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Kuwait Times



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MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017

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DCGD arrests 204 suspects in drugs cases during March



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APPEALS COURT BACKS GOVT OVER PETROL PRICE HIKES

PAM ANNOUNCES BARRAK RALLY TO BE HELD AS SCHEDULED



Min 21°
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Low Tide 04:16 & 16:35

conspiracy theories

SUPERB TIMING



By Badrya Darwish

badrya_d@kuwaittimes.net

What superb timing! The government has decided to implement the increase in electricity and water tariffs. They made the decision and agreed on it last year, but its implementation will be on May 22, just four days before the start of Ramadan, when the whole nation - be it Kuwaiti or expat - will be busy shopping and stocking their kitchens for the cooking required during the holy month.

Even when they implemented the decision to raise the prices of petrol, they did it on September 1, while many Kuwaitis were still traveling out of the country. So this way, we wouldn't feel the pinch immediately. As for petrol, it was at least an equal burden for all. Everyone in Kuwait who drives a car, be it Kuwaiti or Indian or Somali, has to pay the same price per liter.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah looks on as Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas shakes hands with Egyptian Coptic Pope Tawadros II during their official visit to Kuwait yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 2)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The court of appeals yesterday said that a decision by the government to raise the prices of petrol is legal and in line of the constitution, overturning a September verdict by the lower court that ruled the increase was unlawful. Ali Al-Ali and several other lawyers, who filed the lawsuit demanding the scrapping of the decision on procedural flaws, said they will now take the issue to the court of cassation, whose rulings are final.

The decision, taken by the government in August last year, raised petrol prices between 41 percent and 83 percent depending on its type. It came into effect on Sept 1 last year. A number of lawyers then filed a lawsuit saying that the decision was unlawful and not in line with the constitution, as it should have been approved by the Supreme Petroleum Council, the highest oil decision-making body in the country.

The court accepted the challenge and issued a ruling on Sept 28 saying the hike decision was unlawful. The court however refused to suspend the increase. The government went to the appeals court and challenged the ruling as against the constitution and the law, insisting that the Cabinet did not issue the decision but only approved a recommendation made by one of its committees.

The appeals court however said that it was a decision made by the Cabinet but within the framework of the law and as part of the council's powers. It also said the decision was in line with the constitution. The lawyers said

they will challenge the decision at the court of cassation, but at least one lawyer said he will take the matter to the constitutional court to challenge the constitutional basis of the appeals court ruling.

Meanwhile, a rally and reception to mark the release of opposition leader and former MP Mussallam Al-Barrak will go ahead as announced today evening, the Popular Action Movement (PAM) said. PAM's announcement was made even after the municipality placed a notification at the venue - a celebration hall - saying it will be demolished within 24 hours. PAM officials said the issue has been resolved with the municipality and the event will go ahead. During the rally, Barrak is due to make an important speech about domestic development.

Barrak was released from central jail on Friday after completing a two-year term for insulting HH the Amir and undermining his status. He was given a rapturous reception outside the jail and at his diwaniya. He has been receiving well-wishers daily since then.

Separately, opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri sent a series of questions to the ministers of defense and oil.

He asked Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah if the ministry made arms purchases and deals to buy military equipment and spare parts, in addition to maintenance deals, through middlemen during the past three fiscal years. He asked the oil minister about the reasons behind closing Shuaiba refinery and demanded technical reports that recommended the closure.

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah welcomes Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, in presence of state officials. — Amiri Diwan photos

AMIR MEETS WITH PALESTINIAN LEADER

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met with visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at Bayan Palace yesterday, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the Palestinian leader's accompanying delegation were present at the talks. They discussed during the talks Kuwaiti-Palestinian talks, ways of promoting and developing them in all fields, how to bolster bilateral cooperation to serve common interests, supporting Arab unity, and the latest regional and international developments. The friendly talks reflected mutual amity, brotherliness and common willingness to cement bilateral cooperation and coordination in all domains.

Later, His Highness the Amir held a luncheon banquet in honor of Abbas at Bayan Palace. The banquet was attended by the Palestinian leader's accompanying delegation and Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St Mark, who also arrived to Kuwait on an official visit yesterday.

Upon his arrival at the airport, Abbas and his delegation were received by His



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas shortly after the president's arrival.

Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness the Prime Minister, Acting National Assembly Speaker Essa Ahmad Al-Kanderi and Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled. The Palestinian leader was also received by Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of



Children greet His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Finance Anas Al-Saleh, and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, in addition to senior commanders of the army, police, National Guard and the Fire Service

Directorate. The mission of honor to accompany the president during his visit is led by Amiri Diwan Advisor Walid Ahmad Al-Tabtabai. The visiting delegation includes Foreign Minister Riyadh Al-Maliki and senior state officials. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas are pictured during a luncheon held in the president's honor.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah welcomes Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah greets Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St Mark.

ARAB MEDIA FORUM KICKS OFF SESSIONS

BAHRAINI MINISTER TOUTS FORUM AS 'PRECIOUS CHANCE'

KUWAIT: 'Media is Life' is the main theme of the 14th Arab Media Forum that started in Kuwait yesterday patronized by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Secretary General of the Union of Arab Psychiatrists Dr Tariq Habib addressed the first session of the forum on the significance of understanding the types of characters in the media environment, to employ each in the proper place for achieving the aspired goals of the message.

Each character enjoys certain traits that could be viewed negative, or disturbing to deal with, though it is distinct, useful and

capable of realizing if it is well-used in a suitable place, he said. A narcissist character can be employed through new programs and unique materials so that one can achieve self-satisfaction at work.

A second session was then held on 'media, effect, change, expression .. paper and on line journalism.' Though e-journalism - also known as digital or online journalism- is sweeping the entire scene, it is relatively taking slow steps in the Arab world, Editor-in-Chief of the Jordanian Ammon News agency Sami Al-Hayari told the session. This could be the outcome of the economic conditions in most of

the Arab communities, he said. Hayari referred to the state of political instability in some other Arab communities, which affects the possibility of users of the e-media, which could be hard and of high cost amid such conditions.

Egyptian Preacher Dr Amr Khaled addressed a third session on the relation of the media for promoting ethics, and its role in education. Female media figures dominated the fourth session themed "fame in media and social media."

Saudi media figure Lugin Omran told the session that social media has helped her reveal her real character and offered her a space for free expression. Kuwait's Lulua Al-Aslawi said that social media led her to the world of TV. This came after she made great fame in fashion designs and marketing them on line, Aslawi added. Meanwhile, Bahraini Minister of Information Ali Al-Rumaihi stressed the significance of the forum as a 'precious chance for media figures.' Speaking to reporters upon arrival in Kuwait to attend the forum, the Bahraini minister extolled the main issues and subjects of the two-day forum, saying it allows media representatives to exchange views on diverse media topics. He added that he would address the event about major changes and challenges Arab mass media is facing, in addition to the role of mass media in addressing relevant obstacles and problems. "This distinguished forum is a good and precious chance for media figures to take stock of the current media reality and to tackle problems and find solutions to them," he added. — KUNA



Egyptian Preacher Dr Amr Khaled.



KUWAIT: Participants attend a session held as part of the 14th Arab Media Forum yesterday. — KUNA



Secretary General of the Union of Arab Psychiatrists Dr Tariq Habib.

Legalese

RIGHT OF TRAVEL

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

I always wonder what it would be to not have a passport, to be unable to leave a country, to be stuck between its buildings, to be unable to visit family.

This topic is of growing concern internationally from visa issues, to employers illegally keeping passports, to over protective fathers. Traveling is a blessing but it is also a right, and unlike a freedom, a right is granted to us by authorities, where else we are born with freedoms.

I believe that all adults should have the right to travel to wherever they wish, if they can afford to and I hope to see that become true in the future. Unfortunately, just like any other countries, there are some constraints by law in Kuwait, even though Kuwaiti law is extremely fair and gives expats the right to travel, while other GCC countries require expats to have permission to travel from their employers. Kuwaiti law also allows women to travel without male permission and guardianship, unlike other GCC countries.

Today I am answering questions regarding the right to travel, and I hope that you find this week's column useful.

Keeping the passport

Question: Does my employer have the right to keep my passport? And if they are, what can I do about it?

Fajer: No. Your employer does not have the right to keep your passport. This is illegal, but unfortunately seems to be a more common than expected practice in Kuwait. I have seen international companies keep passports of thousands of employees. There are monetary punishments for companies that do keep passports, yet these companies unfortunately know that it is too expensive for employees to take the companies to court.

You need to go and file a complaint in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. This can be a lengthy and difficult process and everything is in Arabic, so you will need a translator or lawyer. You will need to obtain different documents before you can file a complaint. Please keep in mind that it will take some time and that your employer might even be more unfair towards you knowing that you have filed a complaint. Unfortunately the best way to deal with this is through a lawyer.

Contractor

Question: I am working as a contractor in my company and I have my passport, but someone told me that I need to cancel my visa before I travel. The company is not giving me my rights such as my salary, so I want to leave. Can you please advise me what is the best solution?

Fajer: I think it is best that you cancel your visa officially and file these complaints so you are not later on accused of absconding. Even if you are not able to cancel your visa, at least file a complaint for your rights such as your salary at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Question: I am a 40-year-old Kuwaiti mother of four and I want to travel without my husband or his permission. Do I still need his permission? What about my children; do I need his permission for their travels?

Fajer: No you do not need his permission for your own travels, but you will need his permission for your children's travel even if he is no longer your husband and you have custody of your children.

Email Fajer at ask@fajertlawyer.com for help with your legal questions.



The National Assembly building.

MPS FILE TWO GRILLING MOTIONS AGAINST PREMIER

KUWAIT: Kuwait's National Assembly will look into its regular session tomorrow two grilling motions against His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. The first interpellation submitted by MPs Dr Waleed Al-Tabtabaie, Marzouq Al-Khalifa, and Mohammad Al-Mutair includes five points; the first of which is violation of the law and abuse of power by the government, decisions related to withdrawal or dropping of nationality from its holders. The second part of the motion is concerned about violating international agreements and conventions and abuse of power by the Government in selective, retaliatory or politically-motivated manner.

The third part tackles the spread of corruption; Kuwait's drop of 20 spots in the 2016 Corruption Perception Index and the appointment of personalities lacking competence and eligibility, and transferring their failure to other state's institutions. The fourth part

concerns the government's work program and neglecting the state's strategic assets, while the fifth part was about increasing burden on citizens and violating the principle of equality.

Meanwhile, the second motion against His Highness the Premier was filed by MPs Riyadh Al-Adsani and Shuwaib Al-Muwaizri and included financial, technical and administrative irregularities, and the lack of tackling such violations due to neglect, poor follow-up. National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem dealt with the grilling requests in accordance with Article 135 of the Parliament bylaws, stating that the speaker must notify the prime minister or the concerned minister instantly upon submission of the interpellation motion. It also stipulates that the deliberations must be held eight days after submission of the motion, and that is in non-urgent cases, and with consent of the premier or the concerned executive. —KUNA

CP KARATE TOURNAMENT CONCLUDES TODAY

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will patronize the 24th Crown Prince's Karate Championship, organized by the Kuwaiti Karate Federation. His Highness deputized Governor of Hawally, Lt Gen Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to attend the closing ceremony at the headquarters of the Kuwaiti Karate Federation at 5:00 pm today. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Chief of National Security Apparatus (NSA) Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah received the US President's special envoy to the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State (IS) Brett McGurk. During the meeting, they discussed issues with mutual concern and the latest political and military developments, in addition to the ongoing war on terror and ways to support the Global Coalition to eliminate IS —KUNA

SPENDING CUT INEVITABLE

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A paper prepared by Kuwait Central Bank stressed that cutting public expenditure has become inevitable to reform budget imbalances, stop draining national resources and using them in required fields, while at the same time lessening the burdens of people with limited income and achieving social justice. The paper also recommended periodic revision of these measures according to the situation of state revenues.

The paper which was presented to both legislative and executive authorities also stressed that Kuwait needed more efforts to reform the business environment in order to create investments and competitiveness and make the private sector play a more important role in developing the economy. The paper also warned that any lowering of Kuwait's credit ranking would jeopardize the financial reputation of Kuwait and its banking and financial establishments.

Labor reform

The Finance Ministry is currently studying a plan to reform the labor market and civil service in the public sector, said informed sources. They noted that the plan includes preparing a new method of evaluating the performance of Civil Service Commission (CSC) employees, setting up new job opportunities for Kuwaitis in the public sector through terminating or referring to retirement non-Kuwaitis

doing certain jobs, referring some Kuwaiti employees to retirement and submitting the final remarks about amending the payroll law to CSC's assistant undersecretary for legal affairs. Accordingly, CSC was assigned to reduce the period of paying national labor aid retroactively and setting a limit to it, mandate citizens without degrees registered with the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program to undergo training courses and regulate some promotions.

42 gardens

The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources' (PAAAFR) acting deputy director for landscaping affairs Ghanem Al-Sanad stressed that the sector is about to finish a number of park projects in new areas and open 42 gardens within the coming weeks. Sanad explained 39 parks had been completed in Capital areas, in addition to one in Sabah Al-Salem and two in Nahdha, noting that the parks would be fully equipped with recreational facilities, game arcades and playgrounds, and that water-saving plants had been used in all of them.

260 megawatts

General Electric won a contract to supply special turbines to turn Subbiya power plant into a facility operated by the joint circuit system, which will enhance the plant's productivity by an extra 260 megawatts. The turbines will be delivered by the third quarter of 2018.

In my view

KUWAIT VS AMERICA - PART 2

By Talal Al-Ghannam

Good morning my dear and honorable brothers and sisters, and I wish you all a happy week to come. Today's column is a continuation of a previous column written a few months back, in which I compared between behaviors of people in Kuwait to that of people in the United States.

In this article, I would like to continue comparing between life in Kuwait and the US in terms of respecting the law in all aspects of life. As for my experience in the US, during the 1980s, life then was very comfortable, and one could feel that the law was enforced on everyone without discrimination. Take queuing in the university's cafeteria for instance - you would see the dean himself standing in line waiting for his order and be served accordingly.

On the other hand, in so many places in Kuwait, especially in restaurants, bakeries, supermarkets and even in government departments, you have to fight for your right, otherwise you will keep waiting and waiting to finish what you went there to do.

The second example is when visiting a restaurant. In America, the waiter or waitress receives people's respect and appreciation for his or her service, and you can even thank them by their name that is written on the tag on their chests. Whereas here, I have seen with my own eyes some people yelling at restaurant workers, and never speaking politely with them. They instead make them feel as if they are forced to do their job.

Once had to go to a police station to report a missing ID. The officers and staff there called the porter 'shareka', meaning a company worker. They never bothered to ask about his name, but rather insisted on addressing him as if he was the company itself.

The third issue is when you go to rent an apartment in the US - you never encounter a janitor (haris) who stipulates that he is paid an amount equal to half of the rent as commission, and expect a monthly KD 5 payment for offering nothing spectacular to the tenants. But in the US on the other hand, you would deal with certified agencies that never beg to collect unwanted fees, but honor the contract they signed with you. Building janitors here make a bundle of cash they collect from tenants every month, besides the advance fees. I wonder if the building owners know about this illegal stuff. Another issue is commitment to appointments. In the US, once when I had to sell my car, many people called me to come and see the car. And if anything happened, they would call and apologize for not being able to come. Whereas here, the story is different. The majority of callers for the same purpose make an appointment with you, but never show up and do not apologize.

Finally, when you are at a restaurant in the US and discover the food was not OK, you will be compensated or be served another dish for free. The same thing happens when ordering a pizza, which is supposed to be delivered in less than 30 minutes, and if it arrives in 31 minutes, you get it for free. But in Kuwait, there are many cases of deliverymen who get beaten for arriving two minutes late, and many similar cases have been reported to the police.

Till the next article insha Allah

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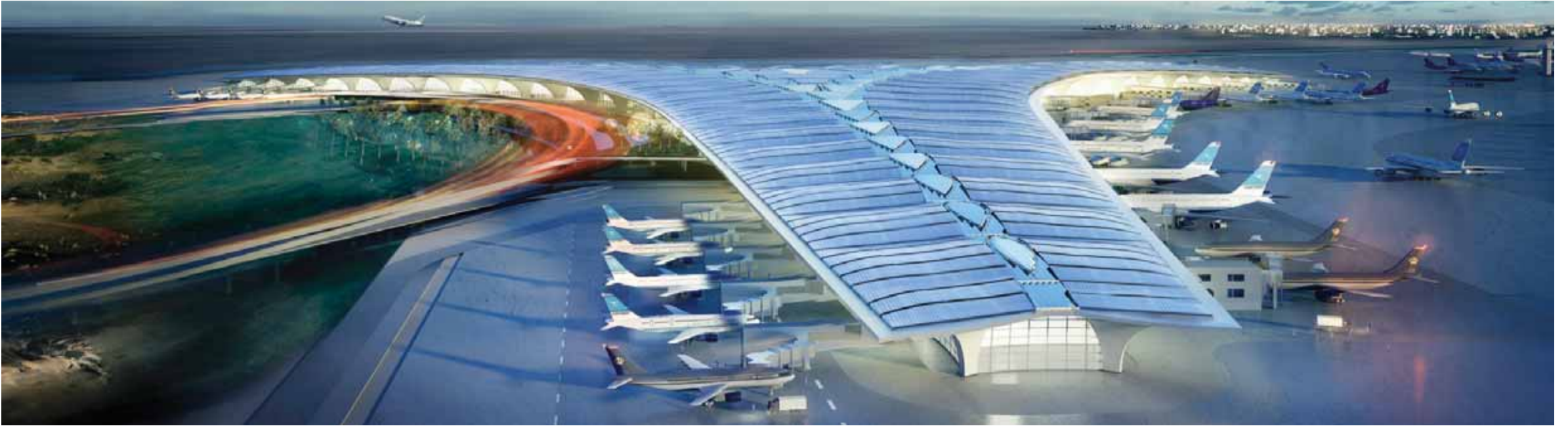
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A Wonderful World

SPECIAL REPORT



KUWAIT: An artist's rendition of the new Terminal (T2), to be implemented as part of Kuwait International Airport's development project. —KUNA photos

DGCA carries out comprehensive Kuwait International Airport development plan

4.5 km runway to receive giant airplanes like the Airbus 380

KUWAIT: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is carrying out a comprehensive plan to develop Kuwait International Airport, aimed at boost aviation safety and increase passenger capacity. The plan includes four projects: building a third runway, developing the infrastructure, constructing an air traffic control tower and developing the East Runway, DGCA's Director General Engineer Yousef Al-Fouzan said.

The KD 149.8 million (\$490.7 million) plan is jointly implemented by Chinese and Kuwaiti companies, and will contribute to operating the new Terminal (T2). Operations will start in June, he said in a statement. Fouzan said the third runway - 4.5 kilometers long and 60 meters wide - would receive giant airplanes like the Airbus 380, ease traffic

on current runways and ultimately boost capacity of entire airport.

He said the East Runway would be enlarged to match the third Runway. Fouzan said the development of infrastructure of Kuwait Airport would link the new projects with each other. This development will include building a new headquarters of DGCA, two fire stations, a cargo city, the T2 and new parking lots for the Amiri Fleet.

He meanwhile said the air traffic control tower, which would be at least 70 meters high, would be equipped with a state-of-the-art radar system, aircraft automatic control system, an advanced communication system between air controllers and planes as well as an aircraft guiding system based on lights.

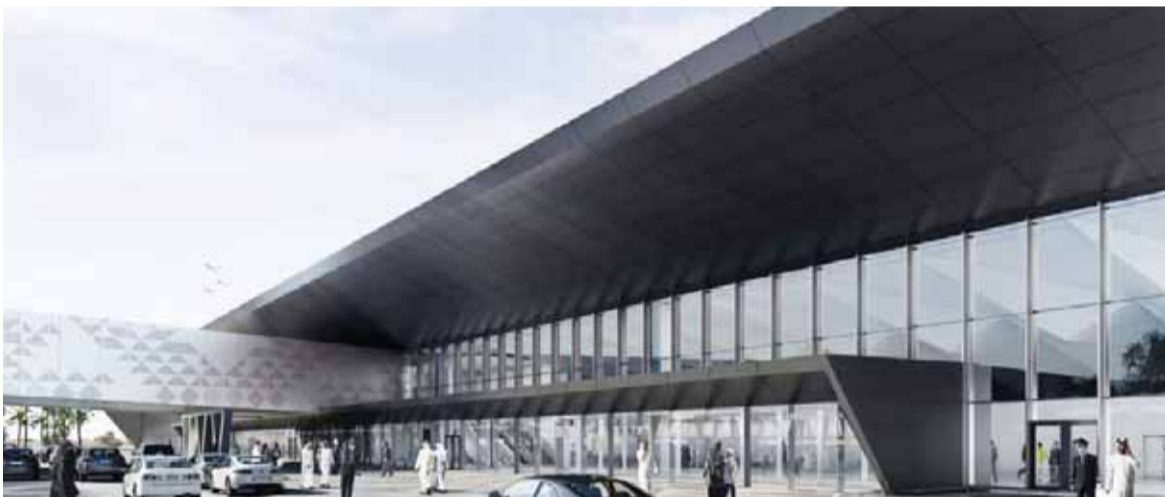
The airport development plan aims at

increasing capacity of passengers, receive giant airplanes, implementing the open skies policy and providing top-notch services, said Fouzan. A supporting terminal is built on 55,000 square meters and will increase capacity by five million passengers every year. This terminal, which encompasses some 2,450 parking lots, will have 14 gates for departing planes and 10 gates for arrivals.

The terminal, a joint Turkish-Kuwaiti KD 52.89 million (\$173.2 million) project, is expected to be operational in first quarter 2018, said Fouzan. The new Terminal (T2) will provide best comfortable means for passengers, he added. The state-of-the-art T2 will receive 13 million passengers every year initially which will increase to 25 million, said Fouzan. — KUNA



DGCA's Director General Engineer Yousef Al-Fouzan



The support terminal.



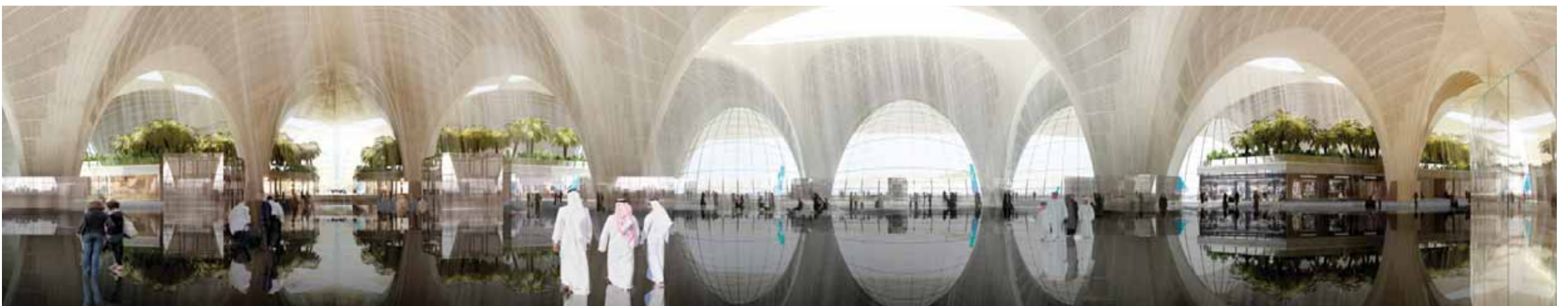
The new terminal (T2).



An artist's rendition of the Support Terminal, to be implemented as part of Kuwait International Airport's development project.



The support terminal.



The new terminal (T2).



The support terminal.



The support terminal.



KUWAIT: A snake was seen in Bneid Al-Qar on Arabian Gulf Street yesterday afternoon. Footage went viral on social media yesterday showing a snake crawling near a beach in the area. Pictures allegedly showing the dead snake, after apparently being killed by passersby, were later posted online. No human injuries were reported.

HEALTH MINISTRY TO ADD 79 AMBULANCES TO FLEET



KUWAIT: Kuwait Health Minister Dr. Jamal Al-Harbi presents the cup to the winner of the EMS football tournament. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait Health Minister Dr. Jamal Al-Harbi announced Saturday that 79 new ambulances would join the Emergency Medical Services' (EMS) fleet in near the future, increasing the number of ambulances to 298. Nine of the new ambulances would especially be equipped for intensive care and overweight patients, he said.

In a statement on the sidelines of the final football game of the EMS tournament, Harbi said the introduction of the new ambulances is part of the Ministry of Health's plans to develop the EMS through recruiting paramedics and air ambulances. The ministry is keen on boosting EMS and improving capabilities of its staff, he said. Harbi added that it is important to develop communications between EMS control room and ambulances. Meanwhile, Harbi said two Korean medical teams would be visiting Kuwait next month. The first is specialized in transplant and the other in medical information systems, like the e-file of the patient. — KUNA

OVER 22 KG DRUGS SEIZED IN MARCH

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) arrested 204 suspects in drugs cases and recorded 148 cases during March. The Ministry of Interior's (MoI) Relations and Security Information Department said 300 gm of hashish, 1,704 kg heroin, 2,619 kg of ice and shabu, 1,313 illicit tablets, 2 kg of marijuana and 16,593 kg of chemical were seized. DCGD also carried out preemptive actions to prevent the spread of drugs by arresting those who cooperate with drug dealers. The department urged citizens and expats to inform it about drugs dealers and pushers so that their children do not fall victim to this scourge.

Analytical lab

Director General of Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Lt Gen Khalid Rakan Al-Mikrad opened the first analytical lab for testing fire remains to aid investigations, and it is the first of its kind at the KFSD. The event was under the patronage of State Minister for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Information Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-

Sabah. In other news, firemen put out a fire in a Hawally building. The fire was in stored material. No injuries were reported.

Crackdown

The Interior Ministry said Farwaniya security department carried out a campaign on Saturday resulting in arresting 89 violators. The campaign covered Jleeb, Ardiya, Khaitan, Farwaniya and Firdous. The arrestees were sent to concerned authorities.



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Crime

Report

POLICE ARREST THIEF BEHIND 37 ROBBERIES IN TWO YEARS

KUWAIT: Criminal detectives solved over 37 cases of home and car thefts committed over two years by identifying the suspect. Detectives were able to identify the prime suspect, a bedoon, and placed him under arrest. Complaints by citizens and expats about thefts in their homes and vehicles were mounting since 2015, so Director General of the Criminal Detectives Department Maj Gen Mohammad Al-Sharhan led a team that determined that all crimes were committed by the same person. Sulaiikhath detectives then found a lead through undercover sources that pointed to a bedoon. His house was raided and he confessed to committing the thefts.

Policemen assaulted

A citizen who was under the influence of drugs attacked policemen and broke the hand of one of them, before he was brought under control. The incident took place on Maghreb Street near Mansouriya. Several motorists called police about a hysterical man whose car had broken down and was disturbing passersby. A police patrol responded, and when he was asked to hand over his ID, he attacked the patrolmen. Backup patrols arrived at the scene and the hysterical man was arrested. He faces further legal action.

Property damage

A car with a citizen and a Gulf national onboard collided with a vehicle, then hit a police car in an attempt to escape. The women ended up detained at a police station, and both were suspected of being drunk. A police patrol noticed a luxury car being driven unsteadily, so it was asked to stop. But the motorist attempted to escape, hitting another car and a police patrol car during the chase.

Fatal fall

The body of a 34-year-old Indian was taken to the medical examiner. He was found to have drunk a large quantity of liquor, and may have lost his balance and fallen from a building. The Indian was working on his satellite dish at the time of the accident. — *Al-Anbaa and Al-Rai*

BURGAN BANK MARKS SECOND BRANCH OPENING IN FAHAHEEL

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday that it will open its second branch in Fahaaheel today. The new branch's location is conveniently positioned to ensure that customers residing in Fahaaheel and surrounding areas gain easier access to conduct their financial needs. With the opening of this branch, Burgan Bank's network reach rises to include 29 branches across Kuwait and 186 branches across the Middle East, North Africa, and Turkey. Equipped with the modern facilities and technologies, the branch will be operational from Sundays to Thursdays, from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. The recent expansion reflects Burgan Bank commitment to continuously offer high quality customer care and comprehensive banking solutions throughout Kuwait.



Al-Jarida

الجريدة Al-Jarida

IN EACH DIWANIYA

By Ali Khajah

In the past, each diwaniya had some useless visitors whose presence or absence made no difference. They probably were only useful to complete a card playing group. However, those very same people have unfortunately started having their own opinions and have become capable of telling who is a Kuwaiti and who is not. They even form political attitudes' maps and describe whoever has a different opinion than him as being 'traitors' among many other accusations.

Each diwaniya or social gathering usually includes various elements or people with different interests varying between politics, sports and other daily concerns. One of them might be better-informed than others, even if the topic has nothing to do with their career or interest.

This individual comes in handy when the group decides to play cards and is short for one more player

Mostly, if not always, one of those people turn out to be useless and dispensable. Their absence makes no difference on any of the topics discussed in the diwaniya. There only remarks are usually limited to inquiries about how everyone was doing, and some other simple bits here and there. Sometimes, this individual comes in handy when the group decides to play cards and is short for one more player. However, after the internet and social media networks revolutionized our lives, people themselves have turned into media channels, posting whatever they wish for a considerable number of people to see.

All you need is internet access and a smartphone. All this allowed such insignificant individuals to gather information from various networks and from whatever is discussed in a diwaniya in order to form a topic to post on social media, as if it was their original idea. And because such individuals are marginal and insignificant as we mentioned, they would always try to make that up by using the internet as a source for having effective opinions amongst others. They tell fake stories as real ones backing up their superficial arguments.

As long as these people form public opinion, we are bound to reach this shaky fragile situation where nobody can stand different opinions and political arguments or disputes, and start having social impacts by classifying others in the most racist and hateful manner that has been tearing the society apart on a daily basis. Those people must be put back on the margins where they belong, because it would be a disaster to listen to and follow them. The consequences will surely be considerable.

— *Translated by Kuwait Times from Aljarida*

الانباء Al-Anbaa

Al-Anbaa

THE VIETNAMESE LESSON

By Salah Al-Sayer

I have started to pick garments having the 'Made in Vietnam' tag whenever I go shopping for clothes regardless of the brand because of the high quality of those clothes that are well-tailored and made of strong fabrics. It has become well-known that many international garment manufacturing companies tend to contract Vietnamese factories that also excel in many other products such as shoes, chocolate, frozen fish, furniture and technological products carrying famous brands. This has greatly changed Vietnam's ranking with the World Bank, and was upgraded to leading positions after it had stayed on the tail of the World Bank's list for long.

'Made in Vietnam' is a phrase that is dominating markets nowadays. It can be seen on international products and very well established and famous commercial brands, which is amazing and admirable at the same time. It calls for so much thought because the country had been through extremely terrible experiences. It was occupied by foreigners so many times. It witnessed dangerous domestic conflicts and has been through devas-

tating wars like that against the French occupation, and the seven-year war with the United States that claimed the lives of one million Vietnamese, injured three millions and resulted in creating 12 million refugees.

Yet, despite such catastrophic situations, Vietnam managed to turn into an industrial country with prosperous economy that attracted so many foreign investors. There is a great lesson to be learnt here from the Vietnamese people who worked hard on liberating their country from the American occupation, then worked on liberating its mind from the grips of history by breaking the ice of hatred with 'Uncle Sam.' They managed to turn old feuds between both countries into investment and commercial bonds, and thus, the US has become Vietnam's business associate.

Economists attribute Vietnam's economic boom to those outstanding commercial ties. Instead of remaining in gloomy bloody memories and Napalm fires of the past, Vietnam broke through to achieve victory for the best interest of the national economy.

— *Translated by Kuwait Times from A-Anbaa*

KIPCO GROUP TRAINS OVER 500 STUDENTS UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF INJAZ-KUWAIT

PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON 'ENTREPRENEURSHIP,' 'WORK READINESS'



Eman Al-Awadhi



Rana Al-Nibari

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO) and its group companies have trained over 500 students on entrepreneurship and work readiness under the umbrella of INJAZ-Kuwait - a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that aims to drive community service through professional volunteering engagement with youth.

Thirty-seven volunteers from the KIPCO Group trained 530 students in 14 training programs during the academic year 2016-2017. The initiative is part of a two-year partnership between KIPCO and INJAZ-Kuwait to train 1000 students by June 2018. Supported by the managements of their

companies, employees from KIPCO, Burgan Bank, Gulf Insurance Group, OSN, United Real Estate Company, Qurain Petrochemical Industries and KAMCO Investment Company volunteered their time to work closely with students in public and private middle schools, high schools and universities on topics such as entrepreneurship, innovation and career success.

Rana Al-Nibari, Chief Executive Officer of INJAZ-Kuwait said: "The programs we provide at INJAZ-Kuwait provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to ensure their success in the business world. Our responsibilities include offering

them the opportunity to meet with different groups of students and exposing them to diverse ideologies, in order to enrich their experience and enhance their understanding of what makes a business succeed or fail."

Eman Al-Awadhi, KIPCO's Group Communications Director said: "We are delighted to be working with INJAZ-Kuwait to build a culture of volunteering within KIPCO Group, driven by our interest in empowering young people and enhancing their skills to ensure career success and the pursuit of entrepreneurship. Our volunteers found the experi-

ence very rewarding, and they are eager to volunteer again in the coming academic year. This initiative has also been an opportunity for us to introduce to students the different roles they can pursue in their careers and the many business sectors they join."

She added: "We would like to thank the INJAZ-Kuwait team for the great effort they are exerting to drive youth engagement. On behalf of KIPCO, we also thank all the volunteers for taking the time to prepare of these programs and deliver them with passion, setting role models for our promising younger generation."

ZAIN WEARS GREEN IN CELEBRATION OF EARTH DAY

STAFF, MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATED IN INTERNAL ACTIVITY

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, organized an internal activity to celebrate Earth Day. The event, held in the company's main headquarters in Shuwaikh, witnessed the attendance of a large number of employees and the executive management, headed by Zain Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al-Roudhan.

Zain is keen on organizing this internal activity each year as part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards the environmental sector. The company involves employees in this internationally celebrated day that is held on April of every year to spread awareness and enrich its internal culture.

The event witnessed overwhelming participation from employees who were keen on wearing green to show their support for Earth Day. Activities included the distribution of office-friendly plants, healthy green snacks, and mini-games made with recycled materials such as old flyers and brochures, plastic bottles and caps, as well as plastic SIM card holders.

Zain's executive management was keen on taking part in the event and receiving written comments and suggestions proposed by the employees for an even greener workplace, as the company was recently recognized as the Best Recycler by Omniya, having recycled nearly 83,595 plastic bottles during 2016.

Recently, Zain employees and their families participated in a beach cleanup initiative at Shuwaikh beach. The event came in collaboration with the Kuwait Dive Team with the aim of preserving Kuwaiti marine life. Employees were keen on shouldering initiatives that con-

tribute to preserving the Kuwaiti marine life, which is considered one of the main pillars of the valued Kuwaiti heritage.

