggering in a final against a mighty AC Milan side in Istanbul 14 years ago. They trailed 3-0 at half-time against the star-studded Italians after Paolo Maldini scored inside a minute and Hernan Crespo's excellent double. But talismanic captain Steven Gerrard gave his side hope with a header early in the second period, and substitute Vladimir Smicer drilled in two minutes later.

A breathtaking six-minute spell was completed on the hour mark as Xabi Alonso scored the rebound after his own penalty had been saved by Milan goalkeeper Dida. Rafael Benitez's underdogs hung on to force a penalty shootout, and Andriy Shevchenko, who had scored the winning spot-kick in the 2003 final against Juventus, saw his effort saved by Jerzy Dudek to confirm Liverpool's fifth, and most recent, Champions League title.

Irureta's miracle

After his side were trounced 4-1 at the San Siro, Deportivo coach Javier Irureta admitted there was no rational reason to believe in a mir-



ROME: Kostas Manolas's 82nd-minute header against Barcelona in the second leg of the 2017/18 Champions League Quarter-finals. — AFP

acle. However, his side burst out of the blocks in the second leg, holding a 3-0 lead at half-time thanks to goals from Walter Pandiani, Juan Carlos Valeron and Albert Luque. Substitute Fran Gonzalez added a fourth with 14 minutes to go and, having prayed for success, Irureta honoured his pre-match promise by taking the pilgrim trail to Santiago de Compostela after Deportivo's unlikely victory.

Di Matteo orchestrates Chelsea escape

Chelsea rode the momentum of a stirring last-16 comeback against Napoli to the club's maiden

Champions League title under interim coach Roberto Di Matteo. Trailing 3-1 from the first leg after two Ezequiel Lavezzi goals and an Edinson Cavani strike, Chelsea sacked Andre Villas-Boas ahead of the return leg. The Blues roared back at Stamford Bridge through efforts from Didier Drogba and John Terry, before Gokhan Inler briefly put the Italians back on top only for a Frank Lampard penalty to force extra time. Drogba then teed up Branislav Ivanovic to blast home a 105th-minute winner, and Chelsea would go on to beat Bayern Munich on penalties in that season's final at the Allianz Arena. — AFP

Neville plots WC glory for England women

LONDON: England manager Phil Neville has hailed the ongoing revolution in the women's game as he fine-tunes his preparations for the World Cup in France. The women's boss named his squad on Wednesday for the tournament that starts on June 7, with sports stars, musicians and even Football Association president Prince William announcing the 23-strong group player by player via social media.

Neville, whose team is grouped with Scotland, Argentina and Japan, said it was a "special period for women's football" as he talked about finding the balance between growing the game and winning matches. "It's been a constant learning curve for me over the last 16 months because ultimately we're in a cut-throat win business and going to this World Cup wanting to win," he said. "There is a development, a growth that we need to keep pushing," he added. "I need to keep exposing my players to the things that we ask them to do in terms of social media stuff, the coaching in schools, the media stuff that they're doing at the moment. "I can say from day one 'I don't want my players doing anything' but that's not going to help growth, that's not going to help get

women's football visible so I've had to adapt my management." The England boss said the best way to inspire the next generation of players would be to win in France and he believes he has a good mix of experience and youthful zest.

The younger players, in common with those in England's men's team, show a fearless streak in their approach to the game, added Neville, whose side open their campaign against Scotland in Nice on June 9. "They get given a lot in terms of coaching, psychological help, technical, tactical, everything is there for them to help them perform on the field," Neville said. "So I think what you're getting now is a more confident younger player."

He said older players had faced much tougher challenges. "I remember sitting down with Fara (Williams, who is not in the squad), I think it was in Bosnia and she was telling me about some of the things she had to put up with," he said. "Jill Scott tells the same things about having no balls, bibs, no pitches, being treated so badly." Neville does not shy away from openly stating his ambitions for his team, ranked third in the world, and rejects the necessity of playing down expectations. "The big occasion, full house, Nice, Scotland, millions watching back home on the BBC," he said. "You speak to those senior players. They will say 'this is what we dreamed about when we went to those park pitches, when we had no balls and we had no coaches'.

"We wanted to get to this stage in women's football and now we're here we can't be fearful of it, we can't be scared of it and we've just got to charge forward." — AFP

Sarri fears ban will ruin any title hopes

LONDON: Maurizio Sarri said Chelsea have no chance of competing with Manchester City and Liverpool next season unless their two-window transfer ban is overturned. Chelsea were hit with the ban for breaches of the international transfer rules on minors and FIFA threw out their appeal against the decision on Wednesday.

The Blues will take their fight against the transfer embargo to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), but it was the worst possible news for Sarri ahead of yesterday's Europa League semi-final second leg against Eintracht Frankfurt. Having booked a place in next season's Champions League after securing a top four finish in the Premier League, Chelsea are bidding to win the first trophy of Sarri's reign in the Europa League.

They are favored to reach the final after drawing 1-1 in Frankfurt in the first leg last week. But Sarri is concerned that a potentially uplifting end to his troubled first season would be erased if Chelsea are unable to sign the players he believes are needed to fight City and Liverpool in the Premier League. "It's very difficult to cover the gap at the moment; we need to work, prob-

ably we need to do something from the market," said Sarri, whose third-placed team are 24 points behind leaders City.

"So it's not easy, because the level of the top two is very, very high. As we can see in Europe, so it's not easy. "Of course, we have to work and we have to try. In my opinion we can reduce the gap. "I think that we have to buy only one, two players, otherwise it's very difficult to improve immediately. "I think we are a very good team, so we need only one, two players, no more."

Young talent

FIFA confirmed it has "partially upheld" Chelsea's appeal, but only in allowing the club to sign European players aged under 16. The ban on signing over-16s remains in place, leaving Chelsea unable to make changes to Sarri's squad unless they win the CAS appeal. With Real Madrid expected to make a move for Blues star Eden Hazard, who is out of contract next year, Sarri could be forced to sell a player he would prefer to keep rather than risk losing him for nothing when his deal expires. That would further weaken his options, but the Italian remains intent on staying with Chelsea next term. The former Napoli manager insists he would be able to survive without new signings at Chelsea next season, despite the obvious impact on his team's development. Asked if he would be ready to promote youth talents to the senior squad, Sarri said: "I like to play with young players, so for me it's not a big problem. — AFP



AMSTERDAM: Tottenham's Brazilian forward Lucas celebrates the victory with Tottenham's Argentine coach Mauricio Pochettino at the end of the UEFA Champions League semi-final second leg football match between Ajax Amsterdam and Tottenham Hotspur at the Johan Cruyff Arena. — AFP

Pochettino leads Spurs to UCL final

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