In addition, Zain recently dedicated a brand new boat to the Kuwait Dive Team, which will be utilized to carry out marine preservation projects throughout the upcoming years. The boat is fully equipped with the latest state of

the art equipment, and will be used for removing wrecked ships and boats from the bottom of the ocean, removing abandoned fishing nets, installing and maintaining environment-friendly anchors, monitoring coral reefs, cleaning shores, islands, and beaches, documenting marine life, and more.

Zain's support to the Kuwait Dive Team

throughout the past 14 years comes under its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards the environmental sector. The company's sustainable goals closely focus on preserving the Kuwaiti environment, especially Kuwait's marine life, and seeks to raise awareness of protecting it within the community.

During October 2016, the Kuwait Dive

Team honored Zain in the occasion of completing 800 marine preservation missions using a boat the company dedicated to the team back in 2003. The newly dedicated boat from Zain is much more advanced, and features state of the art equipment that will ensure easy and fast marine preservation missions throughout the upcoming years.





China urges North Korea peninsula denuclearization



SYRIA: This file handout picture released by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) shows Saudi Arabian air force pilot, Prince Khaled bin Salman, as he sits in the cockpit of a fighter jet at an undisclosed location, after taking part in a mission to strike Islamic State (IS) group targets in Syria.—AFP

SAUDI KING'S PILOT SON NAMED US ENVOY

SAUDI MILITARY PERSONNEL CIVIL SERVANTS TO RECEIVE ALLOWANCES

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia on Saturday named an air force pilot son of King Salman as ambassador to its major ally Washington, with which ties are improving under President Donald Trump. The change came among a series of orders issued by the king, who shuffled his cabinet, restored civil service benefits, and replaced the head of the army which for two years has been fighting rebels in neighboring Yemen.

"Prince Abdullah bin Faisal bin Turki removed as ambassador to the US. Prince Khaled bin Salman bin Abdulaziz appointed ambassador," the official Saudi Press Agency reported, citing a royal order. Prince Abdullah had served for just over a year, according to the website of the Saudi embassy in Washington. The United States and Saudi Arabia have a decades-old relationship based on the exchange of American security for Saudi oil.

But ties between Riyadh and Washington became increasingly frayed during the administration of president Barack Obama. Saudi leaders felt Obama was reluctant to get involved in the civil war in Syria and was tilting toward Riyadh's regional rival Iran. The Saudis have found a more favorable ear in Washington under Trump, who took office in January and has denounced Iran's "harmful influence" in the Middle East. Washington provides some logistical and intelligence support, as well as weapons, for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen.

The kingdom also belongs to the US-led coalition against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria. Prince Khaled, the new ambassador, is an air force pilot who flew missions as part of that anti-IS coalition, said Salman al-Ansari, president of the Saudi American Public Relation Affairs Committee (SAPRAC). Ansari, whose committee is a private initiative to strengthen Saudi-US ties, described Prince Khaled as a "very organized personality, savvy, youthful, and active."

Another son of King Salman, Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, 31, is second in line to the throne and is one of the kingdom's most powerful figures. He holds the post of defense minister and is pushing a wide-ranging social and economic reform program.

Military bonuses

Among other orders issued by King Salman, the head of the army Lieutenant General Eid al-Shalwi was removed. Fahad Bin Turki was promoted to replace him. The army is helping to defend Saudi Arabia's southern border from rebel incursions but analysts say that, in Yemen itself, coalition troops from the United Arab Emirates have the most prominence in ground operations

being conducted with local forces. Saudi Arabia leads the air campaign but after two years of coalition intervention analysts say Yemen is more unstable than ever, and one called it a "quagmire."

Saudi military personnel in the Yemen operation will receive a salary bonus of two months, the king also ordered, despite a budget deficit forecast to be \$53 billion this year following a collapse in global oil prices since 2014. The salaries of other civil servants were frozen last year and benefits curbed, while the government cut subsidies and delayed major projects. Salman on Saturday ended the restrictions on compensation for state workers because he is "keen to provide comfort to the Saudi citizens," a decree said, as the kingdom prepares to increase electricity and other prices.

Salman fired Minister of Civil Service Khaled al-Araj, who will be investigated by a

committee of the Royal Court. The Arab News reported late last year that Araj was under investigation by the kingdom's anti-corruption commission for the alleged "irregular hiring" of his son. In other changes, Salman dismissed Minister of Information and Culture Adel al-Turaifi and replaced him with Awad al-Awad.

Minister of Communication and Information Technology Mohammed al-Suwaiyel also lost his job, replaced by Abdullah al-Swaha. The king changed some regional governors, along with numerous senior bureaucrats including the head of the General Authority of Sports as the kingdom tries to provide more athletic activities for its people. Under the reforms being directed by the Deputy Crown Prince, Saudi Arabia is trying to make government operations more efficient and officials more accountable.—AFP

FRANCE VOTES IN PRESIDENTIAL NAILBITER

PARIS: France voted yesterday under heavy security in the first round of the most unpredictable presidential election in decades, with the outcome seen as vital for the future of the beleaguered European Union. Far-right leader Marine Le Pen and centrist Emmanuel Macron are the favorites to progress to a run-off on May 7 but the result is too close to call in a deeply divided country.

Le Pen, the 48-year-old leader of the National Front (FN), hopes to capitalize on security fears that were catapulted to the fore of the campaign after the fatal shooting of a policeman on Paris's Champs Elysees avenue claimed by the Islamic State group. Aiming to ride a wave of populism that carried Donald Trump to the White House and led Britain to vote for Brexit, Le Pen wants France to abandon the euro and intends to call a referendum on withdrawing from the EU as well.

Observers predict that a Le Pen victory could be a fatal blow for the EU, already weakened by Britain's vote to leave. Macron, 39, is seeking to become France's youngest ever president and has campaigned on a strongly pro-EU and pro-business platform. Seeking to benefit from a worldwide move away from established political parties, the former banker and economy minister formed his own movement, "En Marche" ("On the Move"), that he says is "neither to the left nor to the right."

But polls show scandal-tainted conservative candidate Francois Fillon, a former prime minister, and hard-left firebrand Jean-Luc Melenchon are also in with a fighting chance of finishing among the top two candidates and reaching the all-important second round. Le Pen cast her ballot in Henin-

Beaumont, a former coal mining town in northern France that has an FN mayor. Macron voted in the chic Normandy seaside resort of Le Touquet with wife Brigitte, his former high school teacher who is 25 years his senior.

Four hours after voting stations opened, turnout was up slightly on the figure at the same stage in 2012, suggesting it could beat the final figure of 79.48 percent in that election. Nearly 47 million people are eligible to vote and most polling stations will close at 1700 GMT with those in major cities shutting an hour later. First projected results are expected shortly afterwards.

Security a concern

In the wake of the policeman's killing on Thursday, 50,000 police and 7,000 soldiers have been deployed around France to protect voters. The terror attack was the latest in a bloody series have cost more than 230 lives since 2015. Guy Belkhouche, a 79-year-old pensioner who was voting in the working-class Parisian suburb of Trappes, said he was concerned. "Security issues have influenced me after the attacks. Candidates who want fewer security measures, who want to reduce the police's powers, have not got my vote," he said.

But Yanis Olive, a 35-year-old photographer voting in Paris, said security was not "a major issue"—unemployment and the economy were more important. "Emmanuel Macron's youth and positive demeanor is attractive," he said. "I really don't want Fillon or Le Pen so I've chosen Macron because I think he is going to be in the second round." Analysts believe the attack so late in the campaign

could hand an advantage to candidates seen as taking a hard line on security issues.

"If it were to benefit someone, that would clearly be Marine Le Pen who has dominated this issue throughout the campaign, or Francois Fillon," said Adelaide Zulfikarpasic of the BVA polling institute. In the aftermath of the shooting, Le Pen called for France to "immediately" take back control of its borders from the EU and deport all foreigners on a terror watchlist. US President Trump tweeted that the shooting "will have a big effect" on the election.

Fake job scandal

Closely watched around the world, the French campaign has been full of unpredictable twists and turns. A race that began with the surprise nomination of Fillon as right-wing candidate in November shifted into a higher gear in December when unpopular Socialist President Francois Hollande decided not to seek re-election. Hollande's five years in office have been dogged by a sluggish economy and the constant terror threat. After voting in Tulle, central France, Hollande said "democracy is stronger than all else", in a reference to the Paris attack. Fillon was the early frontrunner until his support waned after he was charged following accusations he gave his British-born wife a fictitious job as his parliamentary assistant for which she was paid nearly 700,000 euros (\$750,000) of public money. Though there are four main contenders in the election, a total of 11 candidates are taking part. The candidate for the governing Socialists, Benoit Hamon, was a distant fifth going into the final weekend.—AFP



FRANCE: French presidential election candidate for the far-right Front National (FN - National Front) party Marine Le Pen casts her ballot at a polling station in Henin-Beaumont, north-western France, yesterday, during the first round of the Presidential election.—AFP

IRAN TO AIR PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES AFTER U-TURN

TEHRAN: Iran will air live debates on state television ahead of May's presidential election, the interior ministry said yesterday, reversing a decision to show recorded versions that had triggered an outcry. "After demands by the Iranian nation and the candidates for a review (of the decision), the presidential elections campaign commission decided... that debates may be broadcast live," the ministry said in a statement on official news agency IRNA.

The U-turn came days after the commission, which sets campaigning rules ahead of the May

19 poll, said the debates would not be broadcast live as in previous elections, sparking outrage on social media. Moderate President Hassan Rouhani and his conservative rivals Ebrahim Raisi and Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf all rejected the ban. Televised debates are a relatively new feature of Iranian presidential elections and are believed to have influenced the results of votes in 2009 and 2013.

The ban on live debates was seen as an attempt to avoid embarrassing certain candidates by

exposing details about their actions in previous roles. Ghalibaf lost momentum in a 2013 election bid after his rival Rouhani said the headline former police chief had proposed allowing student protests in 1999 so security forces could crush them. In 2009, live debates between conservative incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and reformist candidates Mehdi Karroubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi turned into heated exchanges of accusations that many said went too far for the regime.

Karroubi and Mousavi have been under house

arrest since 2011 for leading protests against the re-election of Ahmadinejad. Prior to the reversal, Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani-Fazli, a member of the conservative-dominated commission, defended the ban on live debates, saying it would avoid "insults, accusations and (violations of) public ethical codes". All six candidates are set to take part in the first debate on Friday, the commission's head told news agency ISNA. The powerful Guardian Council last week blocked Ahmadinejad from standing for another term. —AFP

QATARIS KIDNAPPED IN IRAQ SPEAK OF JOY AT RELEASE

HOSTAGES RELEASED UNDER COMPLEX REGIONAL DEAL

DOHA: Two Qatari hunters who endured a 16-month hostage ordeal in Iraq spoke yesterday of their joy at being released, in the first public comments since the group were freed. Mohammed Marzouki was among 24 Qataris and two Saudis who were on a hunting trip in a mainly Shiite area of southern Iraq when they were kidnapped in late 2015. They flew back to Doha on Friday following their release under a complex regional deal linked to the Syrian civil war.

"When I saw the lights of Doha, I felt like life was beginning again—my happiness is indescribable," Marzouki told the local Arabic daily newspaper, Al-Sharq. "My joy at returning to the homeland is a feeling that cannot be described in words." A fellow hostage, Khalid bin Dhafer Al-Dosari, told the same newspaper that "all our aches and pains disappeared once we reached our homeland". The hunting party, believed to include prominent members of the Qatari royal family, were captured in mid-December 2015 and held captive until they were freed on Friday.

There was never any claim of responsibility for the kidnapping of the hunters, who were widely believed to have been taken by militias with close ties to Tehran. While the terms of the group's release have not been made public, it has been reported that Qatar paid millions in ransom to secure their freedom. After flying home on Friday, the hunters were met at Doha's Hamad International Airport by the country's emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

The release deal was linked to the evacuation of thousands of people from the Syrian government-held towns of Fuua and Kafraya, long besieged by rebels. The evacuations marked the end of the first stage of a deal brokered by rebel backer Qatar and regime ally Iran. Wealthy citizens of Sunni Gulf states venture to countries including Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq to hunt with falcons without the bag limits and conservation measures they face at home. —AFP



BAGDAD: An image grab taken from a handout video released by the Iraqi Interior Ministry shows Qatari men who were kidnapped while hunting in southern Iraq in 2015 boarding a plane at Baghdad airport following their release. — AFP

ANGOLAN ACTIVISTS JAILED OVER ELECTION PROTEST

LUANDA: Seven Angolan opposition activists have been sentenced to 45 days in jail over a protest calling for transparency in August elections when veteran President Jose Eduardo dos Santos is due to stand down. The election is set to mark a new chapter for Angola as Dos Santos hands over power after ruling the oil-rich country since 1979.

"The court condemns the accused to 45 days of imprisonment and a fine of 65,000 kwanzas (\$390) for the offences of rebellion and association with criminals," said the judge in Cacucaco, a district of the Angolan capital Luanda. Among those convicted late Wednesday was rapper Adao Bunga, nick-

named "McLife", a prominent critic of Dos Santos. About 50 protesters attended the unauthorized demonstration in Luanda yesterday calling for fair elections, with police arresting seven people. Dos Santos, who has dominated the Angolan government and the ruling MPLA party for decades, has been regularly accused of crushing dissent.

The MPLA has ruled since independence from Portugal in 1975. Joao Lourenco, the current defense minister, has emerged as Dos Santos's chosen successor. After constitutional changes in 2010, Angola does not directly elect a president, but the leader of the winning party automatically becomes head of state. —AFP

DRONE STRIKE KILLS FIVE QAEDA SUSPECTS IN YEMEN

ADEN: A presumed US drone strike in south Yemen yesterday killed five suspected members of Al-Qaeda and three civilians, a security official said. Earlier, a local official gave a toll of three suspects killed in the strike in the Al-Said area of Shabwa province. The vehicle targeted was carrying five suspected Al-Qaeda members, all of whom were killed by a missile, the security official said. Three civilians who went to their aid were killed when a second missile struck, the official said. Washington has sharply intensified its air war against the jihadists since US President Donald

Trump took office in January. The Pentagon said on April 3 that it had carried out more than 70 strikes against jihadist targets in Yemen since February 28. Before yesterday's attack, two strikes overnight on Tuesday killed five suspected members of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Washington regards AQAP to be the most dangerous branch of the extremist group. Last month, US media reports said Trump's administration had given new powers to the CIA to conduct drone strikes against extremist targets in the Middle East. —AFP

TWO ISRAELI SOLDIERS, FOUR OTHERS ARRESTED FOR ANTI-ARAB ATTACKS

JERUSALEM: Six Israelis, including two soldiers, have been arrested for racist attacks against Arabs with knives and other weapons and charged with "terrorist" offences, authorities said yesterday. The suspects are accused of having used knives, clubs and bars to carry out at least five separate anti-Arab attacks and acts of vandalism against cars belonging to Arabs, police said in a statement. Police did not provide details on whether the attacks resulted in serious injuries or how many people were targeted.

They were charged in the southern Israeli city of Beersheba. The accused were allegedly motivated by "nationalist and racist" beliefs, including seeking to

prevent Jewish women from having relationships with Arab men. According to police, they were influenced by a video from the Jewish extreme right group Lehava, which opposes inter-marriage. In August 2014, Lehava activists staged a rally where racist slogans, including "Death to Arabs!" were shouted at the wedding near Tel Aviv of a Muslim man and Jewish woman.

The group's leader, Benzi Gopstein, was questioned by police in 2015 after he condoned torching churches in Israel, in accordance with a mediaeval Jewish commandment to destroy places of idol-worship. Arabs account for some 17.5 percent of Israel's eight million population. —AFP

TRUMP TELLS DREAMERS TO REST EASY, TARGETS CRIMINALS

WASHINGTON: Young immigrants brought to the US as children and now in the country illegally can "rest easy," President Donald Trump says, telling the "dreamers" they will not be targets for deportation under his immigration policies. Trump, in an interview Friday with The Associated Press, said his administration is "not after the dreamers, we are after the criminals." The president, who took a hard line on immigration as a candidate, vowed anew to fulfill his promise to construct a wall along the US-Mexico border.

But he stopped short of demanding that funding for the project be included in a spending bill Congress must pass by the end of next week in order to keep the government running. "I want the border wall. My base definitely wants the border wall," Trump said in the Oval Office interview. Asked whether he would sign legislation that does not include money for the project, he said, "I just don't know yet." Throughout the campaign, he had firmly and repeatedly guaranteed that Mexico, not US taxpayers, would pay for the wall.

Eager to start making progress on other campaign promises, Trump said he would unveil a tax overhaul package next week - "Wednesday or shortly thereafter" - that would include a "massive" tax cut for both individuals and corporations. He would not provide details of rate proposals or how he planned to pay for the package but asserted the cuts for Americans will be "bigger, I believe, than any tax cut ever." Congressional Republicans seemed caught off guard by Trump's announcement and did not appear to have been briefed on the details of the White House's forthcoming plan.

Trump spoke with the AP ahead of his 100th day in office. He panned that marker as "artificial." Still, the White House is eager to tout progress on the litany of agenda items he promised to fulfill in his first 100 days, despite setbacks including court bans on his proposed immigration limits and a high-profile failure in repealing and replacing the current health care law. The president said Friday he spent his first 100 days laying the "foundation" for progress

later in his administration, including by building relationships with foreign leaders.

Dreamer case

He cited German Chancellor Angela Merkel as a leader he was surprised to have developed strong chemistry with, given that he has been critical of her handling of immigration policies. As a candidate, Trump strongly criticized President Barack Obama for "illegal executive amnesties," including actions to spare from deportation young people who were brought to the country as children and now are here illegally. But after the election, Trump started speaking more favorably about these immigrants, popularly dubbed "dreamers."

On Friday, he said that when it comes to them, "This is a case of heart." This week, attorneys for Juan Manuel Montes said the 23-year-old was recently deported to Mexico despite having qualified for deferred deportation. Trump said Montes' case is "a little different than the dreamer case," though he did not specify why. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program was launched in 2012 as a stopgap to protect some young immigrants from deportation while the administration continued to push for a broader immigration overhaul in Congress.

Obama's administrative program offered a reprieve from deportation to those immigrants in the country illegally who could prove they arrived before they were 16, had been in the United States for several years and had not committed a crime since being here. It mimicked versions of the so-called DREAM Act, which would have provided legal status for young immigrants but was never passed by Congress. DACA also provides work permits for the immigrants and is renewable every two years.

As of December, about 770,000 young immigrants had been approved for the program. On foreign policy, Trump said it was "possible" the US will withdraw from the nuclear accord with Iran forged by Obama and five other world leaders. —AP



RABAT: This picture shows the parliament during a joint public meeting devoted to the presentation of the government program by Morocco's newly appointed Prime Minister, in Rabat. — AFP

MOROCCO ACCUSES ALGERIA OF EXPELLING 55 SYRIANS

RABAT: Morocco has accused Algeria of expelling 55 Syrians across the countries' shared border, criticizing it for "inhumane behavior" in the latest row between the North African rivals. The Syrians were sent across the frontier near the desert town of Figuig, Morocco's interior ministry said in a statement late Friday. In searing heat and rugged terrain, they had reached the area in several groups before being "surrounded" by Algerian police, according to the Moroccan authorities.

Rabat condemned its neighbor's "inhumane behavior" towards the migrants who included "women and children in a very vulnerable situation". The expulsion was "contrary to the rules of good neighborliness advocated by Morocco," it added. An NGO official in Figuig, who requested anonymity, said the Syrians were still stuck at the border Saturday without access to water or food.

Moroccan media reported that the Syrians had been left to their fate in the border region as Morocco prevented them from entering its territory. The frontier has been closed since 1994. The ministry's statement did not say whether they had been allowed to seek asylum in Morocco. "This is not the first time that the Algerian authorities have expelled immigrants to Moroccan territory," it said.

A statement from the Moroccan foreign ministry late Saturday expressed "deep concern" over the situation, saying Algeria's ambassador to Rabat had been shown photographs showing that the Syrians had crossed from Algerian territory and then tried to enter Morocco. "Algeria must meet its political and moral responsibility with regard to this situation," the ministry said, adding that "the humanitarian tragedy" faced by Syrian civilians should not be used "to sow trouble on the

Moroccan-Algerian border". In mid-March, a Moroccan migrant rights group, GADEM, reported that around 30 sub-Saharan migrants had been arrested in Morocco then left stranded in no man's land between Morocco and Algeria, having been deported from both countries. Morocco adopted a new migration policy in 2013. In December it launched a new campaign to regularize the status of clandestine migrants in its territory, most of them from sub-Saharan Africa.

Rabat insists its migration policy is "humane and generous"—in contrast, it says, with the policy of its Algerian rival. In January 2014, Morocco summoned Algeria's ambassador to protest against its alleged expulsion of Syrians across their common border. Algeria responded in kind, saying its border guards had merely refused to allow Syrians deported by Morocco to enter its territory. —AFP



WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump walks along the West Wing Colonnade at the White House in Washington. — AP

US WARSHIP IN W PACIFIC FOR JAPAN NAVY DRILLS

TOKYO: The US aircraft carrier Carl Vinson and other warships started joint exercises with Japan yesterday, the American navy said, as regional tensions rise over North Korea's missile and nuclear programs. The exercises also involving a US guided-missile cruiser and guided-missile destroyer-are being

held in the Philippine Sea, the navy said, as the naval strike group "continued its northern transit in the Western Pacific." Confusion has clouded the

carrier group's whereabouts in recent days after President Donald Trump suggested the "armada" was steaming towards North Korea when in fact it was sent towards Australia.

On Saturday US Vice President Mike Pence said in Sydney the strike group would arrive in the Sea of Japan (East Sea) "in a matter of days." Pence has vowed an "overwhelming and effective" response to any North Korean attack as fears grow it may be preparing for another nuclear test. Pyongyang reacted defiantly. State newspaper Minju Joson quoted what it called military sources as saying Washington plans to station "several nuclear carrier task forces" off the Korean peninsula this week.

"The army of the DPRK (North Korea) already declared it will deal merciless destructive blows at the enemies so that they would not come back to life again should they make reckless provocation," the paper said. The Carl Vinson carrier strike group and the Japanese navy "commenced an at-sea bilateral exercise in the Philippine Sea" yesterday, the US Navy posted on its Facebook page. The joint drill is designed to "ensure maritime forces remain ready to defend the region when called upon," it said.

"Seeing the threats we are facing now, it is no surprise that Japan and the United States conduct joint exercises," Toshimitsu Moteji, a senior ruling party

lawmaker, told Japan's NHK public broadcaster, adding the exercises would send a "strong message." The Carl Vinson drills, expected to last several days, involve two Japanese warships, Japan's defense ministry said. Pence, during a regional tour last week that ended in Australia, and other US officials have warned that "all options are on the table" to curb the North's nuclear ambitions.

Pence and Trump have also renewed calls for China to use its influence to bring Pyongyang to heel. The North has ramped up its rhetoric in recent weeks, threatening to hit back against any provocation. It has also renewed threats against regional US allies, including Japan and South Korea, which both host large American military contingents. Even Australia has been cautioned.

"If Australia persists in following the US's moves to isolate and stifle North Korea... this will be a suicidal act," a North Korean foreign ministry spokesman said after Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop called the nation a "serious threat." Bishop responded yesterday that the North "should invest in the welfare of its long-suffering citizens, rather than weapons of mass destruction." Washington is sending a senior envoy on the nuclear standoff with North Korea to Tokyo this week for talks with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts.—AFP



JAPAN: In this photo released by the US Navy, the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson transits the Sunda Strait between the Indonesian islands of Java and Sumatra as the US Navy aircraft carrier strike group is on a scheduled western Pacific deployment. —AP

CHINA URGES NORTH KOREA PENINSULA DENUCLEARIZATION

'ALL OPTIONS ARE ON THE TABLE TO CURB NUCLEAR AMBITIONS'

ATHENS: China's foreign minister called yesterday for the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula amid rising tension over North Korea's missile and nuclear programs. "China is firmly supporting the denuclearization of the area in the name of stability and peace," Wang Yi told reporters in Athens after meeting Greek counterpart Nikos Kotzias. "China may not

threatening to hit back against any provocation.

Serious threat
It has also renewed threats against regional US allies, including Japan and South Korea, which both host large American military contingents. Even Australia has received a warning from Pyongyang. "If Australia persists in following the US's moves to isolate and stifle

referring to the North's fears that the US plans a secret military strike to topple its leader. "It's also a resolve to point a double-action revolver against the US and China because he is a US citizen who worked in China."

Australia, New Zealand hit back
Australia and New Zealand stiffened their rhetoric against North Korea yesterday after the isolated

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop called the hermit state a "serious threat." The spokesman, speaking to the North's official KCNA news agency, warned Bishop to "think twice about the consequences." Australia's close ally New Zealand has since accused North Korea of having "evil intent."

Defense Minister Gerry Brownlee told Television New Zealand yesterday people knew little about Kim Jong-Un's regime but "you would assume that underneath him there is a very big machinery of people who have equally evil intent." "It's North Korea that is sending the missiles into the Sea of Japan and making the various outrageous threats including the threats overnight to Australia," he added. Australia's Bishop added yesterday that the North Korean government "should invest in the welfare of its long-suffering citizens, rather than weapons of mass destruction."

All-out war

The reclusive state has long been seeking to develop a long-range missile capable of hitting the US mainland with a nuclear warhead, and has so far staged five atomic tests, two of them last year. Pence vowed Wednesday that the US would counter any attack with an "overwhelming and effective" response after a senior North Korean official pledged weekly missile tests and "all-out war" if the US took any action against it.

In Sydney, Pence maintained calls for Pyongyang's sole ally China to do more to rein in its neighbor. Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull also urged China to use its leverage over the hermit state, describing the North Korean regime as "reckless and dangerous." He added that Australia and the US were "absolutely united" in their determination to achieve a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. Super carrier Carl Vinson is due to start joint exercises with Japan's navy yesterday, Tokyo's defense ministry said, with the drills expected to last several days and involve two Japanese warships.—AFP



CLARIN: Philippine soldiers ride in the back of a military truck as they head to an area where gunmen have engaged government troops in the town of Clarin, Bohol province, yesterday. —AFP

FOUR GUNMEN KILLED IN HUNT FOR PHILIPPINE MILITANTS

MANILA: Four gunmen have been killed on a Philippine tourist island as President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the military yesterday to kill remnants of an Islamic militant group behind a foiled mass kidnapping attempt there. Authorities said the dead suspects and three others on the run were stragglers from a boatload of southern Philippines-based Abu Sayyaf gunmen who sailed to the central island of Bohol this month as part of a plot to kidnap tourists.

The raid had signaled an escalation of the kidnapping threat from the Abu Sayyaf, who are based on remote islands and also blamed for beheadings and deadly bombings, prompting Duterte to vow deadly retribution. "I told the military: Do not sleep. Find them. Kill them. I want them dead. Do not give them to me alive," Duterte said about the fresh fighting in Bohol. "They are animals but if you want me to be an animal, I am used to that. We are the same. I can dish out more than what you can," he told people attending a public sports event.

Six other Abu Sayyaf members had been killed in clashes on the island on April 11, when three soldiers and a policeman were also slain, authorities said. The military said they had been pursuing up to seven of the remaining gunmen. Security forces continued the hunt for the remaining three gunmen yesterday while residents fled to safety to avoid getting caught in the crossfire. "The remaining lawless armed elements who are strangers in

the area have nowhere to go," a joint military and police statement said.

"It could just be a matter of time before we can say that the threat (on Bohol) is totally eliminated." Bohol police said Saturday's fighting erupted at a rice and coconut farming village near the town of Clarin, adjacent to the area of the April 11 clashes. The Abu Sayyaf, made up of several hundred militants, is notorious for kidnappings, beheadings and deadly bombings. Its leaders have also pledged allegiance to Islamic State fighters in Iraq and Syria. Yesterday, the army said the Abu Sayyaf beheaded a soldier it abducted last week in its southern Jolo stronghold.

The fighting in Bohol, about 500 kilometers away from Jolo and 800 kilometers south of Manila, caused a scare for the Philippines' important tourism industry. The Philippines alerted Western governments after the military said it got wind of an Abu Sayyaf plan to raid central Philippine resorts during the Easter holidays and kidnap up to a dozen tourists. This led to travel warnings being issued by the United States, Australia, and other countries.

Over the past year the Abu Sayyaf has been expanding its activities from the south where the military has been waging an offensive since last year. Its gunmen have been boarding commercial and fishing vessels and abducting dozens of foreign crew members, ransoming some of them off for huge sums of money, according to the defense ministry.—AFP



ATHENS: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, left, speaks next to his Greek counterpart Nikos Kotzias during a press conference after a meeting with his Greek counterpart yesterday in Athens. —AFP

have the key to this solution ... but we are happy that more sides are accepting our point of view", he added.

US President Donald Trump has urged China to take stronger steps to press the North to curb its nuclear and missile programs. During a regional tour last week, Vice-President Mike Pence warned that "all options are on the table" to curb the North's nuclear ambitions, as fears grow it may be planning another atomic test. Pyongyang has ramped up its rhetoric in recent weeks,

North Korea... this will be a suicidal act," a North Korean foreign ministry spokesman said after Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop called the nation a "serious threat."

Yesterday, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported that a US citizen had been arrested as he tried to fly out of North Korea, becoming the third American to be detained there. "It is important for them to hold a US citizen hostage at this point to prevent Washington from carrying out a decapitation of Kim Jong-Un," Ahn Chan-il, a former defector, said,

state threatened Canberra with a nuclear strike, urging it to think twice before "blindly and zealously toeing the US line." The move comes as US Vice President Mike Pence wraps up an Asia tour, which has included visits to South Korea, Japan and Australia partly to reassure allies amid fears that Pyongyang may be readying for a sixth nuclear test.

"If Australia persists in following the US's moves to isolate and stifle North Korea... this will be a suicidal act," a North Korean foreign ministry spokesman said after

N KOREA DETAINS US CITIZEN

SEOUL: A US citizen has been arrested as he tried to fly out of North Korea, becoming the third American to be detained there, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported yesterday. There was no immediate official confirmation of the reported arrest, which would come at a tense time in relations between Pyongyang and Washington. Yonhap quoted sources as saying the man, identified only by his surname Kim, was arrested last Friday at Pyongyang International Airport on his way out of the country.

It said Kim, aged in his late 50s and a former professor at China's Yanbian University of Science and Technology, had been involved in aid programs for the North. He reportedly was in the North for about a month to discuss relief activities, Yonhap said. The reason for his arrest was unclear. South Korea's National

Intelligence Service and the unification and foreign ministries said they could not confirm the report.

But the director of a Seoul-based group called the World North Korea Research Center said his sources in Pyongyang had confirmed the arrest. "The reason North Korea is not saying anything yet is because it is not done with the investigations," Ahn Chan-il, a former defector, said. "It is important for them to hold a US citizen hostage at this point to prevent Washington from carrying out a decapitation of Kim Jong-Un," Ahn said, referring to the North's fears that the US plans a secret military strike to topple its leader.

"It's also a resolve to point a double-action revolver against the US and China because he is a US citizen who worked in China," US President Donald Trump has

urged China to take stronger steps to press the North to curb its nuclear and missile programs. Trump's deputy Mike Pence, during a regional tour last week, warned that "all options are on the table" to curb the North's nuclear ambitions as fears grow it may be planning another atomic test.

Two other US citizens-college student Otto Warmbier and Korean-American pastor Kim Dong-Chul-are currently being held in the North after being sentenced to long prison terms. Kim was sentenced last year to 10 years' hard labor for spying. Also last year Warmbier was jailed for 15 years for stealing a propaganda sign and for "crimes against the state." The North has arrested and jailed several US citizens in the past decade, often releasing them only after high-profile visits by current or former US officials.—AFP

MALDIVES BLOGGER STABBED TO DEATH IN RESTIVE CAPITAL

MALE, Maldives: A liberal blogger, Yameen Rasheed, was stabbed to death in the politically restive Maldivian capital Male, his family members and colleagues said yesterday. He was 29. Rasheed was found in the stairwell of his apartment with multiple stab wounds to his neck and chest early yesterday and died shortly after being taken to hospital, family members said. His blog, The Daily Panic, had a considerable following and was known for poking fun at politicians in the nation of some 340,000 Sunni Muslims.

"With The Daily Panic, I hope to cover and comment upon the news, satirize the frequently unsatisfactory politics of Maldives," he wrote on his blog. Rasheed is the third media personality to be targeted in the Maldives in the past five years. Blogger Ismail Rasheed, also known as Hilath, was stabbed and wounded by an unidentified attacker in 2012. A journalist with the independent Minivan News, Ahmed Rilwan, was likely abducted in August 2014 and has been missing ever since.

Exiled opposition leader and former president Mohamed Nasheed yesterday demanded action on the latest killing of an independent journalist. "President Nasheed is demanding an inquiry with

international participation so it can't be swept under the carpet as usual," a spokesman for Nasheed said. Political tension has mounted in the Maldives after a failed bid by the opposition to impeach the country's parliamentary speaker late last month.

The regime of President Abdulla Yameen has arrested the last Maldives opposition leader not to be in jail or in exile as part of a major government crackdown on rival politicians, who narrowly failed to seize control of parliament. Qasim Ibrahim, who ran for president in 2013 and currently heads the Jumhoore Party (JP), was one of four signatories of an opposition unity deal aimed at toppling Yameen.

Ibrahim was briefly detained and released earlier this month only to be re-arrested over the weekend. A coalition of opposition parties, led by exiled leader Nasheed, is trying to undermine Yameen before elections next year. It faces an uphill struggle, with all opposition leaders now in exile or in jail after a years-long crackdown on dissent under Yameen's leadership. The clampdown has raised fears over the country's stability and dented its image as a tourist paradise.—AFP

MACRON TOPS FRENCH ELECTION, TO FIGHT LE PEN IN 2ND ROUND

PARIS: Centrist Emmanuel Macron will face off against far-right Marine Le Pen in the second round of France's presidential election, projections showed yesterday, making him clear favorite to emerge as the country's youngest leader in modern history. Macron was projected to win between 23 and 24 percent in yesterday's first round, slightly ahead of National Front (FN) leader Le Pen with between 21.6 and 23 percent, according to estimates on public television. "The French have expressed their desire for change," Macron told AFP in a statement, adding: "We're clearly turning a page in French political history."

The outcome capped an extraordinary few months for a deeply divided France, which saw a campaign full of twists and turns and widespread anger at traditional parties. It signals a stinging defeat for the scandal-hit rightwing Republicans party candidate Francois Fillon and Socialist Benoit Hamon, meaning neither of France's mainstream parties will be in the second round for the first time in 60 years.

Macron, a 39-year-old who had never before stood for election and only started his independent centrist movement 12 months ago, will be the overwhelming favorite to win the second round on May 7. All polls show the pro-Europe, pro-business modernizer with a 20-point lead in a head-to-head contest with Le Pen, who has hardened her anti-immigration and anti-Europe rhetoric over the last week.

The French vote was being closely watched as a bellwether for populist sentiment following the election of Donald Trump as US President and Britain's vote to leave the EU. Throughout the campaign, Macron insisted that France was "contrarian" - ready to elect a pro-globalization liberal at a time when rightwing nationalists are making gains across the world. "It's a victory for openness, social-mindedness and... an understanding of the modern economy that will restore French competitiveness," Macron supporter Marie-Helene Visconti, a 60-year-old artist, told AFP at his election party.

Le Pen will follow in her father Jean-Marie's footsteps who made it through to the second round in 2002. He suffered a stinging defeat when mainstream parties closed ranks to keep him out. Le Pen's niece, young hardliner Marion Marechal-Le Pen, hailed a "historic victory for patriots and nationalists" but reaction at her headquarters was subdued compared with the euphoria at the Macron party. There were already signs that Macron, who is married to his former school teacher 25 years older than him, would also enjoy support from his defeated rivals in the Republicans and Socialist parties.

Leading figures from both camps immediately called for voters to vote for the poetry and theatre lover. Hamon, forecast to win a humiliating six percent and finish in fifth place, said the left had suffered a "historic drubbing" but said voters should back Macron to keep out Le Pen who he said was "an enemy of the republic". Fillon followed suit, saying he would vote for Macron.

The vote took place under heavy security after the killing on Thursday of a policeman on Paris's Champs Elysees avenue claimed by the Islamic State group. With France still under the state of emergency imposed after the Paris attacks of November 2015, around 50,000 police and 7,000 soldiers were deployed to guard voters. Thursday's shooting on the most famous street in Paris was the latest in a bloody series of terror attacks that have cost more than 230 lives since 2015.

Nearly 47 million people were eligible to vote in the eurozone's second biggest economy. Voting was brisk on a bright spring day, defying forecasts of a low turnout after a campaign dominated by scandals. Riding the wave of disaffection with globalization that carried Trump to the White House and led Britain to vote for Brexit, Le Pen has vowed to abandon the euro, hold a referendum on withdrawing from the EU and adopt a French-first policy on jobs and housing. — AFP



RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz (right) receives Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi upon the latter's arrival yesterday.— AFP

SISI VISITS SAUDI ARABIA

RIYADH: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi received a royal welcome from King Salman as he landed yesterday in Saudi Arabia for a visit to boost ties after months of tension. King Salman, surrounded by key Saudi officials, greeted Sisi as he stepped off the plane in the capital Riyadh and hosted him for lunch, the official Saudi Press Agency said. The two Arab leaders then had talks during which they "reviewed the strong and brotherly relations as well as cooperation between their two countries" and regional issues, the agency said.

The Egyptian presidency announced the visit in a statement on Friday, saying Sisi's trip was in response to an invitation by Salman and aimed at "bolstering strategic relations between the two countries". It said Salman and Sisi would discuss "regional and international issues of common interest". "The struggle against terrorism which threatens security and stability" in the region and beyond would top their agenda, it said.

Sisi met Salman on the sidelines of an Arab League summit in Jordan last month to break the ice after months of apparent tensions between the two allies. That encounter on March 29 came days after Egypt announced that Saudi energy giant Aramco had

resumed delivering shipments of petroleum products after abruptly suspending them in October. Aramco had halted agreed monthly deliveries of 700,000 tonnes of petroleum products without explanation.

But the halt came after Egypt voted in favor of a Russian-drafted UN Security Council resolution on Syria that Saudi Arabia strongly opposed. Moscow is a staunch supporter of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad while Riyadh is a key backer of the rebels who are fighting his regime. Ties between Cairo and Riyadh had also suffered after an agreement to hand over to Saudi Arabia two Red Sea islands, signed during a visit by Salman to Cairo last year, was blocked by a court ruling.

Earlier this month, an Egyptian court ruled that the decision to block the transfer of Tiran and Sanafir to Saudi Arabia was invalid. Cairo has said the islands were Saudi territory which had been leased to Egypt in the 1950s. Saudi Arabia supported Egypt with billions of dollars in aid after Sisi toppled Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013 when the president was head of the Egyptian army. Saudi Arabia is opposed to the now outlawed Muslim Brotherhood to which Morsi belongs.— AFP

SUPERB TIMING

Continued from Page 1

This is fair - though I don't find it fair to increase the price of petrol in an oil-producing country. If it happens somewhere else where the nation imports it, I could understand. But we are a major exporter, not just any exporter. But that's life. The parliament took the decision and I cannot revoke it by myself.

But as for the hike in water and electricity, I find it unjust. Ridiculously unjust. You can actually call it discrimination. Why should I as a Kuwaiti be exempt, while living in a big private house - most of us thank God (Alhamdulillah) live in big houses with a garden or small yard. And our consumption is at least four to six times more than people living in flats.

Most expats - 90+ percent of them - reside in flats. Why should they pay more than us Kuwaitis? All of us are suffering from the same heat. The same summer. The same weather conditions. We are under the same sky and the

same sun. Plus, Kuwaitis have better salaries and we enjoy more privileges at hospitals and clinics.

Apartheid is good for us. Imagine an expat living in a flat with an average salary. Let's not take the average salary for an expat in the private sector, which according to the Central Statistics Bureau, is less than KD 300 per month. Let's say the expat is earning KD 600 per month. He has to pay for rent, school tuition, food, residency, car, clothes, furniture, government paperwork, health insurance, etc. The government now wants him to pay more for electricity?

Average electricity bills will jump from KD 5 per month to KD 50 per month in the summer. And our summer, thank God, is very short - it's only eight months a year! Please guys, have some mercy and at least exempt people during the three major months of summer: June, July and August. This is the least the government can exempt the expats from and it would be even better to do it with the advent of the holy month of Ramadan.

Have a nice Israa wal Miraj!

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Focus

SPATE OF ATTACKS MASKS WEAKENING ISLAMIC STATE

The steady drip of jihadist attacks in Europe, including the slaying of a policeman on Paris's world-famous Champs Elysees Thursday, might give the impression the Islamic State group is thriving - but experts say that's wrong. Under the pressure of the international coalition in Iraq and Syria as well as improved efforts by intelligence services, IS has seen its ability to mount complex, group attacks weaken.

'A criminal organization'

On Thursday, 39-year-old Frenchman Karim Cheurfi pulled out an automatic weapon and opened fire on a police van just a few hundred metres from the iconic Arc de Triomphe. The Islamic State jihadist group claimed the perpetrator as one of its 'fighters' and a note praising IS was found near his body.

Into the void left by the smashing of organized rings, have stepped 'rather unstable, even marginal, individuals who police have trouble linking to Daesh,' Olivier Roy, a specialist in political Islam, wrote last month.

It is too early to say if the Champs Elysees attack will have an impact on the outcome of the French election - Sunday is the poll's first round - but far-right leader Marine Le Pen, her centrist rival Emmanuel Macron, and scandal-hit conservative Francois Fillon cancelled campaign events Friday.



Cracks radiate from a bullet hole in a shop window on the Champs Elysees boulevard in Paris on April 21, 2017. — AP

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TURKEY OPPOSITION DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Turkey's embattled opposition to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan can still find glimmers of hope in a shifting political landscape despite the strongman winning a controversial referendum that will hugely enhance his powers.



Demonstrators shout during a protest against the result of the nationwide referendum that will hugely enhance President Recep Erdogan's powers in the Kadikoy district of Istanbul yesterday. — AFP

have also challenged the result, claiming rigging and a last minute change to the rules by the election board distorted the outcome, an argument vehemently rejected by the authorities.

But analysts say that the official results dominating from Thrace down into the Mediterranean coast and into the Kurdish-dominated southeast but 'Yes' holding strong in the Anatolian interior and the Black Sea region.

make troubling reading for the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) and Erdogan, who just two days before the poll confidently predicted that 'Yes' would win with up to 60 percent.

The electoral map showed Turkey more divided than ever, with the 'No' vote Party (MHP) failed to work with many nationalist voters defying the support of the MHP's longstanding and enigmatic leader Devlet Bahceli for the new presidential system.

'Shifting landscape' Pro-government columnist Abdulkadir Selvi wrote in the Hurriyet daily that the results should be an 'early warning' for the AKP ahead of November 2019, when presidential and parliamentary elections will be held simultaneously.

Unluhiscarikli said there is a chance of significant change in the nationalist camp as dissidents give up on Bahceli's leadership, raising the possibility of a new party. The leader of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) Kemal Kilicdaroglu appears safe in his position for now after leading the 'No' camp.

The challenge of the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP) has meanwhile been diluted by the jailing of a dozen of its MPs, a move it says was punishment for daring to oppose Erdogan's new system.

'Energized opposition' Street protests in areas of Istanbul have followed the disputed results. Although limited to anti-Erdogan areas and not exceeding a few thousand in number, such demonstrations have been unusual under the state of emergency that followed the July 15 failed coup.

IRAN ELECTIONS HAVE HISTORY OF DARK HORSES

Election season is under way in Iran and the rumor mill is in overdrive as the public tries to divine the back-room machinations that have thrown up major surprises in the past.

Rouhani, a moderate cleric with a long history in Iran's security apparatus, won the 2013 vote after the conservative-dominated Guardian Council blocked every other pro-reform candidate from running.

Iran's past elections have rarely been predictable. The establishment was rocked by the landslide win of relative reformist Mohammad Khatami in 1997 that led to a flowering of civil society, at least for a while.

about Iran. Although many Iranians are cynical about politics - seeing it as stitched up behind the scenes - these surprises have shifted Iran's trajectory.

A lack of polling makes it hard to follow public opinion. 'Outside observers go with what they hear from north Tehran, and can't always gauge what's going on in the rest of the country,' said Axworthy, referring to the wealthy, cosmopolitan part of the capital.



Iranians walk past election posters of President Hassan Rouhani, who is running in the presidential elections, in Tehran yesterday. — AFP

speculation in the media. Some say Raisi is being lined up as the next supreme leader, so everything will be done to ensure he is not embarrassed in the election.

For now, it is all speculation, although the smart money is still on Rouhani, not least because every president since the early 1980s has been given a second term.

'God's hand'

So is an upset possible this time? There is plenty of

CHARLO USES SERIES OF RIGHTS TO BEAT HATLEY

NEW YORK: Jermell Charlo used a series of straight right hands before a huge right knocked out Charles Hatley - literally - as Charlo defended his WBC junior middleweight title Saturday night with a sixth round knockout. In a total mismatch during which Charlo won every round and knocked down Hatley in the third with another right, Charlo moved to 29-0 with 14 knockouts. He never gave Hatley a chance to do any damage, and after the third, Hatley mostly was on the run. But he couldn't avoid that powerhouse right, and the knockout punch sent Hatley (26-2-1) straight to the canvas. His cornermen rushed into the ring along with fight doctors, and a stretcher was brought over. But Hatley got up woozily after several minutes and sat on a stool. Meanwhile, the 26-year-old Charlo, of Houston, celebrated a rather easy defense of the crown he won from John Jackson last May. —AP



THAILAND'S WORAWI VOWS TO CHALLENGE FIFA BAN

BANGKOK: Former Thai football chief Worawi Makudi has vowed to push FIFA to lift its ban on him after an appeals court in Bangkok overturned his conviction for forgery. Worawi, who had a long and tumultuous tenure in charge of Thai football, was banned for five years by FIFA last year following his July 2015 conviction. He was found guilty by a Thai court of forging documents during a re-election campaign as head of the Football Association of Thailand (FAT). FIFA's five-year ban was for both that conviction and for failing to cooperate with their own investigation. But on Friday, Thailand's Appeals Court overturned the forgery conviction and the football club that made the initial complaint, Pattaya FC, said it would not take the case to the Supreme Court. Speaking to AFP yesterday, Worawi said FIFA had rushed their decision to ban him before he had exhausted all his legal appeals. "They (FIFA) have to accept the decision from the (appeals) court," he said. "I don't know why they were so rushed to make a decision at that time because I told them to wait for our legal proceedings (to finish)," he added. —AFP

ROMANIA DEFY NASTASE SCANDAL TO BEAT BRITAIN

BUCHAREST: Romania brushed aside the controversy surrounding captain Ilie Nastase to beat Britain 3-1 in their scandal-mired Fed Cup play-off yesterday. Nastase, 70, a former world number one and two-time Grand Slam title winner, was kicked out of the tie on Saturday after a foul-mouthed rant compounded his controversial racial slur over Serena Williams's unborn baby. The International Tennis Federation (ITF) is looking into his behavior on Saturday and the day before, when he was overheard making derogatory remarks about US superstar Williams. But Romania yesterday let their tennis do the talking, sealing the World Group II tie when Irina-Camelia Begu defeated Heather Watson 6-4 7-5 in Constanta. Simona Halep had earlier put the hosts in control by beating Johanna Konta 6-1, 6-3. Defeat relegated Britain to the Europe/Africa Zone. —AFP



MINNEAPOLIS: Minnesota Twins' Brian Dozier, right, slides into the waiting tag by Detroit Tigers shortstop Dixon Machado on a steal attempt in the first inning. — AP

DETROIT BEATS MINNESOTA IN FEISTY GAME

MINNEAPOLIS: Twins slugger Miguel Sano punched Tigers catcher James McCann in the mask Saturday during a bench-clearing scrap in the fifth inning of Detroit's 5-4 victory over Minnesota. Two innings after Tigers outfielder JaCoby Jones was hit in the face by a pitch, Detroit starter Matthew Boyd threw behind Sano, who pointed his finger toward Boyd and yelled out at the mound. McCann intervened and appeared to put his mitt in the face of Sano, who immediately took exception and let fly with a right hand.

There was plenty of pushing and shoving near home plate as both benches and bullpens emptied, though there did not appear to be any other punches thrown. Sano and Boyd were both ejected. Jones took a 90 mph fastball in the mouth from Twins reliever Justin Haley in the third and left the game. The rookie center fielder was escorted to the bench bleeding from a split lip and later went to the hospital for a CT scan. Nicholas Castellanos and Justin Upton each hit a solo home run for the Tigers, who placed star slugger Miguel Cabrera (groin) on the disabled list before the game and used five relievers after Boyd was tossed. Blaine Hardy (1-0) won in relief and Francisco Rodriguez earned his sixth save in eight chances.

CUBS 12, REDS 8

Willson Contreras hit his first career grand slam and Anthony Rizzo and Jason Heyward each added a three-run shot to power Chicago past Cincinnati. Jake Arrieta (3-0) returned to the mound where he threw his second career no-hitter last April and struggled mightily at the outset, giving up two homers in the first inning. Chicago's offense pulled him through with another homer-heavy game at Great American Ball Park. Arrieta helped with an RBI triple. Rizzo connected in the first inning against left-hander Cody Reed (1-1), who was moved into the Reds' injury-depleted rotation. Contreras hit his grand slam in the second, Reed's final inning.

NATIONALS 3, METS 1

Gio Gonzalez pitched no-hit ball into the sixth inning to win again at Citi Field as Washington beat New York for its sixth straight victory. Gonzalez (2-0) gave up two

singles in 6 1/3 innings. The lefty improved to 9-1 lifetime on the Mets' home field. Still missing slugger Yoenis Cespedes and other injured starters, New York has lost seven of eight. Koda Glover, the fourth Washington pitcher, completed the combined two-hitter by getting the last out for his first big league save. Jacob deGrom (0-1) struck out 10 and walked six in 5 2/3 innings. He was supposed to pitch Friday night but was scratched with a stiff neck.

YANKEES 11, PIRATES 5

Pinch-hitter Chris Carter drilled a three-run homer in the eighth inning off reliever Felipe Rivero to lift New York over Pittsburgh. Carter sent the first pitch he saw from Rivero (1-1) into the bullpen beyond the center field fence for his first homer with the Yankees. Starlin Castro added a three-run shot of his own and Aaron Judge hit his team-high sixth home run for New York. Ronald Torreyes had four hits and two RBIs. Dellin Betances (2-1) earned the win in relief. Andrew McCutchen hit his third home run and had a sacrifice fly for Pittsburgh. David Freese added a solo home run but the Pirates fell apart late.

ATHLETICS 4, MARINERS 3

Adam Rosales and Ryon Healy each homered in the first inning while Jharel Cotton pitched six innings of two-run ball as Oakland beat Seattle for its fifth straight win. The two hottest A's hitters quickly got to Ariel Miranda (1-2). Rosales led off with his second homer, and two batters later, Healy hit a two-run shot, his third this season.

RAYS 6, ASTROS 3

Tim Beckham's third straight hit came during a four-run sixth inning that helped carry Tampa Bay over AL West-leading Houston. Beckham, who tripled and singled in two at-bats against starter Charlie Morton (1-2), drove in a run with his single in the sixth off reliever Will Harris. Evan Longoria had a two-run double for the Rays, who have won four of five. Austin Pruitt (2-0) got the win after 2 1/3 innings of hitless relief. Alex Colome pitched the ninth for his fourth save. Houston took an early 2-0 lead when Evan Gattis and Jose Altuve hit their first home runs of the season off Rays starter Blake Snell.

ORIOLES 4, RED SOX 2

Trey Mancini and Jonathan Schoop homered in succession off knuckleballer Steven Wright while Jayson Aquino won his first big league start as Baltimore beat Boston for its fourth straight victory. Aquino (1-0) allowed two runs and six hits over six innings to earn his first career victory while Mychal Givens followed with two perfect innings and Darren O'Day finished for his first save. Jackie Bradley Jr homered for the Red Sox, who were without injured second baseman Dustin Pedroia.

PHILLIES 4, BRAVES 3

Maikel Franco hit a two-run single with two outs in the bottom of the 10th inning to lift Philadelphia over Atlanta. Adonis Garcia's infield single drove in the go-ahead run in the top of the 10th after Brandon Phillips hit a tying solo homer off Edubray Ramos with two outs in the ninth, but Philadelphia rallied against Jim Johnson (2-1).

INDIANS 7, WHITE SOX 0

Carlos Carrasco pitched eight innings of three-hit ball, helping Cleveland shut out Chicago for the second straight night. Carrasco (2-1) struck out eight and did not

allow a runner to reach second base. Edwin Encarnacion and Michael Brantley each hit a two-run homer and Jose Ramirez added a solo shot as the Indians won their fifth straight.

CARDINALS 4, BREWERS 1

Pinch-hitter Aledmys Diaz delivered a go-ahead homer in the seventh and Lance Lynn pitched six strong innings as St. Louis defeated Milwaukee. Diaz, who didn't start at shortstop due to back stiffness and a sore shoulder, homered leading off the seventh against reliever Carlos Torres (0-2). Lynn (2-1) gave up a run and three hits. He struck out seven and walked two. Seung Hwan Oh got his fourth save in five tries.

RANGERS 2, ROYALS 1

Elvis Andrus hit an RBI single with one out in the ninth inning as Texas topped Kansas City. Rougned Odor led off the ninth with a sharp single off Travis Wood (0-2), who didn't face another batter before Peter Moylan took over. After Odor stole second base, Andrus hit a sharp single to left field. Mike Napoli homered for the Rangers, who have won three straight for the first time this season.

DIAMONDBACKS 11, DODGERS 5

Yasmany Tomas homered twice and David Peralta hit a team-record four doubles to lead Arizona over Los Angeles. Chris Herrmann and Jake Lamb each hit a two-run homer for the Diamondbacks. Peralta scored three times and Tomas drove in his third run by drawing a bases-loaded walk as part of a three-run seventh inning. Kike Hernandez hit a leadoff home run for the Dodgers (8-10), who have lost five of six, while Herrmann connected off starter Kenta Maeda (1-2) in the fourth, giving the Diamondbacks a 5-2 lead.

ROCKIES 12, GIANTS 3

Antonio Senzatela got his third win in four major league starts while Trevor Story homered for the second straight night as Colorado beat San Francisco. Charlie Blackmon tripled and homered and Mark Reynolds also went deep for the Rockies, who have won five of six. Giants center fielder Denard Span left the game after crashing into the wall shoulder-first while catching Blackmon's deep drive for the final out of the second. The team said Span has a mild shoulder sprain and was scheduled for X-rays.

MARLINS 6, PADRES 3, 11 INNINGS

Dee Gordon scored on his own swinging bunt in a crazy play during the 11th inning and Giancarlo Stanton homered twice as Miami beat San Diego. The Marlins went ahead 4-2 with no outs in the 11th thanks to San Diego's sloppy defense. With Justin Bour aboard on a pinch-hit single, reliever Jose Torres (1-1) fielded Gordon's dribbler and threw it away, with the ball rolling all the way into the right-field corner to allow Bour to score. Hunter Renfroe had difficulty picking up the ball, allowing Gordon to sprint home. Stanton added a two-run homer for a four-run lead.

ANGELS 5, BLUE JAYS 4

Andrelton Simmons hit a tiebreaking grand slam and Tyler Skaggs pitched into the eighth inning as Los Angeles held off Toronto. Simmons connected in the third inning off Casey Lawrence (0-2) for his second career slam, while Skaggs (1-1) gave up a run in the first but settled down to hold the Blue Jays to five hits over the next six innings. Toronto is a major league-worst 4-13. —AP

MLB results/standings

LA Angels 5, Toronto 4; Miami 6, San Diego 3 (11 innings); Arizona 11, LA Dodgers 5; Colorado 12, San Francisco 3; Texas 2, Kansas City 1; Cleveland 7, Chicago White Sox 0; St. Louis 4, Milwaukee 1; Philadelphia 4, Atlanta 3 (10 innings); Baltimore 4, Boston 2; Tampa Bay 6, Houston 3; NY Yankees 11, Pittsburgh 5; Oakland 4, Seattle 3; Washington 3, NY Mets 1; Detroit 5, Minnesota 4; Chicago Cubs 12, Cincinnati 8

Table with MLB results and standings for American League Eastern Division, American League Central Division, American League Western Division, National League Eastern Division, National League Central Division, and National League Western Division. Columns include team, wins, losses, percentage, and games behind.

WARRIORS TAKE 3-0 LEAD OVER BLAZERS

PORTLAND: Stephen Curry wasn't trying to be a hero. He just wanted the win. Curry scored 34 points - including a 3-pointer with just about a minute left that all but sealed the victory - as the Golden State Warriors overcame a slow start to beat the Portland Trail Blazers 119-113 and take a 3-0 lead in their first-round playoff series. Playing without both Kevin Durant and coach Steve Kerr, the Warriors came back Saturday night from a first-half 17-point deficit. Golden State can clinch the series with a win Monday night in Game 4 at the Moda Center.

"It's not necessarily 'hero ball,' it's being aggressive in those spots that you have," Curry said. "You might need to force the issue. That might mean taking a shot, it could be trying to get your feet in the paint and make a play, defensively trying to assert yourself - whatever the game calls for, getting ready for those moments." Klay

Thompson added 24 points in the victory, which Curry said was marked by a handful of "boneheaded mistakes" in the first half. A 19-1 run in the third quarter brought the Warriors back.

Afterward, Curry said he gave the game ball to general Manager Bob Myers to give to Kerr, who stayed back at the team hotel because of illness. Warriors assistant Mike Brown stood in for Kerr, who still experiences lingering symptoms from complications following two back surgeries after the franchise's run to the 2015 championship. He missed the first 43 games last season dealing with symptoms such as headaches, nausea and an aching neck. Despite his prolonged absence, the Warriors went 73-9 last season and played in the NBA championship game. Kerr was named Coach of the Year. "I don't know all of the circumstances," Brown said before the game. "He's just not feeling well, and we'll see how he feels later on." — AP



ATLANTA: Atlanta Hawks' Dennis Schroeder, right, wins the battle for a loose ball with Washington Wizards' Bradley Beal during Game 3. — AP

GASOL LIFTS GRIZZLIES PAST SPURS IN OT, SERIES TIED

MEMPHIS: Grizzlies guard Mike Conley said he was an option to take the final shot and that the San Antonio Spurs thought so, too, on a night when he scored a franchise postseason record 35 points. Marc Gasol laughed and insisted he didn't know his teammate was an alternative on the game-winning play. Zach Randolph backed up his All-Star center, too. "He told me he was going to get it and go to his fadeaway, and that's what he did," Randolph said.

Gasol hit a 12-foot floater with 0.7 seconds left in overtime, and the Grizzlies beat the Spurs 110-108 on Saturday night to even up their Western Conference first-round series at 2-2. The Grizzlies won despite blowing a 10-point lead with 7:38 left in regulation and franchise postseason-high 23 turnovers that San Antonio turned into 31 points. Gasol finished with 16 points after shooting 5 of 12 for the game. He also had 12 rebounds.

The Grizzlies overcame another postseason personal best from Kawhi Leonard, who had 43 points. He rallied the Spurs by scoring the last 16 points of regulation, but missed a 21-footer short of the rim with James Ennis defending him just before the buzzer ending regulation. Leonard also tied it at 108 with 17 seconds left in overtime with a 3 from the left corner. "That was great game," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said. "Both teams played their hearts out. Just a fantastic basketball game. The fans got their money's worth tonight for sure. At the end, Marc made a great shot. LA (LaMarcus Aldridge) contested it very, very well, and it went down." Game 5 is Tuesday night in San Antonio.

Nailing free-throws

Conley also had eight assists and nine rebounds. Randolph added 12 points and 11 rebounds, but was 4 of 12 from the field.



MEMPHIS: San Antonio Spurs forward Kawhi Leonard (2) loses control of the ball while defended by Memphis Grizzlies guard Wayne Selden Jr, left, and center Marc Gasol (33) during the second half of Game 4. — AP

CLIPPERS' GRIFFIN OUT OF PLAYOFFS WITH TOE INJURY

SALT LAKE CITY: Los Angeles Clippers forward Blake Griffin is out for the remainder of the NBA playoffs after injuring his big toe during Friday night's win against the Utah Jazz. The team announced Saturday that the five-time All-Star was diagnosed with an injury to the plantar plate of his right big toe. Griffin left Game 3 with 3:18 remaining in the second quarter after landing awkwardly following a transition layup. He had 11 points, six rebounds and two assists in 18 minutes, and the team said at the time the injury was a bruised toe. X-rays at the arena were negative, but he was re-evaluated after the game.

Clippers coach Doc Rivers said the injury actually happened on the play before the layup and added Griffin knew immediately that it was bad. The former No 1 pick will remain in Salt Lake City, wearing a walking boot and will return with the team after Game 4 on Sunday. Rivers said surgery is a possibility. His injury marks another playoff blow to a franchise that has dealt with a series of bad luck and internal turmoil in recent years. Griffin and point guard Chris Paul were lost to injuries last year, and the Clippers blew a 3-1 series lead against Houston in 2015.

During the 2014 playoffs, voice recordings

of then-owner Donald Sterling making racist comments surfaced, leading to him being banned by NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, who forced the sale of the team. The Clippers were up 2-0 in 2013 before losing to Memphis in six games after Griffin stepped on teammate Lamar Odom and injured his ankle. Rivers said he believes in the karmic-like presence of the "basketball gods," but not in any kind of Clippers curse.

"You make your own luck at the end of the day," Rivers said. "Like I told Blake last night ... right now he's probably thinking, 'Why me?' He's too good of a guy for this to continue to happen. There's going to be some kind of sunshine for him at some point. You've just got to weather this storm." The Clippers run much of their offense through Griffin and he's one of the best passers on the team. Rivers said they'll play both big - with Mareese Speights and DeAndre Jordan - and small for stretches. He doesn't want to put too much of a load on Paul to make up the difference. Paul added, "It has to be by committee. Blake's too much to our team. Offensively, defensively, his presence. ... We don't have one person over there that we're like, 'Oh, Blake's out, put him in.' — AP



Clippers forward Blake Griffin

HAWKS DELIVER PLAYOFF KO, ROMP PAST WIZARDS 116-98

ATLANTA: The Hawks are back in the series, and the bad blood with the Washington Wizards shows no signs of letting up. Paul Millsap scored 29 points, Dennis Schroder had 27 and Atlanta delivered an early knockout blow in a 116-98 victory Saturday, slicing the Wizards' lead to 2-1 in the opening-round playoff matchup. After two tight losses in Washington exposed plenty of ill feelings between the teams, Millsap and Washington's Markieff Morris continued to go at it in Game 3.

"He's a crybaby," Morris said afterward. "You get all the calls when you're a crybaby. That's how it went tonight." Those comments were quickly relayed to Millsap at the postgame news conference. "It definitely got personal now," he replied, before offering some unsolicited advice to Morris: "Take his loss and go back to the hotel, be ready for the next game." Cheered on by a raucous home crowd, the Hawks built a 25-point lead by late in the first quarter and were never seriously challenged by the Wizards.

One-man team

John Wall kept up his dazzling play in the series, scoring 29 points, but he was essentially a one-man team. The other Washington starters combined to score 30 points on 14-of-45 shooting. Bradley Beal, in particular, had a miserable night after averaging 26.5 points in the first two games. He was held to 12 points on 6-of-20 shooting, missing all six of his attempts beyond the arc. "That's probably the most I've ever seen him air-ball in one game," Wall said. "He'll figure it out." Game 4 is tomorrow night in Atlanta.

The Hawks came out intent on moving the ball, getting open looks and cutting down on the turnovers that plagued them in the first two contests. Talk about following the game plan. Atlanta pushed out to a double-digit lead before the game was 3 minutes old and stretched the margin to 38-13 with just under a minute to go in the opening quarter on Schroder's 3-pointer.

Wall did everything he could to spark the Wizards. He posed along the baseline after a thunderous dunk, which might have had more effect if the Wizards weren't losing by 23 at the time. He somehow made a 3-pointer while falling out of bounds in the corner at the end of the first quarter. He darted through the lane against a collapsing defense to bank in an improbable shot, drawing gasps from the Atlanta crowd. Wall made all but one shot and scored 21 points in the first half, but the Wizards trailed 64-46 heading to the locker room. The other four Washington starters had just 18 points.

The Hawks took advantage at the other end. "They jumped on us in that first period," Wizards coach Scott Brooks said. "Their sense of urgency was very high. I wouldn't say we came out relaxed, but we came out missing shots, and we let that affect our defense." Millsap also led the Hawks with 14 rebounds.

Confident rookie

After playing sparingly much of the season, Taurean Prince moved into Atlanta's starting lineup late in the year. His confidence is growing with each game. Prince scored 16 points, hit a couple of 3-pointers and energized the Hawks with his aggressive play. He even picked up a technical foul for taunting the Wizards after an alley-oop dunk in the closing minutes.

"Nothing derogatory," Prince said. "Just being competitive." Millsap praised the rookie for his contribution. "Every time Taurean touches the floor, he's out there hustling," Millsap said. "He's on the ground. He's a scrappy player. He earned himself some minutes. He's starting in the playoffs because of that." Beal has yet to find his shooting touch in the series, hitting just under 40 percent from the field. The Wizards insist they aren't worried. "I like his looks," Brooks said. "I like his shots. He's just going to have to keep shooting 'em. Keep getting him open looks, like we have. Every player will go through a stretch of a few games where you're not going to shoot the ball well. He'll bounce back." — AP

RAPTORS BEAT BUCKS IN RIVETING SLUGFEST

MILWAUKEE: DeMar DeRozan reverted back to his playmaking form. The Toronto Raptors reasserted themselves on defense. They're headed back to Canada after winning a bruiser of a first-round playoff game on Saturday over the Milwaukee Bucks.

DeRozan scored 33 points, and Kyle Lowry had 14 of his 18 points in the second half of Toronto's 87-76 victory to tie the Eastern Conference series at two games apiece. The Raptors turned up their intensity before a hostile road crowd after getting embarrassed in a 27-point loss to Milwaukee in Game 3. They forced 21 turnovers.

"I've always said we play better with our backs against the wall," Coach Dwane Casey said. "It's a tough way to live, but I love our team's resilience and personality." Toronto reclaimed home-court advantage in the best-of-seven series. Game 5 is Monday at the Air Canada Centre. Tony Snell led Milwaukee with 19 points, including five 3-pointers, both playoff career highs.

His 3 with 3:14 left got the Bucks within seven. Lowry answered with a bucket before setting up another basket with a drive-and-dish to center Jonas Valanciunas for a layup in traffic. While Toronto's star guards produced in the clutch, the defense threw up roadblocks after the Bucks ran roughshod all over the court on Thursday night. Milwaukee shot 37 percent overall in Game 4, but 31 percent (13 of 42) in the second half.

"Our tempo was extremely slow," coach Jason Kidd said. "Give (Toronto) credit, they slowed us down." Giannis Antetokounmpo was held to 14 points on 6-of-19 shooting, while also committing seven turnovers. Toronto's PJ Tucker helped contain the Bucks' All-Star with physical play in the

post in the fourth quarter. "We were just trying to send as many bodies to him as we possibly could," Casey said.

DeRozan's day

The resurgent DeRozan was 12 of 22 from the field after missing all eight of his attempts in Game 3. Bouncing back from adversity isn't new for Toronto. But after a forgettable Game 3, DeRozan said the team stayed patient and remained confident. "Being patient and being mature with the process, and (trying) to keep him calm," DeRozan said, nodding to his left in the direction of Lowry. "It was still a challenge, but we figured it out." He came out aggressive with strong drives to the bucket, going 8 of 14 for 21 points in the first half alone. The game was tied at halftime before Toronto slowly edged away, building a 10-point lead with 4 minutes left on Powell's 3-pointer. Milwaukee went 0 of 9 from the field during a stretch between late in the third quarter and early in the fourth, but still managed to stay within two possessions of Toronto for much of the second half. The Raptors were only slightly better with the ball, but their defense set the tone. "Our tempo ... in that second half came to a halt," Kidd said.

Trading shoves in the paint and hand-checks on the perimeter, the Bucks matched the Raptors' rise in defensive intensity. But they misfired more with the ball, with Antetokounmpo seemingly playing too aggressive at times. The Bucks had 13 first-half turnovers. Center Greg Monroe did his best to keep Milwaukee in the game with 10 points and four rebounds in the fourth quarter. "We didn't come out energized," Monroe said. "We tried to picking it up in the second half, but it was too late."



MILWAUKEE: Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo rebounds in front of Toronto Raptors' DeMar DeRozan during the first half of Game 4. — AP

SWING KUWAIT: AIDING SPECIAL NEEDS KIDS WITH GOLF

KUWAIT: Swing Kuwait, a non-profit golf initiative dedicated towards children with special needs, recently concluded its inaugural season with one final training session, which took place on April 22nd at the Sahara Kuwait Golf Resort. The event also included an awards ceremony which honored the season's outstanding golfers in recognition of their performance throughout the season. As well as showing appreciation to all the coaches and volunteers for their dedication and commitment to the program.

The first of its kind in the country, Swing Kuwait is a non-profit club founded by Hamad Al-Barrak, a 14 year-old Kuwaiti with a passion for golf. The initiative seeks to support children with special needs - especially those with autism and Down's syndrome - through golfing; helping them become more independent and enabling them to play and socialize in a friendly, safe environment. Swing's golfing season had kicked off in November of last year, with members meeting every Saturday at Sahara Kuwait Golf Resort.

Al-Barrak, founder and organizer of Swing Kuwait, stated: "My passion and love for golf drove me to start Swing. I had come to learn through research that children with special needs tend to be

much more comfortable and engage better while playing individual sports. Swing gives children the opportunity to interact with others and build social relationships, as well as enabling them to enjoy the soothing, stress-free environment that golfing provides."

Al-Barrak started by approaching Sahara Golf Resort management, which generously provided the golfing premises. He then sought the support of head coach Edward Retief from Sahara for designing the program and overseeing the weekly training of the young golfers. Additionally, the help of coaches Cameron Van Rooyen and Xu Xon and the many volunteers who were there on a weekly basis to support the children.

Finally, Al-Barrak concluded by saying: "This initiative is completely dependent on the concept of volunteering. Coaches, family members and friends all came together out of good will to make it happen. It is our hope that Swing continues to positively affect the lives of children with special needs and their parents. I also hope that Swing inspires others in the community to start their own projects and initiatives to support special needs children within our society, in any way they could."



LONDON: Kenya's Daniel Wanjiru wins the Men's elite race at the London marathon. — AFP

KENYANS WANJIRU, KEITANY IN LONDON MARATHON DOUBLE

LONDON: Daniel Wanjiru and record-breaking Mary Keitany made it a memorable double for Kenya yesterday as they stormed to victories in the London Marathon. Keitany, recording her third London win to put alongside her trio of New York victories, set a new world record for a women's only marathon of 2hr 17min 01sec, smashing the 14-year-old mark of British great Paula Radcliffe.

"It was a great day for me. It was really amazing to run the best time," 35-year-old Keitany told the BBC. "The weather was good at the beginning, it was nice for me and my pace. I've run my best," added Keitany, who saw off an Ethiopian great in Tirunesh Dibaba. Keitany's fellow Kenyan Wanjiru, 24, recorded his greatest victory as he kept Kenenisa Bekele at bay despite a late rally from the Ethiopian legend and race favourite. "We helped each other from the start, talking and we tried to maintain that pace for half of the race," Wanjiru told the BBC of his duel with Bekele.

Wanjiru hinted that he could see himself breaking the world record in the future. "It was very comfortable (to be in world record pace)," he said. Aside from the professionals running for prize money, the great majority of the 40,000 participants were amateurs running their hearts out for charitable causes. Jackie Scully perhaps outdid the lot by getting married in the early morning on the famed Cutty Sark ship and then the 35-year-old ran in her wedding attire designed by the wife of former England goalkeeper David Seaman-with her dad Eamonn in aid of a breast cancer charity.

She was diagnosed with the illness in 2014. The runners were sent on their way by Prince William, his wife Kate and his brother Prince Harry, whose Heads Together campaign wants to remove the stigma surrounding mental health issues. Heads Together was this year's principal charity for the marathon, which took place under blue skies for much of the time.

Poignant end

Heavy security measures were in place in the British capital. And there was an extra poignancy as the runners swept round the corner of the Embankment past Westminster Bridge, scene of last month's terror attack which killed four people, while a policeman died of stab wounds within the nearby parliament grounds the same day.

Wanjiru's feat was even more remarkable given the strength of the opposition: aside from 34-year-old Bekele there was Eritrean world champion Ghirmay Ghebreslassie and Ethiopia's Olympic silver medalist Feyisa Lilesa. Wanjiru came home in a time of 2hrs 5min 48sec to beat

Bekele, who recovered from a poor patch mid-race to come roaring back in the final eight miles, but ultimately fell just short.

Bekele finished nine seconds adrift whilst Wanjiru's compatriot Bedan Karoki was third in 2hr 07:41. Bekele, whose training was interrupted when he was ill three weeks ago, went through a bad patch and looked like he folded completely shortly after the halfway mark. Bekele set off in pursuit of Wanjiru and in stark contrast to his downcast look earlier in the

race, raised his arm in salute to a coterie of Ethiopian supporters as the race headed towards its climax.

The shock of seeing Bekele gaining on him appeared to refocus Wanjiru and he extended his lead late on, consoling Bekele with a warm cuddle when the latter crossed the line. The wheelchair races saw a seventh win for the remarkable Briton David Weir and a maiden triumph for Swiss woman Manuela Schaefer, to add to her Boston title earlier this month. —AFP

WILL POWER CLAIMS FOURTH POLE AT BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK

BIRMINGHAM: Will Power is the front-runner at Barber Motorsports Park once again, and his teammates are following right behind. Power claimed the pole for the fourth time at the Indy Grand Prix of Alabama Saturday in a qualifying session dominated by Team Penske. Power's fast lap of 1:06.9614 gave him 46 career starts up front and continued his success at Barber Motorsports Park.

Teammates Helio Castroneves and defending champion Simon Pagenaud completed a sweep of the top three spots to start yesterday's race. "It's phenomenal for the race team, 1-2-3," said Pagenaud, who won the series championship in 2016. "They did a fantastic job preparing these cars. This is a really good track for us in general." That might be understating the matter.

Current Penske drivers have won five of the seven IndyCar races at the 1.7-turn, 2.3-mile road course. They've claimed the pole seven times in eight years. Power won in 2011 and 2012, Castroneves in 2010 and first-year Penske driver Josef Newgarden two years ago. Newgarden qualified seventh with his new team. "It's definitely working well this weekend," Power said. Castroneves said his teammate "definitely has something about this place."

Even split

"He did a great job putting a lap towards the end," Castroneves said. "In Long Beach, it was like a precision lap, and this lap was like going out-and-out crazy; I was like one eye closed and hopefully stick, and it did." The Penske trio are followed by Ganassi's Scott Dixon, Andretti Autosport's Ryan Hunter-Reay and James Hinchcliff, who's coming off a win at Long Beach for Schmidt Peterson Motorsports. Dixon and Hinchcliff are the only drivers to be among the top six qualifiers

in each of the three races this year.

The Fast Six round was split evenly with Chevrolet- and Honda-powered teams thanks to Penske. Dixon has six podium finishes, but no victories, in Alabama. Penske drivers are partly to blame. "It'd be nice if these guys just pulled over at the start," he said, pointing to Pagenaud and Power. "That would definitely help things." None of these tracks owe you anything. It's just trying to piece it together. I think we've had a couple of really good shots in the past to get the win and we've made a couple of mistakes and it just hasn't played out." Powerhouse teams Penske and Ganassi Racing - and Chevrolet - are still seeking their first win of the year. Smaller, Honda-powered teams have taken the first two races, already matching Honda's win total from last year. Sebastien Bourdais and tiny Dale Coyne Racing won the opener at St. Petersburg and then Hinchcliff secured the Long Beach win. Hinchcliff made his IndyCar debut at Barber in 2011. Two-time winner Hunter-Reay is the only non-Penske driver to capture the Alabama race, winning in 2013 and 2014.

"Penske's had a bit of a stranglehold on this track," he said. "We've won here twice but for the most part it's been Penske blocking out the front. Hard to beat right now." Former Indy Lights winner Zach Veach is making his first IndyCar start, filling in for Ed Carpenter Racing with JR Hildebrand recovering from a broken left hand. Veach qualified 19th in the 21-driver field. The most talked about driver this weekend might be one who isn't even racing. Fernando Alonso, a two-time Formula One champion, is set to arrive at Barber Sunday as a spectator. He'll run in the Indianapolis 500 next month for Andretti Autosport. "I think it's very, very cool that it's happening," said Andretti driver Alexander Rossi. — AP

'RELIEVED' WIESBERGER WINS SHENZHEN INTERNATIONAL

BEIJING: Austria's Bernd Wiesberger beat England's Tommy Fleetwood on the first playoff hole to win the \$2.8 million Shenzhen International yesterday, securing his fourth European Tour title. Despite continued rain, the 31-year-old Austrian shot a one-under-par 71 to force a playoff with Fleetwood, who carded a tournament-best 63 to set the clubhouse target at 16-under. "I'm feeling a bit relieved now, I have to say," the European Tour website quoted Wiesberger as saying. "I've had a stretch of really good events the last couple of months and it's really nice to have a trophy again." Tommy has had a great day and I'm just grateful to make that one shot in the playoff when I needed to."

Wiesberger has not missed a cut in the last eight months, claiming seven top five finishes since the US PGA Championship. The world number 43, who nabbed two European Tour titles in 2012 and the Open de France in 2015, is the first European to win the Shenzhen tournament in southern

China. He is now set to move up into the top 30. Fleetwood, 26, was the tournament's second-ranked player after American Bubba Watson, but continues a streak of bad luck on the mainland-he was runner-up at the 2014 Volvo China Open, and came in third at the first Shenzhen International in 2015.

"I've played well all week but I was really disappointed-it was stressing me out, actually-that I couldn't really get anything in the hole, especially in the second round when I played almost as good as I could and didn't get anything out of it," Fleetwood said. The US's heavily favored Watson made clubhouse leader in the first round, but had slid to 26th place by yesterday. Local favourite Li Haotong, ranked 151 in the world and winner of the Volvo China Open last year, missed the cut for round three. It was the third edition of the Shenzhen International at the Genzon Golf Club-the first Chinese course to host multiple European Tour events. —AFP

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day in the first Test between West Indies and Pakistan on Saturday in Kingston, Jamaica.

West Indies 1st innings (Overnight: 244-7)		Pakistan 1st innings	
K. Brathwaite c Y. Khan b Abbas	0	A. Joseph b Amir	0
K. Powell c Y. Khan b Amir	33	S. Gabriel not out	4
S. Hetmyer b Amir	11	Extras (lb-17)	17
S. Hope b Amir	2	Total (for 9 wickets, 92.3 overs)	278
V. Singh c Az. Ali b Riaz	9	Fall of wickets: 1-1 K. Brathwaite, 2-24 S. Hetmyer, 3-32 R. Chase c Riaz b Shah	
R. Chase c Riaz b Shah	63	S. Hope, 4-53 V. Singh, 5-71 K. Powell, 6-189 R. Chase, 7-189 S. Dowrich, 8-264 D. Bishoo, 9-274 A. Joseph.	
S. Dowrich b Shah	56	Bowling: Mohammad Amir 24.3-11-41-5; Mohammad Abbas 22-4-63-1; Wahab Riaz 22-5-66-1; Yasir Shah 24-5-91-2.	
J. Holder not out	55		
D. Bishoo c S. Ahmed b Amir	28		

AMIR TAKES FIVE WICKETS, RAIN RUINS JAMAICA TEST

KINGSTON: Mohammad Amir completed a five-wicket innings haul and West Indies captain Jason Holder reached a fifth half-century as the home side reached 278 for nine in their first innings on a rain-ruined second day of the first Test against Pakistan at Sabina Park on Saturday. Only 11.3 overs were bowled in the entire day as inadequate covering from heavy overnight and early morning rain left damp patches on the pitch and a sodden area of the outfield, delaying the start of play by four hours.

By the time the showers returned in late afternoon with even greater ferocity, just 55 minutes play was possible during which Amir and Holder shone through the gathering gloom. After the home skipper and Devendra Bishoo extended their eighth-wicket partnership to 75 against the sec-

ond new ball, Amir had Bishoo caught at the wicket for 28. He then bowled Alzarri Joseph without scoring to achieve his first five-wicket haul since returning to international cricket last year following a five-year ban for spot-fixing.

Most impressive in the left-arm fast bowler's effort was his accuracy as reflected in figures of five for 41 off 24.3 overs before the showers swept across the ground and drove the players off the field for the last time for the day. Holder's defiance was also admirable, the captain reaching the half-century mark by hoisting debutant Mohammed Abbas for a straight six. He resumes alongside last man Shannon Gabriel on the third day, weather permitting, on 55 off 69 balls with two sixes and seven fours embellishing his defiant innings. —AFP



KINGSTON: Pakistan's Mohammad Amir unsuccessfully appeals for LBW on day two of the first Test match between West Indies and Pakistan at the Sabina Park. — AFP



KUWAIT CRUSHES MACAU IN ASIA ICE HOCKEY CUP

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Ice Hockey team started its competition in the Asian Ice Hockey Cup Championship with a convincing 8-0 win against Macau. Kuwait's players led by Jassim Al-Awadhi scored thrice in the first period, twice in the second and three more in the third. Both offence and defense put in outstanding performances. Kuwait's goals were scored by Ahmad Al-Ajmi, Jassim Al-Awadhi, Abdallah Al-Maraghi and Abdelaziz Al-Shateel. In the other fixture, India came up on top against Oman with a close 3-2 victory over their gulf rivals. They scored two decisive goals in the third period, taking them closer to winning the title.

Minister of Commerce and Industry, Acting Minister for Youth Affairs, Chairman of the Board of Public Authority for Sports said PAS will work on supporting the efforts of Kuwait Winter Games Club. It is exerting all its efforts in promoting the game in Kuwait and is set to allocate an Ice Skating Rink for the club with international standards to accommodate lovers of winter sports in Kuwait.

Al-Roudhan who spoke to journalists after the opening ceremony said Kuwait's national team participation in international tournaments, along with their women's team and junior teams of both genders is a plus for the club's

board. He lauded the organization of the tournament which shows that the club has what it takes to manage major international events, adding that PAS is keen on supporting and having Kuwait's flag prominently flown around the sporting world. Meanwhile, Chairman of the Board of the Winter Sports Club Fahad Al-Ajmi said Kuwait's Organization of this tournament is the crowning achievement of the outstanding relations between the club and the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF). He said the club worked hard to prepare for the tournament and hoped that fans enjoy the matches. Al-Ajmi appreciated the patronage of the tournament by Minister Khalid Al-Roudhan as well as PAS which helped the club to organize this important event. IIHF representative and Director of Game Development in Asia Andy Kerr lauded the preparations and organizational skills by the Kuwaiti side, and said he is proud of being in Kuwait which became a crucial member of the IIHF.

The opening ceremony included a documentary about Ice Hockey's development in Kuwait, which started its operations in promoting and nourishing the sport since the 1980s. In addition to the screening, Kuwait's women ice hockey team members performed on the ice while figure skater Rasha Al-Shaar gave an outstanding performance that was highly appreciated by the crowd.



Rasha Al-Shaar



AHLI UNITED BANK FIRST IN KBA BOWLING LEAGUE TOURNAMENT

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank's bowling team came in first place and won the 2017 Kuwait Banks Club (KBA) bowling league tournament. The tournament, which was held at Salmiya's Cosmo bowling center, witnessed an incredible come back by our team that qualified in 4th position and defeated 3rd place team (NBK) then 2nd place team (Burgan) then went on to beat 1st place position (Gulf Bank) to be dubbed as the tournament's new champions.

On this occasion, Ahli United Bank announced that "The Bank's keen interest in sports, and driving employees' potentials to participate in a number of different sports and activities, reaffirms AUB's overall philosophy in nurturing the importance of such sports that reflect on strong healthy outcomes, harnessing positive team collaboration and spirit. Moreover, by participating in various athletic activities, teams thoroughly understand the importance of role exchange, which positively reflects on their work."

The Bank added, "We are proud of our team which came in first place in the bowling championship as the tournament is considered one of the key activities that is organized by KBA, and one which witnesses large participation from members of the local banking community." Ahli United Bank thanked the organizing committee, as well as Cosmo's management for continuously hosting and managing the championship.

CELTIC INTO SCOTTISH FINAL IN TREBLE CHASE

GLASGOW: A second-half penalty by Scott Sinclair sealed a 2-0 win for champions Celtic over bitter rivals Rangers and a place in the Scottish Cup final yesterday. Sinclair's penalty and a first-half effort by Callum McGregor set them up with a May 27 date with Aberdeen who beat holders Hibs 3-2 on Saturday and a potential domestic treble for the first time in 16 years.

McGregor and Sinclair's goals avenged defeat at the hands of Rangers at the same stage last year and extended their unbeaten run to 41 domestic matches this season. It brings to an end a 92-year Hampden Park hoodoo for Celtic, who failed to beat Rangers in the last four of the competition on their previous five attempts since their last victory at this stage in 1925. Celtic manager Brendan Rodgers said his side was a joy to watch.

"Everything you would want from your team to play in terms of composure, temperament and technical quality," purred Rodgers.

"We restricted Rangers to very few opportunities and the only disappointment was we didn't score more." His Rangers counterpart Pedro Caixinha felt his side showed Celtic too much respect in the first half.

"At half-time we tried to change some things but I think we needed to be more aggressive in defending," he said. "I think they deserved to win but we could have done, and should have done, much better." Rangers kicked off at Hampden but it was to be the closest they were to the ball for the majority of the half. Rangers had conceded just once in their previous five games, but with Celtic enjoying the lion's share of possession a goal seemed inevitable and it duly came through McGregor. Moussa Dembele brought down Mikel Lustig's long ball over the top of the Rangers defence and laid it back into the path of the Scottish midfielder, whose first-time strike with his left-foot rolled into the bottom corner.—AFP

CAS RULES IN FAVOR OF KUWAIT SHOOTING

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) ruled in favor of Kuwait Shooting Federation and rejected the decision of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) to suspend Kuwait Shooting Federation's membership. The ruling is to be implemented immediately, and all decisions taken against Kuwait Shooting Federation by the ISSF are to be considered null and void.

President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Eng Duajj Khalaf Al-Otaibi said this ruling is the culmination of continuous efforts that began nine months ago. KSF kept working along with the legal team to remove the unjustified decision against Kuwait Shooting, adding that KSF board of directors, held the belief that Kuwait's shooter had legal right to represent their country under Kuwait's flag at international tournaments and events.

Engineer Duajj Al-Otaibi, on behalf of the board of directors and the shooting community, congratulated HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah,

Commerce and Industry Minister, Acting State Minister for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan, Director General of Public Authority for Sports Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, President of Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Kuwait Athletes and all the people of Kuwait for this just ruling, and hoped that the suspension be lifted from all sports activities.

Al-Otaibi thanked all the presidents of shooting federations around the world who expressed their support towards Kuwait's plight with this issue. He also thanked the legal team in Kuwait and abroad for their efforts that resulted in lifting the suspension of the shooting participation in the ISSF agenda events.

Meanwhile, Secretary General of KSF and ASF Obaid Al-Osaimi said KSSC will go ahead with its demands of all its rights that it was deprived of due to the unjust decision by the International Olympic Committee and ISSF, following the final ruling by CAS. He said KSSC will issue a detailed statement in few days to explain the most important rulings for Kuwait sport during the entire suspension period. He said the demands include material and moral compensations for the harms Kuwait shooters have endured.



Duajj Al-Otaibi



Obaid Munahi Al-Osaimi



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Skeet Shooter Eman Al-Shamma won the Silver medal while shooter Afrah bin Hussein won the Bronze during HH The Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad International Grand Prix held in Italy.

NADAL WINS HISTORIC 10TH MONTE CARLO TITLE

MONTE CARLO: Rafael Nadal won the Monte Carlo Masters for a record-breaking 10th time with a dominant 6-1, 6-3 defeat of Spanish compatriot Albert Ramos-Vinolas yesterday. The 30-year-old Nadal, who now has 50 clay court titles and 70 in all, will be aiming for a 10th French Open title as well next month. It was Nadal's first title in almost a year and further cemented his place in history as he became the first man in the Open era to win the same event 10 times. He won eight Monte Carlo titles in

a row from 2005 to 2012 but then lost to Novak Djokovic in the 2013 final. He won the title again last year and then added the Barcelona crown a week later, yet had not lifted a trophy since, losing three finals already this year, including January's Australian Open against Roger Federer. Nadal's 50 clay titles breaks the record he shared with Guillermo Vilas since April last year when he lifted his ninth trophy in Barcelona.

"I cannot explain the feelings that I have," Nadal said. "I had a tough start to

the season. When I first played here in 2003 as a qualifier I reached the third round. "Now, a lot of years later, this is something I could have never dreamt. Thanks to life for giving me this opportunity." The great Spaniard needed just 76 minutes and three match points to see off his compatriot yesterday.

The left-hander now has 29 Masters titles, one behind the all-time record of 30 held by Novak Djokovic. He has now won an ATP event for the 14th consecutive year after losing his first three finals

of 2017. Nadal was hardly challenged by his 29-year-old countryman, who was playing the best tennis of his career after seeing off world number one Andy Murray on his way to the final. Nadal took victory as Ramos-Vinolas double-faulted.

"What can you say about Nadal," said the losing finalist. "I never expected anything like this week to happen to me (wins over Andy Murray and Marin Cilic). "Rafa winning here 10 times is unbelievable, he's the best for sure on clay. For me, I still had a fantastic finish

to the week." Nadal will now move on to his home event in Barcelona next week where he will be eyeing another magical 10th title. Nadal and Ramos-Vinolas played the fourth all-Spanish championship in the Open Era in Monte Carlo, with Nadal winning the 2010 edition against Fernando Verdasco and beating David Ferrer a year later. Nadal now stand 3-0 versus Ramos-Vinolas and has never lost to a countryman in an ATP final, now standing 15-0 in that category. —AFP

FREIBURG STUN LEVERKUSEN IN HUNT FOR EURO BERTH

BERLIN: Unfancied Freiburg continued their dream run to a place in Europe next season with a shock 2-1 win over Bayer Leverkusen yesterday in the Bundesliga. The result puts Freiburg, last season's second division champions, back up into sixth place, which carries a Europa League berth next season, with four games left.

Christian Streich's youthful team claimed another big scalp after recent wins over Cologne, Eintracht Frankfurt and Wolfsburg. Ex-Bayern Munich striker Nils Petersen gave hosts Freiburg the lead at their Schwarzwald Stadion before Germany forward Kevin Volland converted a second-penalty for Leverkusen. But the hosts picked up the three points when winger Pascal Stenzel, on loan from Borussia Dortmund, came off the bench to finish a counter-attack.

The 21-year-old hit the winner when he drilled the ball past Leverkusen's Germany goalkeeper Bernd Leno two minutes from time after a brilliant run down the left wing. It was another disappointing result for Leverkusen, who reached the Champions League last 16 this season, but have won just one of their last ten games and are 12th-only four points from the bottom

three. On Saturday, Thiago Alcantara's second-half equaliser rescued Bayern Munich in their 2-2 draw at home to Mainz as the runaway leaders twice came from behind.

Having bowed out of the Champions League quarter-finals at Real Madrid in midweek, the draw caps a week to forget for Bayern, who are winless in their last four games. Mainz twice took the lead in Munich as ex-Barcelona midfielder Bojan Krkic netted an early goal and Daniel Brosinski's converted a second-half penalty, but strikes by Arjen Robben and Thiago gave Bayern a point. Second-placed RB Leipzig can cut Bayern's lead to six points by winning at Schalke yesterday evening. It was a poor performance from double-chasing Bayern ahead of Wednesday's German Cup semi-final at home to Borussia Dortmund.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, the league's top-scorer, hit his 27th league goal this season as Raphael Guerreiro headed the winner in Borussia Dortmund's 3-2 win at Borussia Moenchengladbach to climb to third. Gabon hot-shot Aubameyang crept one goal ahead of Bayern's Robert Lewandowski in the race to be the league's top-scorer this season. —AFP

UNITED ADDS EXTRA BITE TO MANCHESTER DERBY

 Burnley	0
 Man United	2

BURNLEY: Wayne Rooney and Anthony Martial scored on their returns to the side as Manchester United improved their hopes of a top-four Premier League finish with a 2-0 win at Burnley yesterday. The convincing victory-United made light of the season-ending injury to top-scorer Zlatan Ibrahimovic-sets up an intriguing Manchester derby visit to City, now just one point above United, on Thursday.

Martial's strike in particular was a perfect response from the French international, whose form had been criticised by boss Jose Mourinho this week, even if it costs his current club £8.3 million (10 million euros) in a bonus payment to his former club Monaco. Martial responded to those recent public criticisms by starting, and finishing, a goal of devastating pace and simplicity after 21 minutes. Having dispossessed Joey Barton inside his own half, the Frenchman initiated the counter attack with a sprint and pass to Ander Herrera. The Spanish midfielder returned the favour, picking out the run of Martial perfectly and sliding through a pass for the striker to collect, take a touch and beat Tom Heaton from six yards.

Fates hang in the balance

It was the 21-year-old's 25th goal for the Premier League side and activates an incentive clause which means United must pay Monaco that additional 10 million euros. United's important second goal, after 39 minutes, was far more scrappy but, potentially, vital for the fates of both clubs this season. Martial was again pivotal as he gathered a clever pass from Paul Pogba and darted towards goal, producing a shot which Heaton did an unconvincing job of

blocking.

The ball broke to Rooney, who responded more quickly than his marker Michael Keane inside the six-yard area and forced the ball over the line off the defender, despite the efforts of Stephen Ward to clear. It was only Rooney's third league goal of a season that had threatened to end with the club's all-time leading scorer playing only a bit part in proceedings. But the injury to Ibrahimovic, who damaged his knee ligaments in Thursday's Europa League win over Anderlecht, and Mourinho's desire to rest Marcus Rashford ahead of Thursday's derby brought him and Martial recalls.

The pair combined early, with the help of Herrera, for a promising Rooney shot which was well blocked by Ben Mee. A powerful Marouane Fellaini header from a corner was held by Heaton on his line and Rooney side-footed a shot just over from a Jesse Lingard pass. Burnley, searching for a much-needed victory in their bid to remove lingering fears of relegation, offered little first half threat with Mee's wayward header, from Robbie Brady's corner, their only real threat.

Burnley's sloppy performance continued in the second half with too many unforced errors and misplaced passes preventing them finding a quick way back into the contest. Indeed, it took Heaton to keep his team even vaguely in contention as he scurried to his left and kept out a low shot from Pogba which seemed to be destined for the corner.

When Burnley did enjoy a rare United error, with Andre Gray getting the better of Daley Blind on the right, his cross was cut out well by the impressive Eric Bailly. Rashford was brought on as a substitute midway through the second half and gave Burnley's defense more to occupy them. Last hopes of any sort of recovery from the home side disappeared on 78 minutes when Keane arrived to meet a free-kick from Brady but could only head over the crossbar. — AFP





BURNLEY: Manchester United's French midfielder Paul Pogba plays the ball during the English Premier League football match between Burnley and Manchester United at Turf Moor. —AFP



LONDON: Arsenal's German midfielder Mesut Ozil (L) vies with Manchester City's German midfielder Leroy Sane (R) during the FA Cup semi-final football match between Arsenal and Manchester City at Wembley stadium. —AFP

SANCHEZ CAPS EXTRA TIME FIGHTBACK, AS GUNNERS SET DATE WITH CHELSEA

 Arsenal	2
 Man City	1

LONDON: Alexis Sanchez earned Arsenal an FA Cup final showdown with Chelsea and gave Arsene Wenger renewed hope of salvaging a troubled campaign as the gritty Gunners fought back to beat Manchester City 2-1 yesterday. When Sergio Aguero put City ahead in the second half of a bruising semi-final, Wenger's side were on the verge of another dispiriting defeat in arguably the worst season of the Frenchman's 21-year reign.

But, despite being out-played for long periods, Arsenal summoned a spirit and desire too often missing from their performances this term. Nacho Monreal's equalizer forced extra-time and Sanchez's predatory finish in the additional period secured a final date with Premier League leaders Chelsea back at Wembley on May 27. Arsenal's third FA Cup final in the last four years—they won it in 2014 and 2015 — gives them a record 20 appearances in the showpiece match of the famous old competition.

Crucially, it presents Wenger with a chance to mute the mounting criticism from his club's supporters who want him to resign. The Gunners' failure to challenge for the Premier League title has been compounded by their slide out of the top four. But those close to Wenger believe he is still leaning towards staying.

With fourth placed City well adrift of leaders Chelsea, boss Pep Guardiola is destined to finish his first season empty-handed. He now faces the difficult task of lifting his players before a vital derby against Manchester United as the top four battles heats up on Thursday. City came close to striking first when the diminutive David Silva rose to meet Aguero's cross with a header that Petr Cech pushed over. Silva departed due to injury soon after, but City monopolized possession and Arsenal were often reduced to kicking their opponents out of their rhythm. Aguero and Raheem Sterling combined to bundle the ball into the net just before half-time, but the goal was controversially ruled out because Leroy Sane's cross was adjudged to have gone out as it looped over the bar before curling back into play.

Off the canvas

To City's frustration, television replays suggested a tiny part of the ball was still in play before it reached Aguero. Yet Arsenal's play still lacked conviction and by the 62nd minute the scoreline finally reflected City's dominance. When Yaya Toure seized the ball after Aaron Ramsey's mistake deep in City's half, the Ivorian spotted Aguero and sent a long pass towards the striker.

Aguero surged away from Monreal and, although his first touch almost ruined the chance, he recovered to lift a deft finish over Cech for his 30th goal this season. If that felt like the knockout blow, Monreal had other ideas and he hauled the Gunners off the canvas in the 71st minute. Having labored for so long, Arsenal suddenly sprang to life and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain swung over a superb cross to the far post, where Monreal timed his run perfectly to slot home from close-range for his first Arsenal goal in over two years.

City almost hit back immediately, with Toure's 25-yard volley pushed onto a post by Cech before Ferdinand headed against the crossbar from Kevin de Bruyne's corner. Danny Welbeck couldn't win it for Arsenal with a fine curling strike before extra-time, but Sanchez came to Wenger's rescue with a far more prosaic effort in

the 101st minute. Sanchez has been a problem for Wenger with his mood swings this season and he was well below his best for long periods once again. But he was in the right place at the right time when a goalmouth melee ended with the Chilean beating Gael Clichy to the loose ball and firing in from close-range. — AFP

LAZIO'S BALDE HITS FIVE-MINUTE HAT-TRICK, MILAN CRASH AT HOME

MILAN: A Keita Balde five-minute hat-trick in a 6-2 romp over Palermo boosted Lazio's Europa League hopes yesterday as AC Milan edged further away from Europe with a shock 2-1 home defeat to Empoli. Inspired by Atalanta's 3-2 win over Bologna that pushed the high-flying Bergamo side up to fourth, Lazio responded to the challenge from Gian Piero Gasperini's men in defiant fashion at the Stadio Olimpico.

A Ciro Immobile brace had Lazio up 2-0 inside 10 minutes and a Balde hat-trick in the space of five first-half minutes, including a 24th minute penalty, secured the points well before the half-time interval. Palermo hit back with a second-half brace from Andrea Rispoli, but Luca Crecco wrapped up an emphatic win with a goal in the first minute of added-on time to secure a 19th league win and a return to fourth spot. Lazio reduced the gap on third-placed Napoli, held 2-2 at Sassuolo, to seven points. "The lads did great, what I liked most is how they put into practice what we'd spoke about," said Lazio coach Simone Inzaghi.

Balde is rumored to be leaving Lazio, and Inzaghi added: "He's a really important player for us." Atalanta are back in fifth spot at one point further behind with AC Milan, who saw Spanish forward Suso miss a second-half penalty, still in sixth but now five points behind the Europa League places. A week after snatching a share of the spoils with a late equalizer in a 2-2 derby draw at Inter, Milan had the incentive of breaking away from their city rivals following their shock 5-4 defeat at Fiorentina on Saturday.

But on their return to the San Siro as hosts,

the seven-time European champions showed few credentials worthy of the European stage against a team battling for top flight survival. Milan defender Cristian Zapata let Levan Mchedlidge get in front of him to nod Empoli's opener in the 40th minute.

After Suso's 59th minute spot-kick was stopped by Lukasz Skorupski, striker Carlos Bacca spurned a great chance to level from close range after Skorupski fumbled a corner. It proved costly as Empoli doubled their lead moments later, veteran striker Massimo Maccaroni coolly knocking down a cross for Mame Thiam, who was left unmarked to blast past Gianluigi Donnarumma from 10 yards.

Gianluca Lapadula reduced the arrears with a great run from midfield that saw him fire past Skorupski into the bottom corner on 72 minutes. But Milan failed to capitalize on further chances from Lucas Ocampos and Mario Pasalic and were lucky to escape further punishment when Donnarumma denied Maccaroni with a fine one-handed save then stopped Thiam after rushing out his net in the dying seconds of a seven-minute period of stoppages.

After offering Empoli, his former club at the start of his career, his "compliments", Milan coach Vincenzo Montella said: "We missed a great chance to boost our Europa chances, but we can't start throwing blame around. "We created a lot of chances, it's just a pity. It means we have to fight until the very last game." The win left Empoli fourth from bottom but five points ahead of Crotona, and Maccaroni said: "We didn't really concede much to Milan, so we're very happy to be taking this victory home with us. —AFP



ROME: Lazio's Keita Balde, left, celebrates with his teammate Lazio's Stefan de Vrij after scoring a goal during the Italian Serie A soccer match between Lazio and Palermo at Olympic stadium. — AP

Sports

Kuwait crushes
Macau in Asia
Ice Hockey Cup



Gunners set
date with
Chelsea



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MADRID: Barcelona's Lionel Messi (right) celebrates with teammates after scoring the winning goal during a Spanish La Liga match between Real Madrid and Barcelona, dubbed 'El Clasico', at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium yesterday. Barcelona won 3-2. — AP

BARCELONA IN DRAMATIC WIN OVER MADRID

MESSI STRIKES LAST-GASP 500TH BARCA GOAL • LA LIGA TITLE RACE WIDE OPEN

MADRID: Lionel Messi struck his 500th Barcelona goal with the last kick of the game to blow the La Liga title race wide open with a thrilling 3-2 win at Real Madrid yesterday. Messi had broken a three-year goalless drought against Madrid to cancel out Casemiro's opener for Madrid in the first-half. Ivan Rakitic's stunning strike and a red card for Madrid captain Sergio Ramos for chopping down Messi 13 minutes from time put Barca on course for victory before James Rodriguez came off the bench to level four minutes from time.

However, fittingly, Messi had the final say with a brilliant finish deep into stoppage time to lift Barcelona's hopes of a third straight La Liga title. Fresh from dumping Bayern Munich out of the Champions League in a 4-2 thriller after extra-time in midweek, Madrid had started confidently in another breathless encounter at the Bernabeu. Cristiano Ronaldo had strong appeals for a penalty waived away inside two minutes after he appeared to have been clipped by Samuel Umtiti.

Barca grew slowly into the game and had their first big chance when Luis Suarez dragged wide Jordi Alba's fine cut-back from the edge of the box 11 minutes in. Shortly after Messi was

left floored and bloodied after being caught by a stray elbow from Marcelo. The Argentine was still down when Ronaldo drilled another fine effort towards goal that Marc-Andre ter Stegen did well to parry to safety.

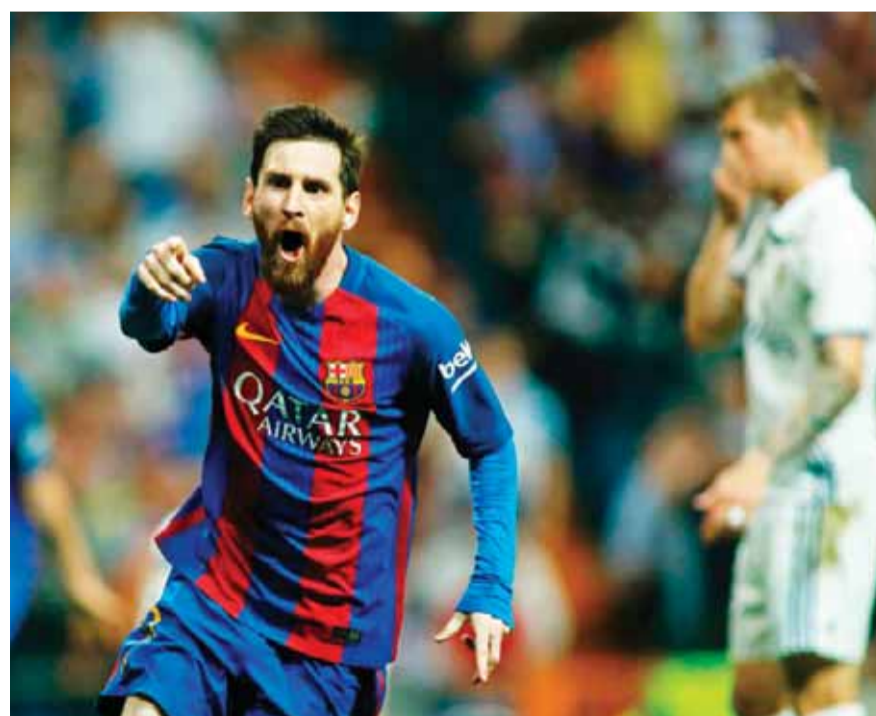
Unsurprisingly given both Madrid's potency and Barca's inability to defend set-pieces, the opener arrived from a dead ball. Marcelo picked up the loose ball from a corner and when Sergio Ramos volleyed his cross against the post, Casemiro was on hand to tap into an unguarded net. The lead lasted just five minutes, though, as with a handkerchief still mopping the blood from his cheek, Messi danced past Dani Carvajal and Nacho to fire home his first goal against Madrid for three years.

Ter Stegen was called into action again to prevent Real immediately retaking the lead as he flew to his left to save from Luka Modric's long-range effort. However, Barca ended the half feeling hard done by when referee Alejandro Jose Hernandez didn't show Casemiro a second yellow card for upending Messi as he led a promising counter-attack. Madrid were rampant at the start of the second period, but were met with a wall of resistance in Ter Stegen. The German dived low to his left to turn

international teammate Toni Kroos's effort behind before diverting Karim Benzema's goal-bound header to safety with his outstretched foot. However, Keylor Navas was also busy at the other end as he came to Madrid's rescue on three occasions. Firstly, he got a foot to Paco Alcacer's prodded effort before pulling off acrobatic saves to deny Gerard Pique and Suarez.

Ronaldo then missed a guilt-edged chance to put Madrid back in front as he somehow turned the ball over from point-blank range after unselfish play from Asensio. There was nothing Navas could do to deny Barca 17 minutes from time when Rakitic took aim from 25 yards and drilled into the top corner. The match seemed to have swung decisively in Barca's favor four minutes later when Ramos scythed down Messi to be shown the 22nd red card of his career.

However, even with 10 men, Madrid rallied and levelled when substitute James Rodriguez swept home Marcelo's cross four minutes from time. There was still time for one huge twist in the title race, though, as Sergi Roberto's lung-bursting run led a Barca counter-attack to feed Jordi Alba and his cross was smashed into the corner by Messi. — AFP



Messi celebrates Barcelona's third goal yesterday. — AFP



ANFIELD: Liverpool's Nathaniel Clyne, left, and Crystal Palace's Wilfried Zaha battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match at Anfield, Liverpool, yesterday. — AP

BENTEKE COMES BACK TO HAUNT LIVERPOOL

	Liverpool 1
	Crystal Palace 2

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool old-boy Christian Benteke stunned his former club with both Crystal Palace goals in a 2-1 win at Anfield yesterday denting the home side's top-four Premier League ambitions. Benteke handed a massive boost to Palace's survival hopes with a goal in each half to cancel out Philippe Coutinho's brilliant opener for the Reds and turn the game on its head.

Liverpool paid £32m for Benteke when they signed him from Aston Villa in 2015 but sold him to Palace for £27m a year later. The 26-year-old Belgian made them pay for that decision with goals in the 42nd and 74th minutes that moved Palace seven points clear of the Premier League relegation zone. But defeat left Jurgen Klopp's side in third place just two points clear of fourth-placed Manchester City and three ahead of Manchester United in fifth.

Both Manchester clubs have two games in

hand in the scrap for Champions League places, meaning Liverpool's fate is no longer in their own hands. Liverpool's forwards turned on the tricks and Roberto Firmino's clever spin away from two Palace defenders sparked an attack. He attempted to spread play wide for Coutinho, but Georginio Wijnaldum inadvertently ended the move by getting in the way.

Palace had offered little attacking threat but on 21 minutes they almost stunned the hosts when Benteke bullied his way towards goal. The Belgian international striker shrugged off defenders and exchanged passes neatly with Wilfried Zaha before bending a right-footed shot just wide of Simon Mignolet's goal. When the opening goal came, it came in real style in the 24th minute.

Palace midfielder Luka Milivojevic was penalized for a foul on Coutinho, who dusted himself down before bending a brilliant right-footed free-kick past a helpless Wayne Hennessey and inside his right-hand post from 25 yards. Palace hit back to equalize with a wonderful, counter-attacking goal three minutes from half-time.

Joel Ward's clever ball over the top dropped perfectly into the stride of Yohan Cabaye, who delivered a delicious cut-back from the right for Benteke to produce a crisp, first-time finish

at the far post. Coutinho might have stamped his mark on the second half after just five minutes with a superb drag-back in the Palace area to engineer some space. But he blasted his shot high and wide. He then produced some more magic to weave away from both Martin Kelly and Ward but this time his effort was deflected behind.

Coutinho should have restored Liverpool's lead on 57 minutes but his header from a Nathaniel Clyne cross was tame and straight at Hennessey. Just before the hour-mark a fabulous pass by Lucas freed Firmino but his first touch was just too heavy and Hennessey made a crucial interception. Out of nowhere, Cabaye missed a chance to give Palace the lead with 19 minutes remaining.

The ball dropped to the Frenchman in a goal-mouth scramble and he scooped a shot just over from eight yards. But there was no mistake moments later when the visitors stunned Anfield. A right-wing corner by Andros Townsend was not cleared by Liverpool and Benteke headed home from a couple of yards. Liverpool pinned Palace back in the closing stages but could not force an equalizer as Palace held on to win at Anfield for a third successive season. — AP

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US businesses getting
hammered by
Venezuela crisis

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Le Pen, Macron, Fillon,
Melenchon

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KFH-Capital holds
9th forum for
listed companies

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US REJECTS EXXON MOBIL'S REQUEST TO DRILL IN RUSSIA

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COLOMBO: Chinese construction team members look on at a new apartment building complex in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo. Cheap Sri Lankan labor has built skyscrapers and condos across the Gulf for decades but now contractors at home are desperate for workers as the island nation experiences an unprecedented construction boom. — AFP

G20 LEADERS DODGE CONFLICT WITH TRUMP US BELIEVES IN 'RECIPROCAL' FREE TRADE: TREASURY CHIEF

WASHINGTON: Global finance leaders sought to avoid conflict with the Trump administration over trade and environmental policy and welcomed signs the world economy is pulling out of the doldrums.

The International Monetary Fund dropped a sharp condemnation of trade protectionism and references to climate change from a statement at the close of its spring meetings with the World Bank. Gone was a call for nations to "resist all forms of protectionism" that had been in an October communique. During the presidential campaign, Donald Trump threatened to impose tariffs on China and Mexico and called global warming a hoax. Since taking office, Trump has slashed environmental regulations, and his administration has planned big cutbacks at the Environmental Protection Agency.

The meetings of the 189-nation IMF and World Bank, which wrapped up Saturday, were dominated by concerns over the rising anti-globalization tide that carried Trump to the White House and set the stage for Britain to leave the European Union. Skepticism over the benefits of free trade persists despite signs of economic improvement. The global economy is finally recovering from a long period of economic languor that IMF managing director Christine Lagarde labeled "the New Mediocre." The IMF expects the world economy to expand 3.5 percent this year, up from 3.1 percent in 2016, helped by rising commodity prices and the surprising resilience of China's economy. But Lagarde and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim said world governments needed to do a better job helping those being left behind economically. Otherwise, a backlash against globalization could pressure governments into adopting protec-



WASHINGTON: US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin during the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings in Washington on Saturday. — AP

tionist policies that would harm world trade and growth. In its communique Saturday, the IMF urged nations to avoid "inward-looking policies," but did not include the stronger language of the October communique.

Communique

At a closing news conference, Lagarde and Agustín Carstens, head of the Bank of Mexico and chair of the IMF's policy committee, sought to downplay the

changes. Lagarde noted that a separate document setting out the IMF's policy agenda did retain strong language condemning protectionism and promoting efforts to combat climate change.

Carstens said that it was important to recognize the viewpoints of different countries. "We all want free and fair trade and that is what is reflected in the communique," he told reporters when asked why the language on protectionism had been dropped.

A similar change on the issue of protectionism was made in a communique that the Group of 20 major economies issued last month in Baden-Baden, Germany. Steven Mnuchin, attending his first international gathering as Trump's Treasury secretary, had defended the change in the G-20 communique at the German meeting by saying, "The historical language was not really relevant."

Eswar Prasad, a trade economist at Cornell University, said the changes in the IMF and G20 communiqués reflect the Trump administration's determination to undo decades of American policy in favor of ever-freer trade. "The G-20 consensus on issues such as free trade and combating climate change is crumbling in the face of the Trump administration's hostility to those positions," Prasad said.

"The notion of allowing for freer trade has run up against the Trump administration's conviction that its major trading partners are manipulating trade and currency policies to their own benefit." At a joint appearance with Lagarde on Saturday, Mnuchin said that the internal debate over the wording of the IMF communique had taken much less time than the debate over the wording of the G-20 communique last month. He said that the administration's goal was to

make trade fairer and was not aimed at erecting protectionist barriers. "The United States is probably the most open trading market there is," Mnuchin said.

Reciprocal trade

The United States, which is considering new protectionist policies, believes in "free and fair" trade, US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Saturday.

"President Trump's agenda is to make sure that we have free and fair trade and I think, as you know, the United States is probably the most open trading market there is for both goods, services and investment," Mnuchin said. But he said the United States expected to be treated as it treats others. "The president believes in reciprocal trade deals and reciprocal free trade." Mnuchin's comments came during a public conversation with Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund, during the spring meetings of the IMF and World Bank.

With a nationalist economic agenda, the Trump administration has vowed to upend decades of prevailing trade policy by renegotiating or scrapping trade agreements, imposing tariffs and moving to bilateral trade agreements. US pressure last month forced a Group of 20 finance ministers meeting in Germany to strike the routine commitment against protectionist policies from a closing statement.

The word "protectionism" also did not appear in the final statement of this week's meetings at the IMF. "If our markets are open, there should be a reciprocal nature to other people's markets," Mnuchin said Saturday. "What's not free and fair is if our market is open and other people either have high tariffs or have high import barriers." — Agencies

HOW BAD CORPORATE DEBTS ARE HOLDING BACK INDIA'S GROWTH

NEW DELHI: The recent arrest of Vijay Mallya highlighted the problem of bad loans in India, but analysts say the tycoon's unpaid debts are just the tip of an iceberg that is already holding back the country's economic growth. The multi-millionaire owner of a Formula One team and founder of the Kingfisher beer brand was arrested on Tuesday in Britain, where he fled a year ago after allegedly defaulting on loans from Indian state banks worth more than \$1 billion.

From the mid-2000s onwards, Mallya and much of corporate India went on a shopping spree, picking up assets both at home and overseas even as a financial crisis hit the global economy.

As a result, Indian banks are now saddled with some of the highest levels of bad debts in the emerging markets according to the International Monetary Fund.

"Banks are so stretched that they're not even lending to healthy companies, holding back growth," Rajeswari Sengupta, an economist in Mumbai, told AFP. "That's a very big collateral damage... The biggest fall-out is the lack of private sector investment-banks are stressed, private sectors are stressed, lending to corporates by banks has totally stalled."

Banks coughed up cash for projects even

when the business plans made no sense—such as a Formula One track on the outskirts of the Indian capital that was practically abandoned after three races.

Regulators, eager to spur growth, allowed many industries to restructure loans rather than write them off, and also agreed to a moratorium on interest payments. The excesses of the period remained hidden as banks sought to keep companies afloat by giving them enough capital to service their loans—a practice known as ever-greening—to disguise their own bad debts.

By 2015, the share of companies it monitored that could not even service the interest on their loans had reached nearly 40 percent, Credit Suisse said in a February report.

That has led to a situation where both banks and their clients are financially stretched.

India remains the world's fastest-growing major economy, with GDP expanding by seven percent in the last three months of 2016 — the last quarter for which data is available. But economists say that growth is fragile because it is being driven by consumer spending rather than investment.

'Rotten system'

India's government is seeking to extradite

Mallya and try him for fraud. He has said there is a "witch hunt" against him, arguing that there were much bigger defaulters. By September 2016, about 16.6 percent of loans to corporates—or about 8.4 percent of GDP—had been declared non-performing, according to Credit Suisse.

"Eight percent of the GDP is a very big number," Sengupta told AFP. "When the size of NPAs (non-performing assets) hits five percent of the GDP, that is considered a crisis, and we have gone way past that." Banks were finally forced to confront the problem in September 2015 when the central bank set them a deadline of March 2017 to clean up their balance sheets.

But more than a year into the forced clean-up, "corporate NPL formation still hasn't abated at both (state-owned) and private corporate lenders," according to the Credit Suisse report.

By its count, some 12 trillion rupees (\$185 billion) have soured, the bulk of it at public-sector banks.

The 10 largest corporates in the country—including the owner of that abandoned F1 track—are also the most burdened with debt and owe a collective 7.5 trillion rupees. "There is still no sign that the affected companies are regaining their health, or even that the bad debt prob-



NEW DELHI: This file photograph shows then Force India-Mercedes Team Principal and Chairman and CEO of India's Kingfisher Airlines Vijay Mallya (center) as he walks in the paddock during the third practice session at the Buddh International circuit in Greater Noida, on the outskirts of New Delhi. — AFP

lem is being contained," said Ashish Gupta, Credit Suisse's head of equity research.

"To the contrary, the stress on corporates and banks is continuing to intensify, and this in turn is taking a measurable toll on investment and credit." Finance Minister Arun Jaitley is looking for solutions. One idea his ministry mooted was to create a single "bad bank" which would take over all bad loans and leave the existing

lenders in healthier shape. Another was to create asset management companies to tackle the problems. But not everyone is convinced that there is a way out. "We've been sitting on this ticking time bomb for so long that I don't even know what are the solutions," Sengupta said. "It's a completely rotten system and it's been like this for so long that there's no good solution anymore." — AFP

INVESTORS PUSH FOR MORE INFO ON LOBBYING AT US COMPANIES

NEW YORK: Dozens of major US companies are facing shareholder votes this spring that seek to require more disclosure about political lobbying, as activists demand greater corporate transparency.

Votes are set to take place at more than 40 annual meetings, including those for Boeing, Wells Fargo, Ford, General Electric and Facebook. The proposals have in many cases been offered before and predate the searing national political debates that have dominated America with the rise and election of President Donald Trump.

But whether or not they have anything to do with broader political dynamics, early tallies in the 2017 season show more investors want to know about corporate spending on lobbying. About 37 percent of Disney's shareholders voted in favor of a measure on this issue, up five percent from last year's outcome, while Monsanto's vote came in at about 28 percent, up 7.5 percent from a year ago.

There were also modest increases at Emerson Electric and Tyson Foods. While still a minority of shareholders, these counts are high enough to force management to take notice, corporate governance experts say. "There's a general discomfort with the

notion of corporate funds for political purposes," said Charles Elson, corporate governance chair at the University of Delaware Alfred Lerner College of Business & Economics.

"If it's explained and it's legitimate, there's nothing wrong with it. The question is the transparency," Trade groups in focus Companies are already required to account for annual lobbying expenditures in reports to Congress that detail the targeted issues and the amounts spent. However, proponents of the stepped-up measures say there are no requirements for reporting other aspects of lobbying, such as activities at the grassroots level or donations to trade organizations that lobby.

Activists point to companies like GE and Disney that favor climate change policies and their links to groups like the Chamber of Commerce which have opposed key climate policies. They argue the companies should disclose their trade group memberships and the amount of money given to those groups that is then used for lobbying.

"Transparency is good for investors and good for companies and it kind of goes to the principle of what gets disclosed gets managed," said John

Keenan, corporate governance analyst at public employees union AFSCME, which has been in a leader in pushing for the measures.

In response, companies argue that the additional sunshining is unnecessary and misstates the nature of a company's relationship with a trade group. "The associations and coalitions to which GE belongs perform many valuable functions," GE said in urging a "no" vote. "Lobbying is not the primary focus of these entities."

"GE may not agree with every position or lobbying action taken by such associations," the company added. Disney said the proposal would exceed legal disclosure requirements and would "be misleadingly suggestive of the control we exercise over" trade groups. Some companies have revised their policies following talks with shareholders. Keenan said Wal-Mart Stores agreed to provide lobbying spending by state, while defense company Raytheon increased its disclosures, including providing a list of its trade association dues. A Wal-Mart spokesman declined to comment on the specifics about negotiations on lobbying disclosures, but said shareholders regularly decide to withdraw proposals following talks with

the company. Raytheon declined comment. This year, Pfizer strengthened its oversight of lobbying by amending the corporate charter to place the responsibility with the Corporate Governance committee.

Business strikes back

As they battle this year's shareholder proposals, large companies through the Business Roundtable, a trade group, are pushing to limit future battles involving activists. In a letter to National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn, the Business Roundtable urged officials to "tighten eligibility" to restrict investors "with insignificant stakes" from making proposals "that pursue social or political agendas unrelated to the interests of shareholders as a whole." The Business Roundtable argues the current \$2,000 minimum requirement is "no longer a reasonable standard" to get on the ballot and should be raised to at least 0.15 percent at large companies.

But corporate governance expert Elson rejected that argument. "Sometimes terrific ideas come from small investors," he said. "It's also become an important signaling mechanism that boards need to be aware of." —AFP



This Jan 30, 2012, file photo shows the sign for the Exxon Mobil Torrance Refinery in Torrance, Calif. The Trump administration denied a request from Exxon Mobil to waive US sanctions against Russia and allow it to resume oil drilling around the Black Sea. —AP

US REJECTS EXXON MOBIL'S REQUEST TO DRILL IN RUSSIA

MNUCHIN SAYS NO WAIVERS TO US COMPANIES

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration has rejected a request from Exxon Mobil to waive US sanctions against Russia to allow the company to resume oil drilling around the Black Sea.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Friday in a brief statement that the administration "will not be issuing waivers to US companies, including Exxon, authorizing drilling prohibited by current Russian sanctions."

Exxon said it understood the decision, while suggesting that the outcome will merely help European oil companies operating under less-stringent restrictions. The decision comes just two days after it was reported that Exxon was seeking a waiver to resume a joint venture with Rosneft, a Russian state-owned oil company. Exxon said it filed the request in 2015.

The disclosure of Exxon's application was criticized in Congress by lawmakers who said the Trump administration should not reduce sanc-

tions after US intelligence agencies concluded that Russia interfered in last year's presidential election. Sen John McCain, R-Ariz., tweeted of Exxon's request, "Are they crazy?" Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was Exxon's CEO before joining President Donald Trump's cabinet. While at Exxon, he cultivated close ties with Rosneft and Russian officials including President Vladimir Putin, and he spoke against sanctions that were imposed in 2014 in response to Russia's annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine.

The sanctions bar US oil companies from transferring to Russia the advanced technology that is used to drill more efficiently offshore and in shale formations. Exxon has said in regulatory filings that the sanctions could lead to losses of up to \$1 billion.

An Exxon spokesman said the company's application for a waiver was made to meet contractual obligations under a joint-venture agree-

ment in Russia, "where competitor companies are authorized to undertake such work under European sanctions."

Rosneft officials have said that their joint venture with Italy's Eni S.p.A. plans to begin drilling this year in the Black Sea next to the area where Exxon hoped to drill. Under Treasury Department rules, ExxonMobil could resubmit its application if it provides additional information the government hadn't reviewed previously.

Irving, Texas-based Exxon has disclosed receiving three waivers from the sanctions during the Obama administration for limited work with Rosneft.

Exxon's critics urged the Treasury Department to block more waivers, which they feared would give new momentum to drilling in the environmentally sensitive Russian Arctic. Shares of Exxon Mobil Corp. fell 32 cents to close Friday at \$80.69. — AP

ROLL WITH IT: GAZANS CREATE OWN LIMO FROM FIVE DIFFERENT CARS

GAZA CITY: A Gazan firm has found a way to add style to weddings in the Palestinian enclave despite being unable to import a limousine: make one with parts from five cars. Wedding planner Salama Al-Odi sought to import a limousine as part of the various offerings to young Gazans by the firm he heads, Farha, but said he was unable to. The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli blockade for 10 years, with the entry and exit of goods and people tightly controlled by Israel.

Its sole crossing with Egypt has also remained largely closed in recent years. Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza, run by Islamist movement Hamas, have fought three wars since 2008.

Israeli officials say the blockade is necessary to prevent the importation of weapons and materials that could be used to make them, but UN officials have called for it to be lifted, citing deteriorating conditions in the enclave of two million people.

With poverty widespread and unemployment at nearly 45 percent, Gazans have had to show creativity and Odi has responded to the challenge. In his small mechanic shop, a group of men were busy

taking parts from five different cars and adding them to a white Mercedes. Some 30 people weighed in on the design and drew up plans for the improvised limousine.

"It took us three months and \$21,000 (19,500 euros)" to build the vehicle, whose interior with curtains was "completely conceived in Gaza," Odi said. The result looks something like a cross between a car and a spaceship, with a rounded roof extending upward from what would have been the original top.

Hand-painted designs adorn the sides of the vehicle. Final touches are being put on the "limo" and the first bride and groom should be able to climb aboard as soon as Thursday.

Odi says he will offer it at an affordable rate for young people in Gaza, where marriages have been delayed due to a lack of financial resources. For him, seeing the homemade vehicle roll through the streets of the Gaza Strip will also be a message to Gazans to "not give in to the restrictions" imposed by Israel. "You have to answer by inventing and embarking on an adventure," he said. —AFP



GAZA STRIP: A Palestinian mechanic works on his vehicle at his workshop in Gaza

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.806
Indian Rupees	4.737
Pakistani Rupees	2.916
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.010
Nepali Rupees	2.966
Singapore Dollar	219.530
Hongkong Dollar	39.325
Bangladesh Taka	3.750
Philippine Peso	6.161
Thai Baht	8.809

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.574
Qatari Riyal	84.018
Omani Riyal	794.439
Bahraini Dinar	812.280
UAE Dirham	83.286

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.400
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.830
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.228
Tunisian Dinar	133.490
Jordanian Dinar	430.810
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.038
Syrian Lira	2.180
Morocco Dirham	30.817

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	305.700
Euro	326.950
Sterling Pound	386.400
Canadian dollar	230.200
Turkish lira	83.100

Swiss Franc	306.160
Australian Dollar	232.640
US Dollar Buying	304.500

GOLD	
20 Gram	262.690
10 Gram	134.270
5 Gram	67.980

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD	
Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.350
Canadian Dolla	229.875
Sterling Pound	385.255
Euro	326.577
Swiss Frank	308.180
Bahrain Dinar	809.890
UAE Dirhams	83.530
Qatari Riyals	84.755
Saudi Riyals	82.320
Jordanian Dinar	430.575
Egyptian Pound	17.009
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.011
Indian Rupees	4.733
Pakistani Rupees	2.912
Bangladesh Taka	3.800
Philippines Peso	6.155
Cyprus pound	168.510
Japanese Yen	3.800
Syrian Pound	2.425
Nepalese Rupees	3.955
Malaysian Ringgit	70.150

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.760
Thai Bhat	9.865
Turkish Lira	82.700

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.384056	0.394056
Czech Korune	0.004149	0.016149
Danish Krone	0.039922	0.044922
Euro	0.321744	0.330744
Norwegian Krone	0.031488	0.036688
Romanian Leu	0.071960	0.071960
Slovakia	0.009141	0.019141
Slovenia	0.029976	0.034976
Swedish Krona	0.299486	0.310486
Swiss Franc	0.077881	0.088181
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.220633	0.233633
New Zealand Dollar	0.208499	0.217999
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.220998	0.229988
Georgina Lari	0.137890	0.137890
US Dollars	0.301200	0.305600
US Dollars Mint	0.301700	0.305600
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003422	0.004006
Chinese Yuan	0.042838	0.046338
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037177	0.039927
Indian Rupee	0.004276	0.004964

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002717	0.002897
Kenyan Shilling	0.002944	0.002944
Korean Won	0.000257	0.000272
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065543	0.071543
Nepalese Rupee	0.003016	0.003186
Pakistan Rupee	0.002709	0.002999
Philippine Peso	0.006060	0.006360
Sierra Leone	0.000038	0.000044
Singapore Dollar	0.213023	0.223023
South African Rand	0.016940	0.025440
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001638	0.002218
Taiwan	0.009910	0.010090
Thai Baht	0.008525	0.009075
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.803243	0.811743
Egyptian Pound	0.014058	0.019966
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000195	0.000255
Jordanian Dinar	0.425248	0.434248
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020404	0.044404
Nigerian Naira	0.000397	0.001032
Omani Riyal	0.786566	0.792246
Qatar Riyal	0.083047	0.084497
Saudi Riyal	0.080327	0.081627
Syrian Pound	0.001295	0.001515
Tunisian Dinar	0.128596	0.136596
Turkish Lira	0.077881	0.088181
UAE Dirhams	0.081697	0.083397
Yemeni Riyal	0.000993	0.001073

US BUSINESSES GETTING HAMMERED BY VENEZUELA CRISIS

WASHINGTON: The political and economic crisis in Venezuela is costing US companies dearly, as General Motors can attest following the unexpected nationalization of its plant there.

The big auto-maker shut down its operations in Venezuela and laid off its 2,700 workers after the government on Wednesday seized the plant, which had been idle because of the chaotic market environment. The group had been operating in the South American country for 69 years.

GM isn't the only US business to be walloped by Venezuela's crisis. Kimberly-Clark, a personal-care paper group, had its factory taken over last July, and posted a charge of \$153 million to deconsolidate its Venezuela operations.

Biscuit-maker Mondelez-behind America's well-known Oreo brand-also took a one-time charge of \$778 million to reconfigure its Venezuela operations as an investment in its accounts, to prevent them dragging the group's earnings down. Although Mondelez products still sell in Venezuela, it's unable to track sales.

Same story for Pepsi, which reported a \$1.4 billion loss last October from its Venezuela business.

A crude let-down

The conditions in Venezuela are a formidable challenge for any company, with hyperinflation, capital controls, political turbulence, mass demonstrations and consumers who have barely enough money to buy food and basic items.

The country was once considered one of the juiciest markets for US businesses, boasting the biggest oil reserves in the world, a free-spending middle class with a taste for American products, and proximity.

But a slump in global crude prices coupled with mismanagement has devastated the country's economy. And nearly two decades of Socialist rule by late president Hugo Chavez and his successor Nicolas Maduro have badly frayed ties with the US, which has halved the amount of Venezuelan oil it imports. Venezuelan authorities regularly accuse Washington of being behind the unrest they are dealing with.

US unease

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is in an uncomfortable position, having been the boss of

American oil giant ExxonMobil before becoming President Donald Trump's diplomatic chief.

In 2014, the Venezuelan government was ordered by a World Bank disputes tribunal to pay ExxonMobil \$1.4 billion for nationalizing an oil field. But that ruling was overturned on appeal in March this year to the World Bank's International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes.

ExxonMobil also plans to drill for oil in an offshore field in a zone that both Guyana and neighboring Venezuela lay claim to. The find is a source of friction between the two countries since 2015. Another point of contention between Venezuela and the United States is Citgo, a network of gas stations in America owned by Venezuela's state oil company PDVSA.

US lawmakers, especially former Republican presidential candidates Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, have expressed concerns that the Russian oil company Rosneft might end up owning Citgo, which is based in Houston, Texas.

That stems from the fact that PDVSA put Citgo up as collateral for a corporate bond issue in December that Rosneft underwrote. If

PDVSA defaults, Rosneft could demand Citgo as compensation.

"We are extremely concerned that Rosneft's control of a major US energy supplier could pose a grave threat to American energy security, impact the flow and price of gasoline for American consumers, and expose critical US infrastructure to national security threats," Rubio, Cruz and four other senators wrote in an April 10 letter to US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

Patience 'wearing thin'

According to Matthew Taylor, an expert on Latin America at the Center for Foreign Relations in Washington, the Trump's administration policies towards the Venezuelan crisis seem to be the same as those of predecessor Barack Obama. "The United States has imposed targeted sanctions against individual Venezuelans, including Vice President (Tarek) El-Aissami, but has wisely avoided the temptation to more directly and unilaterally confront the regime, allowing Latin America to lead," he said in a blog. "But patience is wearing thin in Washington." —AFP



MINNETONKA: This April 18, 2017 photo shows the suburban Minneapolis headquarters of Syngenta in Minnetonka, Minn. The first lawsuit out of tens of thousands across the country is about to go to trial against Swiss the agribusiness giant Syngenta over its decision to put a genetically engineered corn variety onto the US market before China had approved it. —AP

FIRST FARMER LAWSUIT ON DECK AGAINST SYNGENTA

MINNEAPOLIS: The first of tens of thousands of US lawsuits is about to go to trial against Swiss agribusiness giant Syngenta over its decision to introduce a genetically engineered corn seed variety to the US market before China had approved it for imports.

The lawsuits allege that Syngenta's move wrecked an increasingly important export market for US corn, and that the resulting price drops hurt all producers. Court filings show that Syngenta aggressively marketed the seeds even when it knew that Chinese approval was going to be a problem.

Plaintiffs' experts estimate the economic damage to be about \$5 billion, while Syngenta denies its actions caused any losses for farmers. The first test case goes to trial today in state court in Minneapolis. The second goes to trial in federal court in Kansas City, Kansas, on June 5. The two cases are meant to provide guidance for how the complex web of litigation in state and federal courts could be resolved. Here are a look at some of the issues:

The problem:

Syngenta decided to commercialize its Viptera brand of genetically modified corn seeds before China approved importing it. Syngenta invested over \$100 million and 15 years in developing Viptera, which has a trait called MIR162 that protects against pests such as earworms, cutworms, armyworms and corn borers.

With US government approval, Syngenta began selling Viptera in the US for the 2011 growing season. But China didn't approve it until December 2014.

Court papers show that Syngenta initially assured stakeholders that China would approve MIR162 in time for the 2011 crop. But the date kept slipping. Some exporters sent shipments

containing the trait to China anyway. After two years of accepting them, China began rejecting them in late 2013.

One expert working for the plaintiffs estimated the damage to US farmers to be \$5.77 billion; another pegged it at \$4.68 billion. Most plaintiffs didn't grow Viptera, but China excluded their grain, too, because elevators and shippers typically mix grain from large numbers of suppliers, making it difficult to source corn that was free of the trait. So they say all farmers were hurt by the resulting price drop.

The legal landscape

About 60,000 individual cases involving farmers from across the country, plus a class-action lawsuit on behalf of Minnesota farmers, are consolidated before Hennepin County District Judge Thomas Sipkins. Syngenta's North American seed business is based in suburban Minneapolis.

The other big bloc, which includes cases from corn belt states other than Minnesota, has been consolidated before US District Judge John Lungstrum in Kansas City, Kansas. The lawyers themselves aren't sure how many farmers are covered there, but it's a lot.

The first two cases will serve as bellwether trials, which courts often use when there are large numbers of lawsuits concerning similar legal issue. This way the attorneys can see how juries react and determine whether to settle other cases or take them to trial. The trial that starts Monday in Minneapolis is for a lawsuit filed by Daniel Mesnick of Morse Bluff, Nebraska, who grew Viptera and claims about \$150,000 in damages. It is expected to last up to three weeks. The second trial will take place in federal court in Kansas City and will be a class-action case involving Kansas farmers who claim about \$200 million in damages. —AP

BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF YAWMI DRAW

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, the second largest in terms of assets, announced yesterday the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners are:

1. Faisal faleh Al-Subaiei
2. Amani Yaqoub Ali
3. Haleemah Jassim Abul
4. Asmar Yatkeen
5. Abdulmohsen Khaled Al-Bahar

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers Daily and Quarterly Draws, wherein the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win. Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second

largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. "People come first" is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

The bank was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2008, making it the first bank in the GCC, and the only bank in Kuwait to receive such accreditation for the third consecutive year. The Bank also has to its credit the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twelve consecutive years.

Burgan Bank, a subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), is a strongly positioned regional Bank in the MENA region.

BOURSA KUWAIT HOLDS FIRST INVESTOR RELATIONS WORKSHOP

100 INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS ATTEND WORKSHOP

KUWAIT: Building on its recent partnership with the Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA), Boursa Kuwait held its first Investor Relations (IR) workshop, catered to listed companies and brokerage firms, in collaboration with MEIRA and Zain Group. The workshop took place at the Boursa Kuwait premises, on 17, April 2017 in an effort to raise awareness and knowledge of the major role of Investor Relations in Kuwait, from an organizational and practical point of view.

Boursa Kuwait Executive Director - Strategic Transformation and CEO Office, Eman Abdul-Aziz Ali, reinforced the organization's commitment to supporting MEIRA's Kuwait Chapter and ensuring that it promotes IR best practices, due to the importance of this function in elevating the overall investment status of the Kuwaiti market. She said: "The high turnout of attendees to the workshop is a clear indication that the Kuwait market understands the importance of this function and more importantly, is ready to establish and develop a specialized unit within. Ensuring that the significance of this exercise is clearly and efficiently communicated is surely a Boursa Kuwait duty and focus, as well sharing best practices with our stakeholders and developing the means in which we reach the investment communities."

"I would like to thank the CMA for attending the session and for their continuous support of Boursa Kuwait's initiatives," Eman added.

Ahmed Kiswani, Risk, Compliance and Corporate Governance Executive Director at Boursa Kuwait initiated the workshop and led the first session with two main topics, which addressed the importance of IR in light of the new regulatory envi-

ronment in Kuwait, and its importance from a Boursa Kuwait strategic point of view.

MEIRA have covered five main areas namely; IR in a global context, international regulation and practice, investor perspective, the role of the Investor Relations Officer (IRO) and last but not least, IR as a function.

Mohammad Abdal, Chief Communications Officer of Zain Group and Chairman of MEIRA Kuwait Chapter expressed his gratitude to Boursa Kuwait, for initiating the first of a series of IR events. He said: "We are confident that our partnership with Boursa Kuwait will surely

result in a positive and resilient turnaround for the Kuwait market in specific, and the region as a whole. I would also like to thank Boursa Kuwait in advance, for hosting the 'Certificate of Investor Relations' (CIR) two-day program at its premises later this month, as a start to deploying IR certified professionals into the field."

During the workshop, Abdal shared Zain Group's successful experience with IR from the perspective of a mature and well-established company, as a practical case study. This allowed participants to better relate to the role of IR and its importance in

supporting the overall success of an organization and its operations. Abdal also highlighted the nature of the challenges faced by Zain Group at the start when the IR unit was established in 2002, and how these challenges were overcome and leveraged to further grow the IR unit into a fully-fledged function that serves the Group's IR needs.

The Boursa Kuwait IR Awareness workshop witnessed more than 100 participants from the listed companies and brokerage firms from the fields of investor relations, Finance, Compliance, Corporate Governance and Corporate Communications.



KUWAIT: Delegates attend Boursa Kuwait's first Investor Relations (IR) workshop.

AMERICAN TRIES TO LEARN FROM UNITED'S MISTAKES IN INCIDENT

NEW YORK: Another day, another cellphone video of a conflict on an airplane. American Airlines said it grounded a flight attendant who got into a verbal confrontation with a passenger on a Friday flight from San Francisco to Dallas-Fort Worth. Spokeswoman Leslie Scott says the airline is looking into whether the male flight attendant violently took away a stroller from the female passenger just before she boarded a Friday flight from San Francisco to Dallas. He has been removed from duty in the meantime.

In an age of cellphone videos and social media, airlines are learning the hard way that it is essential to deescalate tense situations that occur during air travel, even as there are more passengers, less room and fewer flight attendants than ever before. The incident comes less than two weeks after video of a man being violently dragged off a United Express flight sparked widespread outrage.

United initially blamed its passenger, Dr David Dao, before finally apologizing days after the incident, fanning the public's fury. American, by contrast, seems to have learned from United's mistakes: it immediately said it was sorry, that it had grounded the flight attendant while it investigates the incident, and that it had upgraded the passenger involved and her family to first class. "American doesn't want to

become the next United, but then, United didn't want to become the next United," said Henry Harteveltd, travel industry analyst at Atmosphere Research Group. "No airline wants to be seen as being anti-consumer or anti-passenger."

Smartphone cameras and social media are shifting power to consumers who can share customer relations gaffes with the world. They're increasingly making confrontations with customer-facing staff headline news, making it harder for companies to sweep complaints under the rug. The faster companies own up to mistakes, the quicker they can start to do damage control.

Customer service

American's fast reaction to the incident could be helpful, said brand consultant Allen Adamson, CEO of BrandSimple. "The quick reaction will prevent it from escalating further, but it won't mitigate the perception among flyers that flying is becoming a less enjoyable experience every day," he said. Overall, airlines must start to put more of an emphasis on customer service, he said. "It's another example of airlines struggling to treat their passengers with the traditional 'customer is always right' attitude," he said. "Good customer service is finding a way to deescalate a situa-

tion and he (the flight attendant) was throwing gasoline on it." Days after Dao was dragged off the United Express flight from Chicago to Kentucky to make room for airline crew, his lawyer spent a good part of a news conference railing against what he said was the industry-wide shabby treatment of airline passengers. Dao lost teeth, suffered a broken nose and received a concussion in the incident, which also was captured on video.

In the case of the American flight on Friday, a video that passenger Surain Adyanthaya posted on Facebook shows the sobbing woman holding a small child and saying, "You can't use violence with baby." Later, an unidentified male passenger confronts the flight attendant, telling him, "You do that to me and I'll knock you flat." The flight attendant responds with, "Hit me. Bring it on." Another passenger on the flight, Olivia Morgan, told the New York Times that the flight attendant nearly hit the baby with the stroller when he jerked it away from the woman. Morgan, an executive with an education-related nonprofit, said when she complained about the woman's treatment, the flight attendant pointed his finger in her face and yelled, "You stay out of it."

Air rage

Traveling is stressful under any circumstance, and conflict resolution training is an essential part of being a flight attendant, Harteveltd said. "If airlines aren't going to improve staffing or restore leg room for customers, they should at least provide flight attendants with better, more relevant training about how to handle these types of situations," he said. At the same time, passengers should also be respectful of flight attendants — who often work long hours on multiple flights — as well, he said.

A union that represents American Airlines flight attendants said in a statement that not all of the facts are known about the incident so there shouldn't be a rush to judgment. If a passenger threatened a flight attendant, that would be a violation of federal law, said Bob Ross, president of The Association of Professional Flight Attendants. "Air rage has become a serious issue on our flights," he said in a statement. "We must obtain the full facts surrounding these incidents. Our passengers and the flight attendants deserve nothing less." —AP



MIAMI: In this June 3, 2016 file photo, an American Airlines passenger jet takes off from Miami International Airport. —AP

UNITED CEO WON'T ADD CHAIRMAN TITLE IN 2018

DALLAS: United Airlines said CEO Oscar Munoz, who came under withering criticism for the airline's handling of a passenger-dragging incident, will not automatically add the title of chairman in 2018 as planned. The company said Friday that Munoz proposed rewriting his employment contract to remove the expectation that he would become chairman at next year's annual meeting of parent United Continental Holdings Inc. United also said Friday that Munoz received \$18.7 million in compensation last year. Munoz was widely faulted for his early responses to the April 9 incident on board a United Express plane. He first blamed the 69-year-old passenger who was

dragged off by airport security officers. Munoz later apologized repeatedly for United's handling of the situation.

The incident is under investigation by Congress and the Transportation Department. Lawyers for the passenger, Kentucky physician David Dao, have hinted at a lawsuit. And there have been calls online to boycott United.

United executives said this week it was too early to know if the widely publicized incident has affected ticket sales. The airline's board of directors has supported Munoz, according to a statement last week from Chairman Robert Milton. United said Friday in a securities filing that management and the board "take recent

events extremely seriously," and will link executive bonuses partly to "progress toward improvements in the customer experience."

Munoz has said no employees will lose their jobs and that he will not quit. He ordered a review of the airline's policies on moving crews and handling oversold flights, including bumping passengers. It is expected by the end of next week.

Last month, the airline was also criticized on social media and trolled by other airlines after a United gate agent in Denver told young girls they would have to change or cover up their leggings before being allowed to board a plane.

Munoz was named CEO in September 2015, replacing Jeffrey Smisek, who stepped down in

the midst of an influence-trading scandal. Munoz had been on the airline's board while serving as CEO of freight railroad CSX Corp.

He has focused on improving United's tattered relations with labor unions. The airline has made some strides in improving its on-time performance, canceling fewer

flights and losing fewer bags. However, it still generally ranks poorly in surveys of airline travelers. Most of Munoz's compensation last year was in stock. The company said Friday in a regulatory filing that about \$6.8 million of the total was related to a signing bonus that Munoz was promised in 2016. —AP



In this file photo, United Airlines CEO Oscar Munoz delivers remarks in New York. United Airlines said that its CEO Munoz won't add the title of chairman in 2018 as planned, as fallout continues from the violent removal of a passenger from a plane this month. —AP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report							Global								
Sunday 23 April 2017															
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low		Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change	
Price Index	▲ 5.51	6,819.04	6,813.53	6,859.20	6,812.35		Volume			120,679,023					
Weighted Index	▼ -3.03	405.84	408.87	409.29	405.74		Value (KWD)			15,675,542					
KSX 15	▼ -8.05	915.29	923.34	923.09	915.00		Number of Trades			3,369					
Trades							Trades								
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change	Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	60	60	59950	3,597	2	60	▼ -1.0	SOKOUK	51	49.0	3525618	175,461	91	49.0	▼ -0.5
IPG	400	395	4,959	1,969	7	400	▼ -10.0	KRE	64	63	551,000	35,114	5	64	▲ 1.0
NAPESCO	1,420	1,380	693,900	973,545	37	1,420	▲ 100.0	URC	96	96	40,000	3,840	2	96	▼ -4.0
ENERGYH	44.0	43.0	166,390	7,229	27	43.5	▼ -1.5	NRE	102	100	205,570	20,557	4	100	▼ -2.0
GPI	47.0	46.0	1,014,251	47,151	28	46.0	▼ -0.5	SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	375	▲ 0.0
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0	TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	425	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas	1,939,450	1,033,491	101	1039.71	▲ 26.42			AREEC	170	170	500	85	1	170	▲ 0.0
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290	▲ 0.0	MASSALEH	57	53	11,352	604	5	53	▼ -4.0
BPCC	590	580	152,204	89,221	9	590	▲ 0.0	ARABREC	37.0	36.5	1,020,910	37,718	28	37.0	▲ 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700	▲ 0.0	ERESCO	44.0	43.0	1,714,600	75,385	40	43.0	▼ -0.5
ALQURAIN	335	335	376,750	126,211	19	335	▲ 0.0	MABANEE	820	810	18,423	14,947	3	810	▼ -10.0
Basic Materials	528,954	215,432	28	1305.10	▲ 0.0			INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	93	▲ 0.0
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	520	▲ 0.0	INVESTORS	27.5	26.0	3,580,821	95,180	63	26.5	▼ -0.5
CABLE	455	450	64,622	29,128	13	455	▼ -5.0	IRC	38.0	37.0	896,700	33,205	32	37.0	▲ 0.0
SHIP	230	224	2,174,124	498,940	80	228	▲ 4.0	ALTIJARIA	78	77	300,400	23,136	17	78	▲ 0.0
PCEM	1,000	960	23,858	22,905	3	980	▲ 0.0	SANAM	55	50	15	1	2	55	▲ 0.0
PAPER	350	315	10,002	3,151	3	350	▲ 10.0	AAYANRE	86	85	690,901	58,727	9	86	▲ 0.0
MRC	76	76	500	38	1	76	▼ -2.0	AOAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	▲ 0.0
ACICO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290	▲ 0.0	ALAQARIA	44.5	43.5	1,406,280	62,060	36	43.5	▲ 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	208	▲ 0.0	MAZAYA	118	116	1,115,847	129,440	22	116	▲ 0.0
KBMM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	156	▲ 0.0	ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	11.0	▲ 0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	214	▲ 0.0	THEMAR	90	90	117,629	10,587	3	90	▲ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	57	56	627,902	35,343	32	56	▲ 0.0	TIJARA	60	60	20	1	60	▲ 1.0	
NCCI	89	86	305	26	4	86	▼ -5.0	TAAMEER	44.5	41.0	4,611,918	195,277	110	42.0	▼ -1.5
GYPSSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0	ARKAN	83	83	100,000	8,300	1	83	▼ -1.0
SALBOOKH	67	66	1,712	113	4	67	▲ 0.0	ARGAN	188	188	50	9	1	188	▲ 0.0
AGLTY	630	610	528,054	326,185	29	610	▼ -20.0	ABYAAR	27.5	26.5	4,955,210	132,931	84	26.5	▲ 0.0
EDU	285	275	1,314	361	2	285	▲ 0.0	MUNSHAAT	59	57	908,700	52,540	33	57	▼ -1.0
CLEANING	50	48.5	100,500	4,875	3	50	▼ -1.0	FIRSTDUBAI	60	56	2,660,631	155,832	47	60	▲ 2.0
KGL	62	61	41,000	2,501	6	62	▲ 1.0	KBT	53	51	2,690,206	139,423	54	53	▲ 1.0
KPCP	174	164	941	154	2	174	▲ 4.0	REAM	250	240	8	2	4	250	▲ 10.0
MHANSOFT	3,680	3,680	75,002	276,007	3	3,680	▲ 100.0	MENA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	32.0	▲ 0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	▲ 0.0	ALMUDON	47.5	46.0	2,750,008	128,888	81	47.0	▲ 1.0
GFC	59	59	1,000	59	1	59	▼ -4.0	MARAKEZ	50	47.0	135,005	6,504	9	50	▲ 1.0
MAYADEEN	30.0	28.5	2,945,290	86,280	64	29.0	▲ 0.0	REMAJ	70	68	1,756,744	120,844	62	70	▲ 1.0
CGC	600	580	1,011,442	595,276	94	580	▲ 0.0	AWJ	87	85	122,255	10,481	8	85	▼ -1.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	▲ 0.0	Real Estate	35,887,321	1,727,077	858	993.63	▲ 0.42		
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	740	▲ 0.0	KINV	102	99	90,493	9,049	7	102	▲ 0.0
ALAFAC	250	250	1,250	313	1	250	▲ 2.0	FACIL	166	164	20,005	3,281	3	164	▼ -4.0
MUBARRAD	78	78	23,100	1,802	1	78	▼ -1.0	IFA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	44.0	▲ 0.0
LOGISTICS	69	67	443,000	29,987	8	67	▼ -1.0	NINV	108	102	1,575,672	162,697	45	104	▼ -2.0
SCEM	91	91	40,000	3,640	1	91	▲ 1.0	KPROJ	415	410	301,326	124,659	15	415	▲ 5.0
GCEM	89	88	794,750	69,938	13	88	▲ 0.0	COAST	46.5	45.0	1,143,976	52,463	33	45.0	▼ -1.0
QIC	85	85	4,400	374	1	85	▲ 5.0	SECH	50	49.5	1,982,100	98,868	36	50	▼ -1.0
FCEM	93	92	101,000	9,305	8	93	▲ 4.0	SGC	99	99	50	5	1	99	▲ 0.0
RKWC	98	98	1,370	134	1	98	▲ 0.0	ARZAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	37.5	▲ 0.0
SPEC	90	88	891,451	78,833	24	89	▼ -1.0	MARKAZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	106	▲ 0.0
Industrials	9,907,889	2,075,669	402	1775.95	▲ 12.66			KMEFIC	31.0	31.0	20	1	1	31.0	▲ 0.0
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	188	▲ 0.0	ALAMAN	50	49.0	20,202	1,010	2	50	▲ 1.0
NSH	40.0	40.0	6,404	256	1	40.0	▲ 0.0	ALOLA	49.5	47.0	4,653,982	224,631	89	48.5	▲ 1.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	104	▲ 0.0	ALMAL	20.5	20.0	613,130	12,263	16	20.0	▲ 0.0
CATTL	210	206	805	166	2	210	▲ 2.0	GIH	43.5	42.5	3,342,594	144,035	58	43.0	▲ 0.0
DANAH	90	87	467,030	41,098	24	88	▼ -2.0	AAYAN	49.0	48.0	1,209,420	58,830	35	48.5	▲ 0.0
FOOD	2,420	2,400	39,286	94,672	5	2,400	▼ -30.0	BAYANINV	49.5	48.0	2,527,875	123,160	39	49.0	▲ 1.0
Consumer Goods	513,525	136,193	32	1111.97	▼ -2.88			OSOUL	63	61	124,718	7,682	12	63	▲ 0.0
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	310	▲ 0.0	KPIC	51	51	3,000	153	1	51	▲ 1.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	▲ 0.0	KAMCO	95	95	750	71	3	95	▲ 1.0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	196	▲ 0.0	NIH	65	61	9,050	580	3	65	▼ -1.0
Health Care	0	0	0	0.00	▲ 0.00			UNICAP	49.0	48.0	340,744	16,356	12	48.0	▼ -1.0
KCIN	1,460	1,400	6,004	8,766	3	1,400	▼ -100	MADAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	12.5	▲ 0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	▲ 0.0	ALDEERA	36.5	36.0	80,910	2,913	4	36.5	▼ -0.5
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0.0	ALSALAM	49.0	48.0	2,258,169	110,368	68	48.0	▼ -1.0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	▲ 0.0	EKTTITAB	39.5	37.5	912,842	35,287	50	38.5	▼ -0.5
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	▲ 0.0	ALMADINA	50	48.5	1,047,000	51,499	35	49.5	▲ 1.0
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	▲ 0.0	NOOR	53	51	20,000	1,040	3	53	▲ 0.0
OULAFUEL															

TAMANNAAH LAUNCHES NEW FESTIVE JEWELLERY COLLECTION OF MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS



MUSCAT: Tamannaah Bhatia launches the new festive jewellery collection of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of Najeeb K - Regional Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Oman; Salish Mathew, Head - Branding & Marketing; Khamis Al-Mandhari, Director - Malabar Gold & Diamonds and invited guests at an event held at Oman Avenues Mall in Oman on Saturday.

KUWAIT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the BIG 5 global jewellery retailers unveiled the latest collection of jewellery specially designed for the festive season. Indian Film actress Tamannaah Bhatia unveiled the versatile & sparkling collection of jewellery in the presence of Najeeb K - Regional Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Oman; Salish Mathew, Head - Branding & Marketing; Khamis Al-Mandhari, Director - Malabar Gold & Diamonds and invited guests at an event held at Oman Avenues Mall in Oman on 22nd April.

The latest jewellery collection is specially designed in gold, diamonds & precious gems to celebrate this festive season keeping in mind the tastes of their multicultural & multinational customers. A true shopper's delight, Malabar Gold & Diamonds will captivate the customers by exhibiting eye catching designs in gold, diamonds & precious gems from different parts of the world to flaunt any occasion or event and are well priced too. Customers can browse from over

120 designs which were specially introduced in this festive season and are starting from as low as KD 70 onwards.

Not only that, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has announced some amazing offers to celebrate this festive season. Customers can win up to 30 kilos of gold in 18 days across GCC through this campaign. It's a winning galore for Malabar Gold & Diamonds' customers in this festive season. With every purchase of gold & diamond jewelry worth KD 40, customers get a chance to enter raffle draws to win 1/2 (Half) kg of gold each in 2 raffle draws. Adding to the above, customers also get two gram gold coin on diamond jewellery purchase of KWD 400 and a one gram gold coin on purchase of diamond jewellery worth KD 250. Also, customers can protect the gold rate at Malabar Gold & Diamonds on payment of 10 percent of the entire amount on the selected gold jewellery until 28th April 2017. All these offers will be valid at their outlets in Kuwait until 6th May, 2017.

KFH-CAPITAL HOLDS 9TH FORUM FOR LISTED COMPANIES AND ANALYSTS

FORUM BRINGS TOGETHER 5 PARTICIPATIONS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS

KUWAIT: Senior Vice President- Asset Division at KFH-Capital, affiliated to Kuwait Finance House Group (KFH), Abdullah Essa Al-Ali said that the 9th Forum for Listed Companies and Analysts, which will be held tomorrow April 25th for one day, will witness the participation of 5 companies; KFH, Al-Qerain, Al-Mazaya, ALAFCO, and Boursa Kuwait. The forum aims to reiterate the robust position and solvency of the participating companies, while accentuates their plans, current and future businesses in addition to their achievements and success stories. The forum includes for the first time a discussion panel themed "Sukuk and Future Outlook" to demonstrate Sukuk growth opportunities as a financing instrument, not to mention the legal, regulatory and supervisory requirements for sovereign and corporate sukuk issues.

Al-Ali added, in a press release, that the discussion panel will bring together Senior Vice President - Investment Banking Division-KFH-Capital Abdullah AlHaddad, Partner of global law firm Jones Day, Nadim Khan, and Thwaini AlThuwaini from Warba Bank. They will tackle the key growth drivers for the Sukuk industry and potential growth markets, why issue Sukuk and the top 3 key challenges, how regulatory environment is encouraging Sukuk industry to

be successful, Basel III impacting the bottom line of regional banks, especially Sharia compliant banks, the structures available to corporates, and the experience in bringing Warba's debut Sukuk issuance to the market, especially the regulatory process.

He said that KFH-Capital is keen on holding this forum that enables companies to directly demonstrate their achievements in the presence of businessmen and media, while responding to queries and clarifying facts in a transparent manner. The forum contributes in shedding light on different angles of economy and the latest developments of the local market and its impact on the companies' businesses and future strategies.

Al-Ali invites media representatives and those interested in the economic affairs to attend the 9th edition of this forum to enrich the presentations of every company, affirming that KFH-Capital views the forum as an added cultural and intellectual value for investment



Abdulla Al-Ali

business in Kuwait. KFH was established in Kuwait in 1977 and is enlisted in the Kuwait Stock Exchange. KFH Group is a global pioneer in the field of Islamic banking services, where it offers a wide array of Islamic products and services, not to mention a high standard of innovation and client service.

KFH manages its operations in the GCC, Asia, and Europe through over 480 branches, including KFH-Turkey, in order to offer services for the bank's clients in Turkey, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Germany, Jordan and Dubai.

KFH's mission is to achieve highest levels of excellence and innovation in the field of client service, while developing common interest for all those concerned with the financial institution. KFH's vision is to spearhead the global development in Islamic financial services, and to upgrade the bank into the level of becoming the most sustainable profitable Islamic bank in the world.

KFH's values include cementing leadership through all its businesses, including leadership in the Islamic banking services worldwide, through innovation and in client service and the development of its employees. In addition, KFH is committed to all its procedures, and to setting up long-life partnerships with the concerned authorities.



The attendees at Customer Centricity Innovation workshop.



Dr Alexander Osterwalder speaking at the workshop.

GULF BANK HOLDS 'CUSTOMER CENTRICITY INNOVATION' WORKSHOP FOR EMPLOYEES

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank was pleased to hold the latest in a series of workshops for its employees about the role of innovation in the workplace. Approximately, 100 employees from various departments participated in the workshop entitled, 'Customer Centricity Innovation' which focused on new and innovative methods for creating and delivering the value customers want. The workshop was organized by Creative Confidence Consulting, a leading firm specialized in coaching programs.

The workshop was designed and delivered by Dr Alexander Osterwalder in conjunction with Creative Confidence Consulting. It equipped the participants with the latest tools needed to succeed in implementing a customer centric approach across all divisions within Gulf Bank for our internal and external customers.

Accordingly, the session introduced the Value Proposition Canvas Model, the process for making innovation deliver results that meet or exceed the market expectations. It also focused on developing better ways of communicating, delivering, and testing the efficiency of value propositions.

Dr Osterwalder is a frequent keynote speaker at Fortune 500 companies and has held guest lectures in top universities across the world including Stanford, Wharton, MIT, Berkley, IESE and IMD, among others.

Salma Al-Hajaj, General Manager of Human Resources at Gulf Bank, underlined the importance of innovation in customer centricity by saying: "Customers today have more choices than ever before, so we must ask ourselves, what else can we provide to our customers and

potential customers that goes beyond what is currently on the market? We held this training to help our employees use customer centric innovation methods to ensure they not only meet customers' needs but also meet needs customers may not even realize they have. The workshop provided a simple way to understand customer needs and to design products in a way that is intuitive and accessible for customers."

Al-Hajaj added, "At Gulf Bank we have been delivering innovative and easy-to-use products, and realize the importance of the having the right staff in place to further deliver value to our customers. As such, we continue to offer regular trainings to ensure our employees are equipped with the latest tools and insights to ensure they succeed in their work and the Bank remains on the cutting edge of products and services."

WARBA BANK RENEWS COOPERATION WITH MOHAMED NASSER AL-SAYER & SONS

KUWAIT: Warba Bank managed to leave its mark on the development of the Islamic banking industry in Kuwait by offering distinguished and flexible financing solutions that meet clients' needs. These solutions include financial support to cover clients' educational and health requirements, in addition to helping them own the latest car models. In this regard, and following the great success of Warba Bank's previous campaign in cooperation with Mohamed Nasser Al-Sayer & Sons - Toyota's exclusive dealer in Kuwait - under the slogan "cash-price premiums" to finance 2016 Toyota Land Cruiser vehicles, Warba Bank renews its cooperation with the company to launch a new campaign to finance a number of 2017-model top-selling Toyota vehicle. The offer includes the following Toyota vehicles: Land Cruiser Prado (V6), FJ Cruiser (V6), Camry (V4) (3-year premiums), and Land Cruiser (V8) (5-year premiums). Toyota also offers special discounts on other vehicles.

This offer reflects Warba Bank's commitment to design Sharia-compliant financing solutions that meet clients' needs. The new offer is flexible in terms of allowing people to finance the purchase of a Toyota Land Cruiser for cash-price premiums paid over five years without any additional costs.

The new offer is designed to meet the needs of Warba Bank clients, realizing that Toyota vehicles are among the most popular

in Kuwait considering that they are built according to high standards of durability and luxury. In order to provide clients with all the details regarding solutions to finance car purchases, Warba Bank has allocated an experienced sales team at every car dealership to answer any inquiries and offer presentations of the bank's leading financial solutions.

Warba Bank strives to design car financing offers that meet clients' ambitions. It recently launched the 'Kaseb' program to finance car purchase in cooperation with Mohamed Nasser Al-Sayer and Sons - the exclusive Toyota dealer in Kuwait. Kaseb is a program that provides financing for up to five years through innovative contracts and flexible premiums. Warba Bank hopes, through its newest partnership with Al-Sayer, to offer more options for clients looking forward to purchase a Toyota vehicle. The bank also continues its efforts to provide the best quality services, financial solutions, and innovative offers that meet their demands and ambitions, and help them find suitable solutions to finance car purchases.

The new partnership with Mohamed Nasser Al-Sayer and Sons - the exclusive Toyota dealer in Kuwait - adds to a series of partnerships that Warba Bank has recently made with car dealers in Kuwait as part of its efforts to provide special offers and more options for clients to obtain new vehicles.

CHEVROLET ALGHANIM OFFERS FREE SUMMER CHECKUP

KUWAIT: In one of summer's biggest auto service campaigns created to offer customers maximum value and highest safety standards, Chevrolet Alghanim, is proud to offer free checkup on all Chevrolet vehicles being serviced at the Chevrolet service centers, from 22nd April till June 30th 2017.

This special promotion entails a professional and detailed checkup that guarantees the safety and peace of mind of all Chevrolet passengers. Performed by a team of professionally trained service advisors, the checkup includes a thorough inspection on all aspects related to car performance that may get affected under the brutal summer heat, such as the cooling system, the A/C system and brakes and tires, all at no cost to the customer.

Once the checkup has been performed, customers will receive an exhaustive report detailing the condition of the car, the required maintenance and pricing. Customers will also get an instant 30 percent discount on spare parts and 10 percent discount on labor for work ordered out of the technical report provided by the service advisors. And because Chevrolet Alghanim is committed to total customer satisfaction, the promotion also includes free car vacuum and wash as well as free nitrogen fill.

The discounts mentioned above are valid for a period of 2 months from the date of inspection, which reflects Chevrolet Alghanim's dedication to customer excellence, cementing the com-

pany's reputation as Kuwait's best customer-centric automotive company. With great savings on maintenance cost and professional service, customers are guaranteed to enjoy a peace of mind this summer season when the risks of their cars' malfunctioning is high but can be averted by taking preventive measures early on. The Yusuf A Alghanim & Sons Service Center in Shuwaikh is the biggest and most advanced automotive service center in the world, with 73,000 sq m of built up area, servicing 1,000 vehicles every day. Throughout the facility, advanced technology is used to provide customers with reliable service performed by a team of proficiently trained technicians, on-site and ready to offer necessary advice and support as well as cost-effective operations to customers' vehicles.

In addition, the service center is furnished with spacious and comfortable lounges for customers whose cars are being attended and serviced. With a variety of TV channels, ready-to-use Internet stations, free wireless access and KromOzone shopping outlets, customers can kick back, relax, and enjoy a sip of coffee from the cafe on-site as they utilize their time more effectively.

Valid from 22nd April till June 30th 2017, Chevrolet Alghanim encourages customers to take advantage of this free checkup and service discount promotion before it's too late, and certainly before their cars get untimely malfunctioned in the middle of the day when the sun gets mercilessly hotter.

AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-NAJMA ACCOUNT DRAW

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the Al-Najma Account daily draw yesterday. The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry represented by Saqer Al-Manaie.

The winners of the Al-Najma daily draw are:-
Abdullah Sulaiman Ali Nashi — KD 7000
Hwaishan Taha Al-Hajji — KD 7000
Aida Fadel Al-Matroud — KD 7000
Mohammad Muneeb Nazeer Husain — KD 7000

— KD 7000
Jasem Abbas Abdullah — KD 7000.
Al-Najma awards are now brighter and bigger than ever With the revamped Al-Najma account, all your dreams will be turned to reality. On top of offering the highest daily prize in Kuwait for KD 7,000, now our Mega prize draws got bigger to reach KD 250,000.

The new prizes scheme for Al-Najma account Daily draw to win KD 7000
Quarterly draws to win great prizes that would start from KD 100,000 to KD 250,000
1st quarter — KD 100,000

2nd quarter — KD 150,000
3rd quarter — KD 200,000
4th quarter — KD 250,000

With Al-Najma you have more chances to win greater prizes:

- Each KD 25 kept in your account gives you one chance to win
- Each KD 25 kept in your account for one week will give you a chance to enter the daily draw.

- Each KD 25 kept in your account for 3 months will give you chance to enter the quarterly draw.

Additional features:

- ATM card
- Issue a credit card against your account
- Obtain all CBK banking services

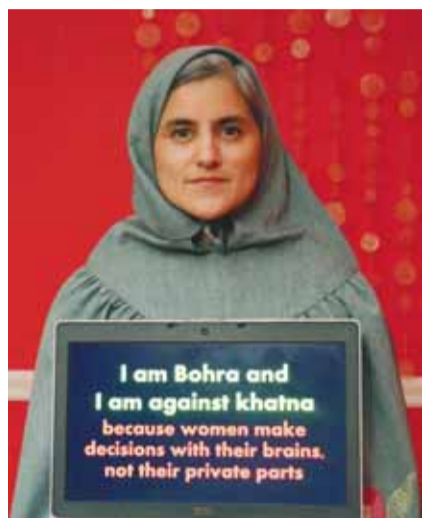
You deserve to win! Open an account now with just KD 500 and you will enter all draws.

ARREST BRINGS ATTENTION TO FEMALE CIRCUMCISIONS IN US

DETROIT: Zehra Patwa learned only a few years ago that during a family trip to India at age 7, she was circumcised, which is common for girls in parts of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Patwa, 46, doesn't remember undergoing the procedure, which is also called female genital mutilation or cutting and which has been condemned by the United Nations and outlawed in the US. But she doesn't want to.

"I have no desire to get that memory back. ... Psychologically, it feels like a violation, even though I don't remember it," said Patwa, a technology project manager from New Haven, Connecticut, who now campaigns against the centuries-old practice. The recent arrest of a Michigan doctor accused of performing the procedure on two 7-year-old girls from Patwa's own Shiite Muslim sect, the Dawoodi Bohra, highlights how female genital mutilation is alive and well in parts of the Western world where its adherents have migrated and formed communities. Depending on the culture, female circumcisions are performed on girls of various ages and by various methods, and they are seen as a way of controlling a girl's sexuality, maintaining her purity or even making her more fertile as she grows into adulthood.

Critics, though, say it can cause complications during childbirth, make intercourse painful and eliminate any pleasure a woman can derive from sex. Dr. Jumana Nagarwala is accused of performing the procedure on two Minnesota girls that left them with scars and lacerations. Her attorney, Shannon Smith, insists that Nagarwala conducted a benign religious ritual that involved no mutilation. Prosecutors on Friday charged two other Bohras, Dr. Fakhruddin Attar and his wife, Farida Attar, with conspiracy. Fakhruddin Attar



NEW HAVEN, Connecticut: In this December 2015 photo provided by her, Zehra Patwa poses for a picture at her home. — AP

owns the Detroit-area clinic where the alleged procedures were performed in February, and investigators say the couple knew Nagarwala was doing the procedures after business hours.

There are more than a million Bohras in the world, most of whom live in India. No one knows how many there are in the US, but it's estimated there are about 25,000 and that they have about 20 mosques and gathering places. Patwa, who is part of the activist group Speak Out on FGM, said that given its clandestine nature, it's hard to estimate how many people perform female circumcisions in the US. But there are a small number in the Bohra community who are known by elders and tend to be clustered around large cities with Bohra mosques, she said.

When many Bohra girls are age 6 to 8, their parents approach - or are approached by - a "secret network" of female elders about getting the girls cut. There is then an informal vetting process to make sure a request is legitimate and not an attempt to expose any activities, Patwa said. "Everybody knows somebody who has gotten their daughter cut ... but nobody wants to rat out their family members or friends," she said.

A spokesman for the Syedna, the Bohras' religious head in Mumbai, India, could not be reached for comment. The two men vying to succeed the Syedna, his half-brother and the son of a former Syedna, have different views on female circumcision. The half-brother says it is time to end the practice of female circumcision. The former Syedna's son, whom most Bohras accept as their new leader, says the tradition must continue and notes that Bohra men are also circumcised. "Men have to do it, and even women have to do it," Syedna Muffadal Saifuddin said in a speech last year.

Cultural

The World Health Organization said the practice of removing or injuring female genital organs has no known health benefits but has been performed on roughly 200 million women and girls in 30 countries. Multiple Islamic scholars and experts say the practice is cultural, not based in religious principles. Those who don't have their daughters circumcised are subjected to pressure, and those who do believe they are protecting the girls.

Although Patwa and others describe it as a widespread practice, it's not universally performed among the Bohra. Sahiyo, a Mumbai-based organization that campaigns against the procedure, estimates that about 80 percent of girls within the community have had it done. She said she attends a Bohra mosque near Boston, which she describes as a welcoming and largely educated and tolerant congregation, but not one in which the procedure they call "khatna" is openly discussed. "Part of my campaigning is always, 'We have a problem within our community. We can only deal with it as a community,'" she said. "We can expose it, but other people aren't going to swoop in and help us."

Patwa said many Bohra mosques, including hers, have sent letters to members encouraging them not to engage in khatna because it could be considered illegal. But she said some critics don't see this as a serious attempt by mosques to end the practice, but rather as legal cover. Dr. Mohammed Arsiwala, president and CEO of Michigan Urgent Care and a board member of the Michigan State Medical Society, said he was a Bohra until about five years ago. He has shared his concerns about the procedure through a resolution presented to the state medical group, which adopted a policy several years ago labeling it unethical for doctors to perform.

Jiwajee Bhai Bootwala belongs to the Minneapolis-area Bohra community, which he said consists of about 25 to 30 families. He said he doesn't know of anyone involved in the practice and didn't know about the families who went to Michigan, or if they even belong to his group. Still, he said, the news will spoil his community's image. "The law for the country is part of your faith," he said. "So we would never do something against the laws of the country." — AP



NEW YORK: In this file photo, provided by Animal Adventure Park in Binghamton, NY, a giraffe named April licks her new calf. — AP

BABY BUMP: BIRTHING GIRAFFE BECOMES A CASH COW FOR TINY ZOO

NEW YORK: April the giraffe has become a cash cow for a tiny zoo in rural upstate New York, thanks to a YouTube video livestream of her pregnancy and birth of an incredibly cute calf that has riveted viewers around the world. Owners of the for-profit Animal Adventure Park won't say exactly how much they've pulled in from all April-related ventures, but internet marketing experts conservatively estimate the haul in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The ventures include the Toys 'R' Us-sponsored YouTube stream, monetized text messages, a clothing line and the sale of T-shirts, caps and fuzzy toys.

"The monies are going to allow the park to continue to grow and improve," said Jordan Patch, who started the 20-acre zoo with his wife four years ago in Harpursville, about 130 miles northwest of New York City. "But also the money will help support our conservation efforts in Africa, so we're actually providing tangible results for wild giraffes."

All Patch would say for sure, moneywise, is that a Gofundme campaign has raised

more than \$150,000 for the care of April, her mate Oliver and their male calf, as well as upgrades to their exhibit space. And he expects 150,000 park visitors - twice as many as last year - to pay \$11-\$13 to see the giraffe family along with the park's 200 other animals, including alligators, monkeys and zebras.

Neither Patch nor Toys 'R' Us, which features a giraffe as its corporate mascot, would talk about how many dollars were attached to April's video stream. After coming online Feb. 23, it has become the second most-watched livestream in YouTube history with more than 232 million views and 7.6 billion minutes of live watch time.

Digital media analysts say the money alone may be beside the point. "Every marketer dreams of getting something that will go viral," said Allen Adamson of Brand Simple Consulting, which helps companies define and market their brand. "The real value is the way the organization has been cemented in millions of people's minds in a compelling way. You can't buy advertising like that." — AP

POSSIBLE SHUTDOWN, HEALTH CARE QUAGMIRE AWAITING CONGRESS

WASHINGTON: Lawmakers returning to Washington this coming week will find a familiar quagmire on health care legislation and a budget deadline dramatized by the prospect of a protracted battle between US President Donald Trump and Democrats over his border wall. Trump's GOP allies control Congress, but they've been unable to send him a single major bill as his presidency faces the symbolic 100-day mark on April 29 - the very day when the government, in a worst-case scenario, could shut down.

Feeling pressure to deliver results, Trump wants to revive a troubled health care measure from House Republicans to repeal and replace President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act. Trump also hopes to use a \$1 trillion catchall spending bill to salvage victories on his promised US-Mexico border wall, a multibillion-dollar down payment on a Pentagon buildup, and perhaps a crackdown on cities that refuse to cooperate with immigration enforcement by federal authorities. Congress faces a midnight Friday deadline to avert a government shutdown.

But negotiations on the spending measure, a huge pile of leftover business from last year that includes the budgets of almost every federal agency, have hit a rough patch. Rank-and-file Republicans received few answers on a Saturday conference call by top House GOP leaders, who offered little detail and said deals remained elusive on both health care and the catchall spending measure, with no votes scheduled yet. It's looking like a one- or two-week temporary measure will be needed to prevent a shutdown and buy time for more talks. Negotiations have faltered because of disputes over the border wall and health law subsidies to help low-income people afford health insurance.

Trump's Capitol Hill allies had been tempering expectations that the president will win much in the budget talks. Democratic support will be needed to pass the spending measure and Republicans fear taking the blame if the government shuts down on their watch. "We have the leverage and they have the exposure," House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California told fellow Democrats on a conference call Thursday, according to a senior Democratic aide.

Pelosi wants the spending bill to give the cash-strapped government of Puerto Rico help with its Medicaid obligations, and Democrats are pressing for money for overseas famine relief, treatment for opioid abuse, and the extension of health benefits for 22,000 retired Appalachian coal miners and their families. An additional Democratic demand is for cost-sharing payments to insurance companies that help low-income people afford health policies under Obama's health law. The payments are a critical subsidy and the subject of a lawsuit by House Republicans. Trump has threatened to withhold the money to force Democrats to negotiate on health legislation. Trump's presidential victory makes it "completely reasonable to ask and to insist that some of his priorities are funded," White House budget director Mick Mulvaney said in an interview. "We are more than happy to talk to the Democrats about some of their priorities but we encourage them to recognize that they are a minority party."

Both the White House and Democrats have adopted hard-line positions on Trump's \$1 billion request for a down payment on construction of the border wall, a central plank of last year's campaign. Talk of forcing Mexico to pay for it has largely been abandoned. But in an interview with The Associated Press on Friday, Trump stopped short of demanding that money for the project be included in the must-pass spending bill.

Health care is on a separate track and facing trouble, too. The White House is pressing House Republicans to rally behind a revised bill so GOP leaders can schedule a vote this coming week that could let Trump fulfill a 100-days promise. A quick vote, let alone approval, seems unlikely. GOP leaders have shown no desire to revisit the issue until they're assured they have enough votes to succeed, a point House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., reiterated to lawmakers Saturday, according to participants in the call. — AP



LONDON: Britain's Prince William and his wife Kate, center right and Prince Harry, standing front left, encourage members of the team Heads Together before officially starting the 2017 London Marathon.

BRITAIN'S YOUNG ROYALS PROMOTE CONVERSATION ON MENTAL HEALTH

LONDON: Britain's Prince William, his wife, Kate, and his brother Prince Harry are spearheading a campaign to encourage people to talk openly about mental health issues. The young royals released 10 films Thursday as part of their Heads Together campaign to change the national conversation about mental health. The videos feature celebrities and members of the public talking about the breakthrough conversation that helped them come to terms with their mental health problems.

The former England cricket captain Andrew Flintoff and former Prime Minister Tony Blair's spin doctor, Alastair

Campbell, are among those featured speaking about their experiences with anxiety or depression.

The films can be viewed on the Heads Together website and YouTube page and are promoted on Facebook, Twitter and Google. The royals said in a statement they hope the stigma surrounding mental health problems can be lifted. They urged people to talk more openly about these issues. "When you realize that mental health problems affect your friends, neighbors, children and spouses, the walls of judgment and prejudice around these issues begin to fall," they said.

Marjorie Wallace chief executive of the mental health charity SANE, said public awareness campaigns are more powerful when the celebrities promoting them have personal experience with the issue being highlighted. "Princes William and Harry speak from their experience of loss and sorrow" she said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. The support of the young royals is important in raising awareness about mental health she added. William and Harry's mother, Princess Diana, was killed in a car crash in Paris in 1997, when the princes were 15 and 12 years old. — AP



LONDON: Britain's Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, second left, his wife Kate, and brother Prince Harry, center, cheer on and hand out water to runners during the London Marathon in London, yesterday. — AP photos



LONDON: Britain's Prince William with Prince Harry and Princess Kate, left to right, prepare to officially start the 2017 London Marathon.

ORBITAL CARGO SHIP ARRIVES AT INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

MIAMI: An unmanned Cygnus cargo ship carrying a load of supplies and science experiments arrived safely at the International Space Station yesterday, according to live images broadcast on NASA television.

Working from inside the orbiting lab, US astronaut Peggy Whitson and her French counterpart Thomas

Pesquet operated the station's external robotic arm to grab the approaching spaceship at 6:05 am (1005 GMT).

The Cygnus spacecraft is packed with 7,626 pounds of crew supplies, hardware and dozens of experiments aimed at studying fire, growing food and cancer therapies.

After the astronauts unpack the Cygnus, they will reload it with trash that will burn up along with the spacecraft upon re-entry into Earth's atmosphere on July 25.

This supply mission by Orbital ATK is the company's seventh as part of a \$1.9 billion contract with NASA. — AFP

LAST ADVENTURE AHEAD FOR NASA'S CASSINI SPACECRAFT AT SATURN

CAPE CANAVERAL: NASA's Cassini spacecraft faces one last perilous adventure around Saturn. Cassini swings past Saturn's mega moon Titan early Saturday for a gravity-assisted, orbit-tweaking nudge. "That last kiss goodbye," as project manager Earl Maize calls it, will push Cassini onto a path no spacecraft has gone before - into the gap between Saturn and its rings. It's treacherous territory. A particle from the rings - even as small as a speck of sand - could cripple Cassini, given its velocity.

Cassini will make its first pass through the relatively narrow gap Wednesday. Twenty-two crossings are planned, about one a week, until September, when Cassini goes in and never comes out, vaporizing in Saturn's atmosphere. Launched in 1997, Cassini reached Saturn in 2004 and has been exploring it from orbit ever since. Its European traveling companion, Huygens, landed on Titan in 2005. Cassini's fuel tank is practically empty, so with little left to lose, NASA has opted for a risky, but science-rich grand finale.

"What a spectacular end to a spectacular mission," said Jim Green, NASA's planetary science division director. "I feel a little sad in many ways that Cassini's discoveries will end. But I'm also quite optimistic that we're going to discover some new and really exciting science as we probe the region we've never probed before." There's no turning back once Cassini flies past Titan, Maize said.

The spacecraft on Wednesday will hurtle through the 1,200-mile-wide gap between

Saturn's atmosphere and its rings, at a breakneck 70,000-plus mph.

Easy shot

From a navigation standpoint, "this is an easy shot," Maize said. The operation will be run from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. The concern is whether computer models of Saturn's rings are accurate. On a few of the crossings, Cassini is "kind of flirting with the edge of where we think it's safe," he noted. For at least the first trip through the gap, Cassini's big dish antenna will face forward to shield the science instruments from any ring particles that might be lurking there.

A couple instruments will provide a quick rundown on the dust situation. Scientists anticipate lots of lightweight impacts, since the spacecraft will be going through extremely small material, more like smoke than distinct particles. Material from the innermost D ring - which is slowly extending into Saturn - should be diffuse enough "that we should be fine," Maize said.

If the models are wrong and Cassini is clobbered by BB-size material, it still will end up exactly where NASA is aiming for on Sept 15 - at Saturn. The space agency wants to keep the 22-foot-high, 13-foot-wide spacecraft away from Titan and its lakes of liquid methane and from the ice-encrusted moon Enceladus and its underground ocean and spouting geysers. It doesn't want to shower contaminating wreckage onto these worlds that might harbor life. —AP



WASHINGTON: The entrance to Western State Hospital is seen in Lakewood, Wash.

PROBLEMS REMAIN AT TROUBLED WASHINGTON HOSPITAL

'REVIEWED AND UPDATED PLANS FOR ALL PATIENTS WITH SPECIAL DIETS'

SEATTLE: Inspectors who visited Washington state's largest psychiatric hospital found that safety problems that thrust the facility into the national spotlight after the escape of two dangerous patients a year ago persist, including neglected patients. And a survey of Western State Hospital staff, conducted as part of federal oversight in December and January, found that administrators make decisions that "adversely affect patient safety" and there was a lack of trained or qualified staff, fear of retaliation from managers and too much focus on bureaucracy over staff safety.

The survey and the consultants' report were obtained by The Associated Press from someone close to the hospital who requested anonymity for fear of retaliation. State officials say they are making progress, including hiring additional staff members, as they try to turn around the facility since the patients escaped in April 2016. They say correcting problems that have developed over decades will take time to resolve. Dr. Joseph Wainer, a psychiatrist at the hospital, said the problems continue. He wrote a letter to the editor that recently appeared in the Tacoma, Washington, newspaper in which he alleged that management at the facility was traumatizing employees and patients.

"I see people who've been told that their perspective is ignorant, who have been ignored, shamed and intimidated into silence by an increasingly authoritarian leadership," he wrote. Wainer told AP in an email this week that the hospital placed him "under investigation." Wainer said the investigation was "quite frightening" and "I still don't know exactly what they're suggesting I did wrong." Wainer said investigations are often used to "discredit and to intimidate both the person investigated and those who might question contemplating the executive leadership."

Kelly Stowe, a spokeswoman for the health department, said the agency couldn't confirm or deny an investigation because they don't comment on personnel actions. "What I can tell you is that we don't restrict an employee's right to free speech," she said. A judge recently issued an injunction against the hospital that requires it to address a pattern of retaliation against staffers by the end of April, and also ordered a \$1.1 million



WASHINGTON: A security officer stands on steps at the entrance to Western State Hospital, in Lakewood, Wash.—AP photos

award for a case involving a former worker who faced retaliation when he reported patient neglect.

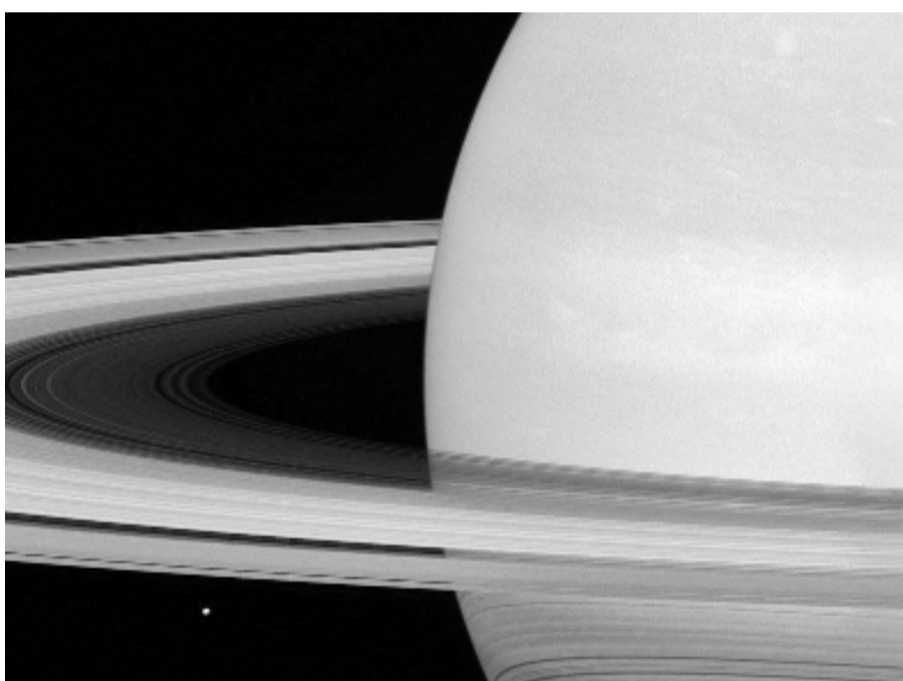
Treatment plan

A consulting firm hired by the state to identify areas for improvement visited the hospital in January and February and found many patients were left alone or ignored. After the 2016 escape, which led to a statewide manhunt, the hospital was hit with a series of health and safety violations that put it at risk of losing the millions it receives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Gov. Jay Inslee then fired the hospital's CEO and sought state funds to hire more staff. The state Department of Social and Health Services entered into an agreement with federal officials in June that required it to fix the problems by July 2017 or face losing its funding and accreditation. At a news conference last week outside the hospital, Inslee and new CEO Cheryl Strange said they've made significant improvements in patient safety and staffing levels. He said he hopes to get more money to continue the work of fixing the hospital.

Carla Reyes, assistant secretary for the DSHS, said the facility has used the recent surveys and

report to make improvements. "The scope of improvement necessary at WSH is the result of decades of underfunding and the changes needed take time to implement," Reyes said. "We have made great strides and continue making necessary changes every day."

Besides noting that they've hired additional staffers, the state did not cite the number of new violations they've had or the number of overtime hours worked by staff. The state health agency inspected the hospital in late March and reported a patient safety violation involving nursing staff and a patient's treatment plan. The patient's doctor had ordered a special diet of thick liquids for a patient who had trouble swallowing. The patient was to be in a nurse's line of sight during all meals, due to the danger of aspiration. That information was never entered into the patient's treatment plan, which put the patient at risk, officials said. The state said that based on these findings, it has "reviewed and updated plans for all patients with special diets." In the survey, staff said managers were concerned only with paperwork, rejected requests for changes that would improve safety and criticized staff or handled discipline problems in front of others. — AP



IN SPACE: This undated photo made available by NASA shows one of Saturn's moons, Mimas, dwarfed by the planet's rings.—AP

SCIENTISTS FIND FOOTPRINT OF ANCIENT REPTILE IN SPAIN

BARCELONA: Scientists have discovered a fossilized footprint from about 247 to 248 million years ago in the Pyrenees mountains in Spain which they believe was made by a previously unknown species of reptile. The footprint was found among a series of tracks made by the ancestors of crocodiles and dinosaurs, a group known as archosauromorphs, the researchers from the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the Catalan Institute of Palaeontology said in a statement. The scientists dubbed the new species of reptile *Prorotodactylus mesaxonichnus* in an article published in scientific journal Plos One.

They believe the species looked like a crocodile but with wider legs and was about a meter-and-a-half long. The researchers said the footprints suggest the tracks which

they found in the Pyrenees mountains in northeastern Spain on the border with France were made by animals that used all four limbs to walk and often also left marks with their tails. "The new Pyrenean footprints indicate that these animals used all four limbs to walk and often also left marks with their tails," said Catalan Institute of Palaeontology researcher Josep Fortuny.

The researchers believe the archosauromorphs dominated the river beds of the ancient Pyrenees. They said they are now looking for fossilized bones of the animals that made the tracks. At the time, the Earth was very different from today, with continents grouped into one supercontinent called Pangaea and the planet was recovering from a mass extinction that wiped out most animals. —AFP

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(From left) Mohammad Al-Husaini, Al-Anbaa Newspaper's representative, Takashi Ashiki, Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait, and Haifa Al-Muhanna, Representative of JACC attend the press conference. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



Nasser Al-Massaied, founder of the Kafa'a initiative.



Mohammad Al-Husaini, Al-Anbaa Newspaper's representative (left) receives a memento from Takashi Ashiki, Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait.

KAFA'A INITIATIVE PROMOTES ETHICAL CULTURE IN SOCIETY FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THE MIDDLE EAST



A general view of the audience.

By Faten Omar

'Kafa'a, a first-of-its-kind initiative in Kuwait, held a press conference on Saturday at Al-Shaheed Park to speak about its activities. "Kafa'a is about promoting an ethical culture within the society, shedding light on a new generation of thinkers and spreading their innovations throughout the world," said Nasser Al-Massaied, founder of Kafa'a.

He affirmed that Kafa'a aims to list the story of talented people and their creativity in all fields. Kafa'a, which means 'reward', is the first initiative of its kind in the Middle East working within the framework of human development by honoring genuine creators of moral superiority in their scientific and functional specialties or even within their communities.

Massaied revealed various activities that will be held during the year and the holy month of Ramadan, including a grand celebration will be held at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center. "We are working to establish a global commercial footprint for the country, and tell the story about the people of Kuwait and its creations and innovations in all fields, highlighting the distinguished

and readying a new generation of Kuwaiti intellectuals through the development of human and moral culture inside and outside Kuwait," he explained.

Ambassador of Japan Takashi Ashiki said that the embassy will cooperate with Kafa'a by providing the judging committee for the competitions. "We are willing to support the initiative for the better future of Kuwait. We believe that students should not only be educated, but also learn ethics, tell the truth and know about values to build the country," he said. "This kind of learning will develop their ideas towards a better life, relationship and work environment." Ashiki added.

At the end of the event, Kafa'a announced the participants of the 'Our Father Deserves' competition. The competition is about children recording videos explaining why their fathers are important. During the holy month of Ramadan, the initiative will hold three events. It will provide food for the poor and create social cohesion among members of the society to become acquainted with each other. Kafa'a aims to distinguish between joy and happiness - joy is temporary, but happiness is permanent, and this is what they want to achieve among the members of society.

SHERATON KUWAIT BIDS FAREWELL TO CHEF IBRAHIM NAJI



Over forty years of service and dedication to work, The family of Sheraton Kuwait and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait bid farewell to Chef Ibrahim Naji, who has demonstrated high competence and performance in the kitchen and highlighted his skills and hard work at the hotel after which he decided to retire.

Chef Ibrahim has worked throughout the years along with his culinary team to provide the highest quality of food that has long been known at the Sheraton Kuwait Hotel and has developed many fresh young people to reach advanced levels in this area. This has witnessed the expansion of the hotel and restaurants, which spread widely to reach the Avenues Mall to provide the finest food and methods of service, and was keen to be ahead of the team in most of the outside catering and many other events in the hotel.

Chef Ibrahim stated "I feel great pride

in my development of the Sheraton family and my work at this school, which brought entire generations to work today, especially the stage I started with Mr. Fahed Abushaar, the General Manager of the Sheraton Kuwait Hotel, and I thank my colleagues, administrators and employees, for this honor, which I would not have deserved had it not been for their solidarity and cooperation."

On this occasion, Fahed Abushaar, the General Manager of the Sheraton Kuwait praised the outstanding work of Chef Ibrahim and his dedication to work over many years of hard work and success. He added that it is unfortunate that we bid farewell to dear colleague Chef Ibrahim and we wish him all the good and happiness in what he promises. In his turn, Mounir Amer, The General Manager of Four points by Sheraton Kuwait also stated that Chef Ibrahim has lived through all these years to see a perfect image of a man who is generous and diligent in his work.



APPLIED BEHAVIOR CENTER OF KUWAIT CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL AUTISM DAY



The Applied Behavior Center (ABC) of Kuwait celebrated the beginning of Autism Awareness month by organizing an awareness event at Al-Shaheed Park recently. The event was sponsored by Artspace Studio and MMC catering, and included an array of fun and educational activities for adults and children, spreading awareness for autism and showing support for this cause.

Some of the activities at the event included an interactive autism time tunnel by ABC staff, demonstrating the evolution of autism treatment approaches throughout the years, leading to today's therapy gold standard, ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) therapy, as well as arts and crafts activities, a mural for children and adults to paint on, live music by Artspace studio team and many more fun

activities. "Many families have had their lives changed forever thanks to early intervention. But, sadly, the lack of awareness in our societies means that a lot of children with autism don't get the chance they deserve at getting better."

That is why the UN dedicated a day to Autism every year. On April 2nd, people around the world wear blue, and world monuments are lit up in blue, to raise awareness for Autism. "We are happy we represented Kuwait on this international day," stated Dr Abdullah Al Ali, Co-founder of Applied Behavior Center of Kuwait (ABC).

Autism Day is an internationally celebrated event and official UN holiday, where monuments light up blue, walkathons take place and many people and organizations come together to show their support and to spread awareness about autism.



Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh, as well as the initiative's officials pose for a group photo with the winning students.

—Photos by Joseph Shagra



Sheikh Fadia Al-Saad Al-Sabah (left) and Minister Hind Al-Sabeeh (right) honor the Information Ministry's assistant undersecretary Yousuf Mustafa.



Students from Oman celebrate their victory.

IBTIKAR AL-KUWAIT'S SHEIKHA FADIA AL-SAAD AL-SABAH'S STUDENTS COMPETITIONS CONCLUDE

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh stressed that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's sponsorship to Ibtikar Al-Kuwait competition reflects his endless support to creative students, as well as his commitment to encourage them to develop scientific research and creative thinking skills.

Speaking to reporters while attending the conclusion ceremony of Ibtikar Al-Kuwait's Sheikh Fadia Al-Saad Al-Sabah's annual competitions for students researches and projects, Sabeeh stressed that His Highness the Amir's support stems out of his vision to turn Kuwait into an international

financial and commercial hub. "This Kuwaiti initiative inspires its principles from His Highness the Amir, the Humanitarian Leader, in terms of spreading science and culture," she underlined.

Meanwhile, Chairperson of Al-Saad Charity for Knowledge and Scientific Research Sheikh Fadia Al-Saad Al-Sabah said that the charity

was established in 2009 with the aim of encouraging scientific talents and creating a new generation capable of developing Kuwait in various fields. She added that the charity has signed agreements with the Ministry of Education, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, and the UNESCO with the aim of enhancing partner-

ships and achieving sustainable development through setting a quota for women contribution in various fields.

In the meantime, the initiative's manager Dr Fatima Al-Hashim said that the project started with kindergarten students then expanded to include all educational stages, including high school and college.



Kuwaiti students are honored.



Sheikh Fadia Al-Saad Al-Sabah poses with some of the winning students.



Chairperson of Al-Saad Charity for Knowledge and Scientific Research Sheikh Fadia Al-Saad Al-Sabah delivers her speech.



Students pose with their awards.



Students from Saudi Arabia.



The initiative's manager Dr Fatima Al-Hashim speaks during the event.



Students from Kuwait.



Students from Bahrain.



Students from Oman.

CROSSWORD 1588

Crossword grid with numbered squares for clues.

ACROSS

- 1. An accountant certified by the state.
4. Discrimination against people who are overweight.
11. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.

DOWN

- 1. More or less flat-topped cluster of flowers in which the central or terminal flower opens first.
2. The short weak cry of a young bird.

- 5. The eleventh month of the civil year.
6. A technician who is highly proficient and enthusiastic about some technical field (especially computing).
7. The form of RNA that attaches the correct amino acid to the protein chain that is being synthesized at the ribosome of the cell (according to directions coded in the mRNA).

Yesterday's Solution

Solved crossword grid with words filled in.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You are able to find the heart of an interesting matter with simple questions. You and others are able to know what future steps are needed to find a solution.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your morning may be spent in preparing for the workweek ahead. As dull as this may sound it is something that pleases you because with preparation, you won't have to run errands or cook all week.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

An intuitive urge to take care of yourself at many levels is emphasized now. Diet, exercise and work somehow mean more. You will want to feel good about yourself and have the energy to do the things you want to do.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your energy is focused to succeed in matters pertaining to the family or home. Your pride is strong and you are always ready to master any problem.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

If channeled properly, your energy is boundless and you could move mountains. You suggest playtime between family members by encouraging art projects, whether it be painting a wall or painting a picture.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Someone has hidden motives today but you are able to determine the truth and find answers. If you unveil a truth, be careful of any judgment.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This morning you may spend a bit of time catching up on your reading and weeding through the old catalogs. This is not the best time to shop, choose colors, etc.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Spiritual guidance is easy to find this morning and you enjoy some quiet time in preparation for your day. Perhaps visiting with relatives that live out of town has been long overdue.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

This Sunday you could slow down a little and enjoy the day. Pay attention to the way the light hits the house or the yard as it comes through the windows.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself chatting with everyone you see today: neighbors, friends and co-worker friends as well. You may have some new insight or understanding and cannot wait to tell everyone you know.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

If communication tends to leave a lot to the imagination, you may be the one to set things straight. This may mean a new phone. Of course, it could also mean you have discovered who you want to make the main character in a book you are writing.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may feel that you have spent entirely too much time with your energies on one path or one subject. In a religious setting you are able to let go of whatever occupies your mind; relax. Music, lights and friendly faces promote a relaxation you had almost forgotten you regularly enjoyed one time.

Wordsearch Puzzle

World Currencies

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

Word search grid containing world currencies and a hidden message.

- AFGHANI ARJAVRY BAHT BALBOA BIRR BOLIVAR BOLIVIANO COLON DALASI DENAR DINAR DIRHAM DOLLAR DRAM ESCUDO EURO FORINT FRANC GOLD CORDOBA GOURDE GUARANI GUILDER HRVVNIA KINA KORUNA KRONA KRONE KUHA KIWACHA KWANZA KYAT LEMPIRA LEONE LLANGENI LIRA LITAS LOTI MANAT METICAL NAIRA NAKFA NEW CEDI NEW DONG NEW KIP RUPEE NGULTRUM OUGUYA PATACA PESO POUND PULA QUETZAL REAL RAND RIAL VATU WON YUAN RENMINBI ZLOTY RUPIAH SHILLING SOM SUCRE SYLI TAKA TALA TENGE TOLAR WON YUAN RENMINBI ZLOTY

Yesterday's Solution

Winter

Winter-themed word search grid with words like SNOWFLAKE, SKIS, and ICEBERG.

- BLACK ICE BLIZZARD BOOTS CARNIVAL CHRISTMAS CHOLD EGG NOG FIREPLACE FIREWOOD FOG FREEZE FROST GLOVES HAIL HEADBAND HIBERNATION HOCKEY HOLIDAYS ICE FISHING ICIICLES KNIT CAP LONG UNDERWEAR MITTENS FREEZE OLYMPICS PARKA SCARF SEASON SKATES SKI DOO SKI PANTS SKIING SLED SOLTICE SOUP SLEET SLIPPERY SNOW CASTLE SNOW PLOW SNOW SHOVEL SNOW TIRES SNOWBALL SNOWFLAKE SNOWMAN SNOWSHOES SOLSTICE SOUP STEW STORM SWEATSHIRT TOBAGGAN VACATION WIND CHILL WOOL SOCKS

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

Daily SuDoku

Daily Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 1-9.

Yesterday's Solution

Solved Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers filled in.



PARAMORE ALMOST SPLIT

Hayley Williams wanted to disband Paramore two years ago. The 28-year-old singer admits in-fighting including the public criticisms and accusations of being controlling she faced on the departures of guitarist Josh Farro, her ex-boyfriend, and his brother, drummer Zac - who has since rejoined - in 2010 and bassist Jeremy Davis leaving two years ago and launching a lawsuit against her and guitarist Taylor York left her feeling drained and seeking a fresh start. She admitted: "Two years ago I asked Taylor if we could start a new band. I was so sick of this thing. I said we should just try something new, give it a new name." Taylor added: "I've wanted to quit this band so many times. Going through all this conflict and drama over the years ... I was just like, 'Man, I feel like we can keep going, but this is not worth it if we don't want to be here.'" And the pair are unsure as to

why they have continued. Hayley told the Guardian newspaper: "Honestly, I don't know. We, for some reason, kept showing up and kept writing and, little by little, the songs got better and we got a little more inspired to do it." When Jeremy quit and sued for unpaid royalties, arguing the trio had agreed to share authorship of all the tracks on their 2014 self-titled album, but he had just one credit, Taylor admitted he was too "numb" to care. He said: "I was just numb. It was just another drama and another example of being in a band and it being really difficult, and feeling bad about that. We have the coolest job ever but why does it have to be so hard?" And while they are not allowed to address his departure directly, Hayley maintains the lawsuit is "bulls**t". She said: "What I will say is that it's such bulls**t that we're in a lawsuit. I wasn't OK for a while; maybe I'm still not."



Bella Hadid wasn't allowed to buy anything designer until she was 18

Bella Hadid wasn't allowed to buy any designer garments until she was 18. The 20-year-old supermodel has revealed her mother Yolanda encouraged her and her older sister Gigi, 21, to "obsess" over shoes, but the 53-year-old parent forbid her daughters from splashing out on luxury items until they reached the milestone and could afford to purchase the expensive product themselves. Speaking in a Facebook Live Q&A with Grazia magazine, the brunette beauty said: "My mum started us with obsessing [over shoes], she always told us when we were 18 we couldn't have anything designer until we were 18 and could afford it by ourselves. So I bought my first pair of Louboutins when I was 18, when I could afford it, and the same with my sister." But the catwalk icon - who has graced the catwalk for prestigious fashion brands including Balmain, Fendi and Victoria's Secret - has admitted the red-soled stilet-

tos are utterly ruined now because she has worn them to death. She explained: "Now, if you saw those Louboutins you would laugh at me I think I should frame them. I wore them to every single fitting, every single casting since I was 17. They are dead. No they are past tired. They don't even know where they live any more, they are scared for their life." But Bella now has three shoe wardrobes to select from as she swaps footwear with her sibling, who has "the coolest shoes" and her mum, although "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills" star doesn't like it when her brood raids her wardrobe and don't return her possessions. Bella continued: "She [Gigi] has the coolest shoes. "Now we switch shoes, so if she has a pair of shoes why do I need to buy them? We have three closets of shoes pretty much, which is amazing. My mum doesn't let us borrow her shoes anymore because we steal them and forget to give them back." — Bang Showbiz

Myystery Jets never want their albums to sound similar. The 'Young Love' hitmakers are working on the follow-up to 2016's 'Curve of the Earth' but the record will be much more "grounded" than that LP was. Songwriter Henry Harrison said: "We've always had a policy of writing album from a different place so that it never sounds similar. 'Curve of the Earth' had a massive step to it and we wouldn't go there again. "This new album is very much more grounded and with this world getting much more fractious and divided so I think we're going more into that arena." And singer and co-writer Blaine Harrison, who is Henry's son, feels the band have a "duty" to write about the current political situation. He told BANG Showbiz: "I've got to the point where now as a songwriter, I'm much more fascinated with what's going on outside my window, on a larger stage, music should have the capacity to make you think as well as feel and I think that sometimes songwriters shy away from what's happening in the news. "Not to say we are going to write a politically-orientated record but actually we are living in a very interesting time and I think it's not the time to shy away from that as a songwriter. "I think it's our duty." Henry added: "Blaine has been living near Trafalgar Square and has virtually been going every march, every weekend and saying 'Dad, this is it, this is what we're writing about'. Not just the marches but the actual conflicts of belief and perspective which people are going through but very non-political, it's the feelings that lie behind all that activity that we are actually trying to get into. "We are well into it and we're feeling very good about it."

Mystery Jets make different music



GEORGE MICHAEL TRIBUTE SHOW IN DOUBT

Plans for a George Michael tribute concert have been thrown into doubt because his family haven't approved the show. The late singer's friend, Dame Esther Rantzen, had hoped to organize a musical performance in honor of the 'Careless Whisper' hitmaker - who was found dead on Christmas Day last year - in order to raise money for charity, and will meet with his loved ones later this week in order to ask for the go-ahead. However, insiders think there is only a "50/50" chance they will say yes. A source told the Sunday Mirror newspaper: "The most important thing about organizing this is that the family approve of everything. "Esther and the organizers didn't want to jump the gun and start making arrangements before they had spoken with them. "At the moment there is a big possibility it won't happen because the family aren't on board. The meeting will either make or break plans." Esther - who founded Childline, a charity



George previously gave £2 million to from royalties from his single 'Jesus To A Child' - had hoped to stage the concert at London's Royal Albert Hall in October. She previously said: "It is still on the cards and we are still hoping it will happen, but we haven't approached his family yet - we don't want to be insensitive and we have been waiting for the right time. "He was so extraordinary in his generosity to Childline - he absolutely got our vision - and we would love to be able to pay tribute to him in our 30th year. "The idea we have at the moment is for the group of charities he supported to join together for the concert. That's our hope. "It would be a tremendous way of fundraising in his memory." A spokesperson for George confirmed there have been approaches about a possible tribute but insisted nothing has yet been given the go-ahead. They said: "We have been approached but nothing's been decided."



Vin Diesel's secret script

Vin Diesel was given a "secret script" for 'Guardians of the Galaxy'. The 49-year-old actor admits it was a "challenge" to voice Groot - who had a vocabulary of just three words - but he was given a lot of pointers in how to express the emotion the tree-like alien was trying to say. He said: "Groot is - always challenging to play. As an audience what you hear is, 'I am Groot'; but he is expressing himself and you have to try and convey what he intends to say and his emotions in those three words. "I actually had a secret script where I was told what Groot was trying to say. That made him a lot of fun to voice." And Vin was also proud to say his line in 16 different languages for the various international versions of the film. He told the Daily Star on Sunday newspaper: "Korean was interesting. "It was cool though because in some countries people have only heard my characters with voice actors. It was good to know people would finally hear me." Though Groot sacrificed himself at the end of the 2014 movie, Vin is back again in 'Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2' voicing Baby Groot, and thinks the two characters are very different. He said: "Groot in the first movie was a college-level Groot."

Schumer had chronic bronchitis filming 'Snatched'

Amy Schumer developed chronic bronchitis while shooting 'Snatched'. The 35-year-old actress was hospitalized with the potentially-dangerous lung infection while filming for the forthcoming comedy with Goldie Hawn and has admitted, although she had to jump straight back onto set after she was discharged, she thoroughly enjoyed her time - despite being covered in chicken poop - with the blonde beauty. Speaking to Empire magazine, she said: "At one point during the shoot, I was hospitalized for chronic bronchitis, and as soon as I was discharged we were doing night shoots from around 6pm until 6am. I'd find myself on the back of a truck full of pooping chickens and think: 'Is this the glamorous dream?' But Goldie and I laughed really hard every day. It's a real proper action movie. It's crazy." The blonde beauty portrays Emily Middleton in the forthcoming blockbuster, which will drop in cinemas at the beginning of next month, alongside Goldie's Linda Middleton and has admitted, although the plot was simple, she was concerned she'd offend. She explained: "The plot is simple: I was supposed to go on



vacation to South America with my boyfriend and, after he breaks up with me, I cannot get anyone else in the world to go with me. I beg my mum to go and she's afraid of everything and then the kidnap happens. I'm aware that it's such a sensitive time with other cultures and I don't want people to think I'm stereotyping South Americans, saying they're all kidnapers. It's more about highlighting my ignorance, as as ugly American who goes somewhere without speaking the language at all. It's ultimately making fun of American entitlement."

Aled Jones wants mainstream classical stars



Aled Jones thinks more classical artists should compete on TV talent shows. The 46-year-old singer believes programs such as 'Britain's Got Talent' have done a great job of promoting singers and groups that otherwise wouldn't get much mainstream exposure. Asked if more classical artists should compete on TV, he said "Why not - it's up to them to enter I suppose. "It's a great opportunity for them and it has worked for Susan Boyle and Collabro. I'm very much for giving classical music to the masses - if you want to do it get up and do it." Aled was very proud to be the best selling classical artist of 2016, not least because his 'One Voice' LP outsold the likes of Zayn Malik. He told BANG Showbiz: "This is album 31 or 32 and I was number one in the classic chart and pop chart. "I was told that one week I was outselling Zayn Malik, which is great if it's true! "The album also outsold Adele in physical copies but not downloads. The hardworking 'Songs of Praise' host is very busy with his music career and as well as going out on the road, he'll be releasing another new album later this year. He said: "I have an album coming out in the end of the year, but I'm not really sure what will be on the album yet. "I've just come back from Australia, I was number one there. I am touring in May then going back to Australia for another tour there. "And I worked with Dame Vera Lynn on her latest album."

Dwayne Johnson eyed for Fast and Furious spin-off

Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson is wanted for a 'Fast and Furious' spin-off. The 44-year-old actor has been a fan favorite since his character Luke Hobbs joined the franchise in 'Fast Five', and Universal Pictures are now hoping to make a movie about him, which would also feature Jason Statham's Decker Shaw and series newcomer Charlize Theron's Cipher, who made her debut in the new 'Fate of the Furious' film. According to Variety, Chris Morgan will remain attached to his characters and will pen the script, though the idea is still in preliminary stages and nothing has been written as yet. The three cast members have also not signed any contracts for the project. The spin-off has reportedly been in the work since as far back as 'Fast Five'

because of Luke's instant popularity, though there were no plans on how to move it forward until Jason joined the franchise for the seventh installment and had instant chemistry with Dwayne. And Charlize is a late addition to the mooted project, with bosses having seen how well her character has been received. The spin-off is expected to revolve around Luke and Decker teaming up to go after Cipher. The news comes after it was recently reported Dwayne is expected to appear in the ninth 'Fast and Furious' film, despite claims he and his co-star Vin Diesel, who portrays Dominic Toretto in the films, clashed on set. Both both stars are believed to be "1000 per cent" up for a follow-up in the future. Last year, Dwayne slammed his "male co-stars" on the franchise for not act-



ing like "true professionals", and it is believed the post was directed to 49-year-old Vin. His Instagram comment read: "This is my final week of shooting #FastAndFurious8. There's no other franchise that gets my blood boiling more than this one. An incredible hard working crew. UNIVERSAL has been great partners as well. My female co-stars are always amazing and I love 'em. "My male co-stars however are a different story. Some conduct themselves as stand up men and true professionals, while others don't. The ones that don't are too chicken s**t to do anything about it anyway. Candy asses. When you watch this movie next April and it seems like I'm not acting in some of these scenes and my blood is legit boiling - you're right. (sic)."



A general view of the Bhandi Bazaar area of Mumbai that is being redeveloped under the Cluster Development Act 2009 by the Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust. —AFP photos



A dilapidated building in the Bhandi Bazaar area of Mumbai that is being redeveloped under the Cluster Development Act 2009 by the Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust.

Religion, free homes spur Mumbai's Bhandi Bazaar revamp

Farida Kachwala is vacating her family's cramped home of eighty years, one of thousands receiving modern apartments through a project that hopes to transform Mumbai's historic Bhandi Bazaar from a dilapidated ghetto into a slick Singapore-like enclave. Six hundred million dollars is being spent to demolish hundreds of rundown low-rise buildings in the dirty colonial-era market and replace them with shiny skyscrapers that will house 20,000 Dawoodi Bohras, a sect of Shia Muslims, who have made the area their home for decades.

"We have many problems here. It's smelly because there's sewage and garbage everywhere and the wooden stairs are really steep and dangerous. I'm so happy that we're moving," says Kachwala. The rehousing project aims to replace the decrepit structures and maze-like narrow streets, where hawkers sell everything from sunglasses to sweets as goats meander docilely, with gleaming towers and polished shopping arcades. It is also hoped the scheme will help cleanse the neighborhood of its underworld image. Dawood Ibrahim, who carried out the 1993 Bombay bomb blasts, lived in Bhandi Bazaar during the 1980s and Bollywood films often portray the area as a gangster hangout. In India it is common for tenants to stall development projects by refusing to move, or for homeowners to hold out for more cash, but this project is unique in that it is being driven

by residents' faith as much as their desire for 21st century amenities. Bohras, whose women wear colourful ridas akin to hijabs while men sport gold and white caps, are a Shia Islamic sect who follow a religious leader they call his holiness. They originally arrived in western India from Yemen in the 11th century.

Bohras often seek guidance from his holiness on many matters ranging from marriage to naming a child. The redevelopment was the brainchild of late leader Syedna Burhanuddin, who died aged 101 in 2014, a key reason why residents support it.

Spiritual leader

"Our families took his holiness Syedna's advice and supported the project so we hope it will be good for everyone involved," says Juzer Morbiwala at a transit home where he is being housed until his new apartment is ready. Some 250 decrepit three and four-storey buildings known as chawls—originally built for single male laborers in the 1800s and where residents often share toilets—are being razed and replaced with 17 high-rise towers across 16.5 acres. Three thousand two hundred families will receive new homes free of charge. Each will be a minimum of 350 square feet in size with private bathrooms and separate sleeping and living spaces.

It will be a significant improvement on the tiny, dark one-room home Kachwala shares



A Bohra woman walking past a roadside shop selling photographs of former Dawoodi Bohra community spiritual leader Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin in the Bhandi Bazaar area that is being redeveloped under the Cluster Development Act 2009 by the Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust in Mumbai.

with her husband, daughter and father-in-law, who moved in as a ten-year-old in the 1930s. "I'm attached to this place because I've lived here almost my whole life but our children will have a better environment to live and grow in the new home," says Kachwala, 45. The demolition and construction is taking place in nine phases. The first started around three years ago

and the entire project is expected to be completed by 2025. The only buildings not being torn down are the area's mosques.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is taking a keen interest, hoping that the cluster redevelopment method can become a model for urban renewal across India. It is budgeted to cost 40 billion rupees (\$600 million) and a trust

attached to the Bohra community's governing body is providing the funding through donations. Money will also be raised by selling off four of the new towers that could stretch 60 storeys into the sky.

Conservationists' lament

Abbas Master, Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust CEO, says the trust had acquired almost 90 percent of properties but that a small fraction of residents were refusing to negotiate. "To uproot people and to bring them back is a challenge. It happens in places like China but in a democratic world I think this is the first example," he told AFP. Some 1,250 businesses will move from ramshackle shops and stalls down dingy lanes into shopping arcades above street level which will be connected by pedestrian bridges. Rapid development has altered Mumbai's skyline over the past two decades and conservation architects lament the loss of another historic district and the personality attached to it.

"The entire fabric is going to get erased, the history, the artefacts. It's going to have an impact on the social character," architect Vikram Pawar told AFP, adding that the skyscrapers will be out of keeping with neighboring areas. But that doesn't seem to concern the majority of residents, including Shirin Electricwala. "It will change the way we live. We'll have more space, hygiene and comfort," she told AFP. — AFP

Lamar scores biggest US album release of year

Kendrick Lamar has pulled off the biggest US album debut this year with "DAMN," an introspective work of hip-hop storytelling that features Rihanna and U2. "DAMN" sold 603,000 copies or the equivalent in streaming and downloads in the week since its April 14 release, tracking service Nielsen Music said late Saturday. Entering at number one on the benchmark Billboard chart, "DAMN" sold more in a single week than any other album so far this year. "DAMN" follows Lamar's 2015 album "To Pimp a Butterfly," which has quickly been hailed as a hip-hop classic with its innovative infusion of jazz and its lyricism that explored the state of black America.

While "DAMN" has similarly won wide praise, it brings a more classic rap style, even with a pop-oriented collaboration with Rihanna and a guitar rock fusion with U2. "DAMN" is a highly personal work and culminates with a track in which Lamar recalls his father being shot while working at a Kentucky Fried Chicken branch in the Los Angeles area. While "DAMN" also has political references, Lamar said in an



Kendrick Lamar

interview aired Friday that he did not want to focus too much on President Donald Trump.

"I wanted more self-evaluation and discipline because of what's going on now," he told Apple Music's Beats 1 radio. "We're not focusing on him," he said of Trump. "What's going on now—we're focusing on self." Lamar's track "Alright" from "To Pimp a Butterfly" became an unofficial anthem of the Black Lives Matter movement. The rapper's admirers include then president Barack Obama, who invited Lamar to the White House. Lamar topped the "More Life" collection by Drake—the Toronto rapper known more for crowd-pulling dance tracks than social commentary—which had earlier held the crown for biggest US album release of 2017. But "DAMN" remains well below Drake's last full-fledged album "Views," which sold more than one million copies in its first week after its release a year ago. The comparative sales figures are sure to be scrutinized as Lamar and Drake have made a series of critical, if indirect, comments about each other. — AFP

Filmmakers see hope - and paralysis - 25 years after LA riots

Late in the afternoon of April 29, 1992, the looting began in south Los Angeles, quickly escalating as motorists were dragged from their cars and vehicles set alight. In the downtown area a few miles away, an angry crowd began to build at the city police headquarters and, as day turned to night, protesters attacked uniformed officers and blocked traffic. The fuse had been lit by the acquittal earlier in the day of four white police officers filmed beating black motorist Rodney King with wooden batons. For six days, America's second city was engulfed in fireball of rage in front of the world's news cameras as decades of pent-up anger exploded into some of the worst riots in US history. More than 50 people died and 2,000 were wounded.

The not-guilty verdict for use of excessive force was a breaking point in relations between the city's African American communities and the Los Angeles Police Department, opening fissures which for many have never healed. As LA was ripped apart by crowds who looted businesses, destroyed hundreds of buildings, causing around

\$1 billion damage, and attacked one another, King made a personal plea for peace. "People, I just want to say, you know, can we all get along? Can we get along?" he asked on the third day of rioting.

Police brutality

A documentary, "Let It Fall," which opened theatrically in Los Angeles and New York on Friday, is among a number of films timed to mark the 25th anniversary of the riots. Written and directed by John Ridley, who won an Oscar for his screenplay of "12 Years a Slave" (2013), it offers first-hand testimony from black, white, Asian, and Hispanic Angelenos of all classes caught up in the violence. If a suspect resisted, "you beat him," retired detective Robert Simpach tells Ridley, remembering the interrogation techniques used by the LAPD in the early 1990s. "If he doesn't do what you told him, then incapacitate him by breaking a bone or a joint," he adds. Simpach, who was present as King was beaten but was not one of the four officers involved, says his colleagues' behavior was "100 percent

LAPD policy." Ridley, who moved to LA a year before the riots, shows the violence as the almost inevitable culmination of a decade of heightening racial tensions, gang wars, drug crime and police brutality. "With a white man, their attitude is enforcing the law. With a black man, it's about control: 'Put your hands on the steering wheel, don't move until I tell you,'" retired fireman Donald Jones says in the two-hour film, due to air on ABC on April 28. Other documentaries looking at the LA riots include "LA Burning," co-produced for the A&E channel with "Boyz n the Hood" director John Singleton, and Showtime's "Burn Motherfucker Burn," both of which recently had their premieres and are available through video on demand.

'Still victimized'

On the narrative front, "Kings," a romance starring Daniel Craig and Halle Berry which is due for release later in the year, is set amid the civil unrest while "Gook," by Justin Chon, focuses on tensions between African Americans and Korean traders. After several lawsuits, King ended up with \$3.8 million in damages from the Los Angeles authorities. But he was dogged by depression and nightmares, and in 2012 was found dead in a swimming pool after taking a cocktail of alcohol and drugs. He was 47.

"Twenty-five years ago footage like the Rodney King beating was very rare. Now unfortunately people see these incidents happen with regularity," says Ridley. One of the main reasons is the ubiquity of cellphones with video cameras, which didn't exist then, rather than the situation worsening. Indeed, Ridley acknowledges that there have been "positive changes" in the LAPD since the riots. But these films serve as a reminder that, a quarter century after the riots, relations between law enforcement officers and ethnic minorities, the militarization of police and the use of force remain hugely divisive issues across the United States.

"LA Burning" ends on images of the 2014-2015 Ferguson riots which followed the death of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager killed by white policemen, and unrest in Baltimore after the 2015 death in police custody of 25-year-old Freddie Gray. "There are still issues. They're complicated, they're beyond race," Ridley told AFP. "You look at Baltimore. You see people of color represented in uniform and still people being victimized. These are complicated issues." — AFP



Actress/Writer/Producer Emily Taaffe, from left, Producer Rebecca Cronshey and Georgia Oakley attend a screening of "Little Bird" at Regal Battery Park Stadium 11 during the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival on Saturday, April 22, 2017 in New York. —AP

'Heart of Gold' Splash launches the perfume line

Splash, the home grown fast fashion retailer, has announced the launch of its Perfume & Bath and Body range titled 'Heart of Gold'. Including three options for both men and women, the fragrance has been created in Paris. Priced starting at KD 9 for EDP and KD 4.5 for shimmering Bath & Body range across Splash stores. Oud collection for Men. Three unique interpretations of this exquisite smoky sensual ingredient resulting in fragrances that can only be described as LIQ-UID GOLD



Pure OUD for men

This original interpretation of OUD is enrobed with exotic spices, peppercorns and nutmeg with classic woods of oak moss and patchouli to bring out its deep sensual personality.

Black OUD for men

This sensual interpretation of OUD is blended with the richest amber & leather accords wrapped around pure jasmine and warm incense, the exquisite scent of attraction.

White OUD for men

This fresh interpretation of OUD combines energizing bergamot with the rich sensual notes of patchouli and spicy coriander seeds for an enticing laid-back modern classic.

Women

Pure Gold for women

THE Oud theme is introduced in the upper notes by adding the precious saffron and it is placed together with fresh aroma of mandarin. Bright white flowers are paired with a hint of leather, which is wrapped in soft tones of vanilla and amber.



Rose Gold for women

This fragrance opens with juicy notes of pear, raspberry and saffron. The heart captures essence of Bulgarian rose and oranges blossom, followed by the oriental base of Oud, patchouli, amber and musk.

White Gold for women

This elegant fragrance combines three agreement the nectar of cassia, modern chypre blond oud and musk, the fragrance remains on the skin and envelops the sense.

'Heart of Gold' is available across all Splash stores in Centrepoint and at Splash -The Avenues, Phase II and at Salam Mall- Salmiya.



A view of the former Lorraine Motel balcony where Martin Luther King Jr was shot in 1968 in Memphis, Tenn. — AP photos



Photo show displays of records at the Stax Museum of American Soul Music in Memphis, Tenn.

Memphis

1 city,
2 days,
4 attractions



Photo show displays of records at the Stax Museum of American Soul Music in Memphis, Tenn.



Photo shows the Stax Museum of American Soul Music in Memphis, Tenn.



Photo shows the Meditation Garden at Graceland in Memphis, Tenn, where Elvis Presley is buried along with his parents, grandmother and a memorial gravestone for his stillborn twin brother.

My ultimate destination was Mississippi to explore blues history. But to get there, I flew in and out of Memphis, Tennessee, an hour's drive from the Delta. With one day in Memphis on either end of my itinerary, I decided to visit four attractions there that would add to the music and civil rights themes of the Mississippi trip.

Those four Memphis stops, plus an evening listening to music on Beale Street, were perfect bookends for my Mississippi sojourn. But these attractions also make an easy and interesting two-day itinerary whether you use Memphis as a gateway for other parts of the South, or as a destination unto itself.

Stax museum of American soul music

One of the first things you see at the Stax Museum of American Soul Music is an exhibit portraying a Mississippi country church. That's because soul, like so many genres of pop music, has roots in the Delta.

The Stax recording studio was founded by a white sister and brother, Estelle Axton and Jim Stewart. But in an unusual arrangement for the era, Stax was also a place where whites and

blacks worked together. And Stax's roster of black stars, including Otis Redding, Isaac Hayes and the Staple Singers, proved enormously popular with both black and white audiences, first in Europe and ultimately at home.

Stax eventually went bankrupt but the museum was built on the original site and does a terrific job showcasing everything from costumes to cars to walls of hit records. Videos of TV and concert performances will have you dancing your way through the exhibits.

SUN STUDIO

Sun Studio calls itself the "birthplace" of rock 'n' roll, and as every music fan knows, there's a straight line from the blues to rock. Among the Delta natives who recorded at Sun Records were B.B. King, Howlin' Wolf and Ike Turner. Turner played keyboards on what some regard as the first rock single, the Delta Cats' "Rocket 88," released by Sun in 1951. But it was an 18-year-old who wandered into the studio in 1953 named Elvis Presley who took Sun's fortunes big-time. Presley recorded two dozen songs with Sun before switching to a national label to manage his rocketing career. An iconic photo displayed at the studio, dubbed the

"Million Dollar Quartet," shows Presley back at Sun in 1956, sitting at a piano with Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash.

Lively guided tours of Sun Studio walk visitors through its hit parade with music clips and engaging anecdotes - including the tale of Sun founder Sam Phillips' improvised repair of a busted amp. He shoved a wad of paper inside and the fuzzy distortion became part of the label's trademark sound. You'll stand in the footsteps not only of the label's early stars but also more recent visitors like rock giants U2.

National Civil Rights Museum

The story of the blues can't be told without looking at black history, from musical traditions brought here by enslaved Africans, to the music shared by black laborers eking out a living on Delta cotton plantations in the early 20th century. One place to put that history in context is the National Civil Rights Museum, located in the former Lorraine Motel where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr was assassinated. The museum has extensive exhibits on slavery, segregation and the protests that powered the civil rights movement. Allow several hours to take in the engrossing dis-



File photo shows the cafe counter at Sun Studio in Memphis, Tenn, with a photo of the 'Million Dollar Quartet' on the wall.

plays, which include video footage of marches, riots and news reports from the era, along with engaging interactive exhibits that offer interviews with ordinary people reflecting on their personal experiences.

King was in Memphis to support striking garbage workers when he was shot while standing on a hotel balcony. On your way in, you see the balcony from outside, but at the tour's end, you'll see the spot where he was murdered from

inside the hotel. It's a stunning, heart-stopping vantage point that brings you face to face with that watershed moment. April 4, 2018, will mark 50 years since that day.

Graceland

No trip to Memphis is complete without visiting Graceland, the mansion Elvis Presley bought in 1957 and lived in until his death 20 years later. The house - which feels remarkably small by 21st century standards - is a time capsule, complete with green shag rugs and carved animals in the famous Jungle Room. Guests are shuttled through by the hundreds in a remarkably efficient fashion, with each visitor issued an iPad and headphones so you can get information about what you're seeing at your own pace. The King is buried in the onsite Meditation Garden, along with his parents and grandmother. There's also a memorial gravestone for his stillborn twin brother.

But visiting the house is only half the fun. A \$45 million complex opened at Graceland in March, adding displays that look at his career from his start at Sun Records, to his work in Hollywood, to his Vegas jumpsuit era. One area showcases his cars, another looks at his influence on other entertainers. — AP



flydubai brings Holidays Division

to the Arabian Travel Market

Dubai-based airline, flydubai, brings its new Holidays Division, Holidays by flydubai, to the Arabian Travel Market to showcase the offering to travel trade professionals. Holidays by flydubai will become the tour operating arm of the airline and aims to simplify travel by providing customers with the choice to customise packages including flights, hotels and other ancillary services such as airport transfers, sightseeing packages, car rental and more.

"Holidays by flydubai will represent a new milestone in flydubai's journey as we enter a more mature phase of our operation," said Hamad Obaidalla, Chief Commercial Officer at flydubai. "We continue to challenge the conventions of travel in the region and exceed our customers' expectations. Holidays by flydubai will enhance the overall travel experience as we give customers the freedom to design their own holiday in one convenient place."

As part of the offering, a new online portal for Holidays by flydubai, will allow customers to browse, book and pay for flights, accommodation and services all within a single booking process. The portal will also allow travel agents, distributors and flydubai-authorised



travel shops to design and book tailor-made packages. Around the clock sales support will be another feature available to customers.

Nelson D'souza, Vice President - Holidays, said: "By combining internally sourced wholesale hotel rates and rates provided by third parties along with our competitive airfares, Holidays by flydubai will aim to provide affordable packages making travel more accessible to more people."

"We will work closely with travel trade experts to ensure the customer interface and the functionality of this portal is user-friendly, enjoyable and reliable," added D'souza.

Holidays by flydubai will offer holiday packages around the flydubai network including popular destinations such as: Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Egypt, Georgia, India, Maldives, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey and the UAE.

Passengers will be able to earn OPEN reward points from their Holidays by flydubai bookings.

flydubai operates to 93 destinations in 44 countries with flights to Batumi in Georgia, Qabala in Azerbaijan and Tivat in Montenegro starting from June to September 2017.

For blues fans, Mississippi Delta has many stories to tell

Photo shows the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola, Miss. — AP photos



The Mississippi Delta has no shortage of museums, historic attractions and clubs devoted to the blues. But visitors will find the region has many other stories to tell, from the cotton plantations where African-American families worked and lived in desperate poverty to culinary traditions that reflect a surprising ethnic diversity.

The blues trail and museums

You can't miss the big blue guitars marking the famous crossroads of Highways 61 and 49 in Clarksdale. This is where, according to legend, Robert Johnson sold his soul to the devil to learn how to play the blues. Roadside signs for the Mississippi Blues Trail make it easy to find other sites as well, from Clarksdale's Riverside Hotel, where Bessie Smith died, to the Dockery Farms cotton plantation in Cleveland, where many pioneering bluesmen lived, worked and made music, among them Charley Patton, Roebuck "Pops" Staples and Howlin' Wolf.

A sign in a field at Clarksdale's Stovall Plantation notes that Muddy Waters' songs were recorded here in 1941 by musicologist Alan Lomax as he collected folk music for the Library of Congress. The sharecropper's shack that Waters lived in has been restored and relocated to the nearby Delta Blues Museum. In Indianola, the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center pays tribute to King's life and legacy. He's buried there as well. These museums and others use photos, artifacts, videos and other exhibits to explore the blues' roots, beginning with African musical traditions brought to the South by slaves. Because Delta cotton plantations were relatively isolated, musical styles developed here uninfluenced by trends elsewhere. But eventually many African-Americans who barely eked out a living working for white landowners in the decades after the Civil War migrated away from the South, seeking economic opportunity elsewhere along with an escape from segregation and racial terror.

Stolle keeps a list online of who's playing where. Clarksdale's best-known club is Ground Zero, co-owned by actor Morgan Freeman and Clarksdale Mayor Bill Luckett, but blues fans may be disappointed by party-vibe bands playing songs here like "Sweet Home Alabama." A more interesting venue is Red's. Don't be fooled by its rundown appearance and tiny, informal living room-style interior. Red's showcases under-the-radar, brilliantly talented musicians like Lucious Spiller whose performances will make you realize why the blues still matter. Delta festivals include the Sunflower River Blues & Gospel Festival, Aug 11-13, and the Oct 12-15 Deep Blues Fest. Next year's Juke Joint Festival will be April 12-15, 2018.

Muddy Waters left the Delta for Chicago in 1943. BBKing left Mississippi for Memphis, where he got his big break at radio station WDIA. These and other bluesmen were worshipped by 1960s music giants like Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones. "Muddy Waters' music changed my life," said Eric Clapton. As the title of one of Waters' songs puts it, "The Blues Had A Baby And They Named it Rock And Roll."

Cat head, clubs and festivals

Stop in Cat Head, a Mississippi blues music and gift store in Clarksdale, for a chat with owner Roger Stolle, a blues fan who moved there to "help pull the blues scene together in a way that would get people to come." Local clubs stagger their schedules so you can hear live music every night. Stolle keeps a list online of who's playing where. Clarksdale's best-known club is Ground Zero, co-owned by actor Morgan Freeman and Clarksdale Mayor Bill Luckett, but blues fans may be disappointed by party-vibe bands playing songs here like "Sweet Home Alabama." A more interesting venue is Red's. Don't be fooled by its rundown appearance and tiny, informal living room-style interior. Red's showcases under-the-radar, brilliantly talented musicians like Lucious Spiller whose performances will make you realize why the blues still matter. Delta festivals include the Sunflower River Blues & Gospel Festival, Aug 11-13, and the Oct 12-15 Deep Blues Fest. Next year's Juke Joint Festival will be April 12-15, 2018.

Food, lodging and curtained booths

Mississippi cuisine isn't just catfish and barbecue. Doe's, in Greenville, where a security guard watches over your car as you dine and walks you to the parking area when you leave, is known for

steaks the size of your head and has been recognized by the James Beard Foundation. Chamoun's Rest Haven in Clarksdale, founded by a Lebanese family in the 1940s, serves some of the best kibbe you'll find outside the Middle East. At Larry's Hot Tamales, ask owner Larry Lee to share stories of how Mexican tamales became a scrumptious Mississippi staple. For upscale bistro fare like ceviche and roasted vegetables, try Yazoo Pass in Clarksdale.

To learn more about culinary traditions in Mississippi and elsewhere in the South, visit the Southern Foodways Alliance website. Delta accommodations range from motels to the Alluvian, a luxury boutique hotel in Greenwood. The city, once a major shipping point for Delta cotton, is also where the movie "The Help" was filmed. Today Greenwood is headquarters for Viking Range, the kitchen appliance manufacturer, and a Viking cooking school (classes fill up fast



Photo shows guitars marking the famous crossroads in Clarksdale, Miss.



Photo shows steaks being prepared at Doe's Eat Place in Greenville, Miss.



Photo shows a preserved sharecropper's cabin at Tallahatchie Flats in Greenwood, Miss.



Photo shows the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale, Miss.



Photo shows Dockery Farms in Cleveland, Miss, with a sign from the Mississippi Blues Trail asking whether the Dockery cotton plantation might be considered the "Birthplace of the Blues."

so book ahead). Other Greenwood spots include the excellent Turnrow bookstore and the tasting room for the Winery at Williams Landing, which specializes in wines made from Mississippi-grown muscadine grapes. Pick up a bottle for dinner at Lusco's, a BYOB restaurant famous for whole grilled pompano fish and for curtained booths that offered cotton traders privacy for business deals, romantic liaisons and alcohol consumption.

A unique lodging option in the Delta is spending the night in a preserved sharecropper's shack at the Shack Up Inn in Clarksdale or at Tallahatchie Flats in Greenwood. Some travelers may find the concept offensive as a sugarcoating of the misery experienced by those who had no choice but to live this way. But for others, a night spent in a rustic cabin that rattles with the howling wind or shakes to its foundations in a thunderstorm may evoke the very vulnerability that makes the blues so haunting. — AP



A sign, right, in a field in Clarksdale, Miss, marks the site of the Stovall Plantation, where Muddy Waters' songs were recorded in 1941 by musicologist Alan Lomax as he collected folk music for the Library of Congress.



Photo shows cypress trees in the Mississippi Delta.

Lifestyle

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017

For blues fans,
Mississippi
Delta has many
stories to tell

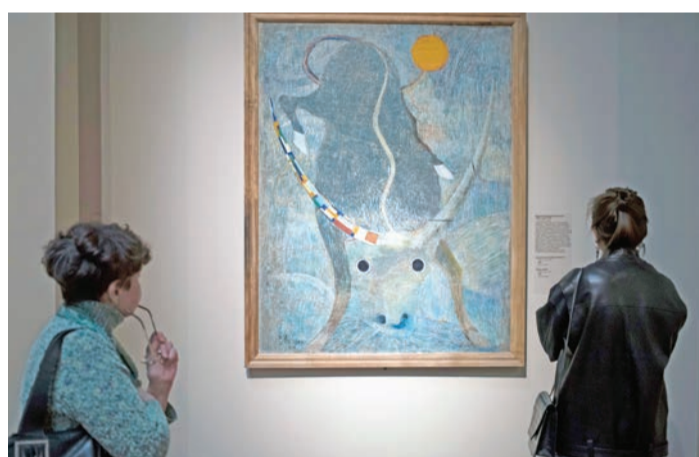
39



Floats decorated with flowers is pictured during the flower parade in Lisse, The Netherlands, on April 22, 2017. This year's theme is Dutch design and De Stijl art movement, which is celebrating its centenary. — AFP photos



Renowned Soviet avant-garde art collection comes to Moscow



Vladimir Lysenko's painting "The Bull" is displayed at the exhibition of renowned avant-garde collection from the Savitsky State Art Museum of Karakalpakstan in Uzbekistan, opened in the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum in Moscow, Russia. —AP photos



A visitor looks at Alexander Vokov's Caravan at the exhibition of renowned avant-garde collection from the Savitsky State Art Museum.

Vladimir Lysenko's painted bull stares with flat black eyes like a double-barrel shotgun, one of his horns festooned in a mosaic of bright rectangles, the tip of his tail stretched toward a glowing orange globe that may be the sun. Over the years, the painting has become one of the most renowned images of the artistic ferment that bubbled under the strictures of insipid Soviet social realism. But until recently, anyone who wanted to see it had to travel to an isolated, gritty city in Uzbekistan's desert.

This month, more than 200 paintings from the Savitsky State Art Museum of Karakalpakstan went on display at the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, a rare traveling exhibit from the gallery widely regarded as having the world's second-best collection of Soviet avant-garde art. "This exhibition opens completely new, and not very well researched, layers of art that are linked to the international avant-garde," said Pushkin museum director Maria Loshak.

The show also draws attention to the history of the Savitsky museum, which is as remarkable

as the works it holds. In the 1950s, painter Igor Savitsky got work in an archaeological expedition in Uzbekistan. He became fascinated by the intricate weavings and elegant pottery of the local Karakalpak ethnic group and collected their art extensively. Local officials, flattered by his interest, helped him establish a museum in the city of Nukus.

Savitsky also was concerned about the fate of the works of the Soviet Union's more adventurous artists. In the early 20th century, Russia had been a hotbed of bold art experimental movements - Suprematism, Luminism, Constructivism - as well as visions too idiosyncratic to fit into any category. But by the early 1930s, authorities decreed that art must express Soviet ideals and be comprehensible to the average worker. Bold colors, dancing polygons and strange faces disappeared from the public view, replaced by muscular construction workers and children devotedly presenting bouquets to Soviet leader Josef Stalin.

Artists unwilling to conform were

denounced as "formalists" who valued aesthetics over ideology, and some suffered severe repression. Lysenko was arrested in 1935 and although he was recorded as showing some paintings in the 1940s, little else is reported of his work.

He is believed to have died sometime in the 1950s. Alexander Nikolaev, whose "Way of Life" is the main emblem of the exhibit's advertising, also was arrested. The painting shows a young man in a skullcap staring as if in a trance, against a nearly abstract background of trees and a river.

Central government's attention

Savitsky began collecting as much of the "unofficial" Soviet art as he could, reportedly filling train sleeping compartments with paintings to bring them to Nukus, some 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) from Moscow. Many of the works likely would have been destroyed or deteriorated irreparably if he had not been able to spirit them away to a city far from the central government's attention.

"He collected works without taking into consideration whether this was a well-known name or not well-known. He collected art with an orientation on the art itself," said curator Irina Kim. The collection's hometown of Nukus has little else to please the eye. By some measures it's the world's dustiest city, plagued by storms of chemical-tainted sand blowing from the disappearing Aral Sea. The more elegant environs of the Pushkin Museum are conducive to contemplating the works, and appreciating why many of them would offend conformism-obsessed Soviet censors.

One of Ural Tansykbayev's works nominally celebrates the cotton fields that are Uzbekistan's mainstay, but the dominant element is the nearby road colored vivid purple and rising from the bottom of the frame like a shrouded figure.

Kliment Redko's painting "Motherhood" might work as a Soviet-acceptable portrait of a peasant and her son, except that the mother is helping the son urinate. "Some of the paintings give indelible impressions, which is why I think this a huge event. Personally, I am in complete awe," said viewer Alla Tiligina. — AP



Visitors look at Alexander Vokov's Caravan at the exhibition of renowned avant-garde collection from the Savitsky State Art Museum.

Bizarre News

Strongman fools viewers with no-handed push up

A strongman has amazed audiences with his footage of a no-handed push up - though it was all a fake. The video footage of the unnamed man fooled viewers as he seemingly managed to complete impressive one armed push-ups and taking it one step further by attempting to do the impossible and removing both hands from the ground to complete no armed push-ups. However, at the end of the video it is revealed the man doesn't actually have super human strength, and the whole video was in fact a fake. Throughout the video, the man's legs are partially out of shot, raising suspicion that there might be something going on that viewers can't see. The big reveal comes at the end of the footage when the camera zooms out to show the man laying on a plank of wood balanced like a see-saw. Another man is stood at the other end of the plank, acting as a weight to tip the man up and down on the plank, giving the illusion from the ground that he is completing impressive physical feats.

Weed selling nuns to move to Canada because of Donald Trump

A group of marijuana-selling nuns have said US president Donald Trump has made them think about moving to Canada. The Sisters of the Valley in California call themselves "weed nuns", and sell the substance to help the needy as they say they are on a mission to heal and empower women with their products. However, whilst the US president and his Attorney General Jeff Sessions, a longtime critic of marijuana legalization, have cast doubt over the legalization of the substance, the nuns say they are now planning on moving their business to Canada. Founder of the group Sister Kate, 58, said: "The thing Trump has done for us is put a fire under our butts to get launched in another country. Our response to Trump is Canada." At present, the group make online sales in Canada, but are planning on moving their operations there full time. The sisterhood was founded in 2014, and although they take on the persona of nuns - something which Sister Kate adopted after she took part in an Occupy Wall Street protest in 2011 dressed as a Catholic nun - they say they are "against religion". Sister Kate added: "We're against religion, so we're not a religion. We consider ourselves Beguine revivalists, and we reach back to pre-Christian practices. We've gotten a few hate calls but, by and far, the Catholics understand what we're doing."

Spaghetti named as worst date food

Spaghetti has been named as the worst dish to eat whilst on a date. Food delivery service Deliveroo has teamed up with rewards app Wuntu -

created by Three - to survey the UK to find out which foods they would never eat whilst out on a date and have found that spaghetti, the notoriously messy meal, has come out on top. Other "out of bounds" dishes that round out the top five include fellow spaghetti-based nightmare spaghetti carbonara, ribs, lobster, and langoustines. Furthermore, research showed that a whopping 25 percent of people surveyed said they would refuse to order their favorite dish whilst out on a date with a potential partner, and 16 percent said they would avoid a dinner date completely because of the potential for disaster. Despite two traditional Italian dishes making the top five "out of bounds" foods, Italian natives topped the list of nationalities Brits would most like to date, and so Deliveroo and Wuntu decided to create a virtual dining experience in order to teach Brits the art of Italian dining. The virtual event, named 'Milan Upon Thames', saw Milan based food experts virtually sharing a meal with willing Brits, sharing their wisdom and skills in a virtual sitting room environment by the Thames river. Joe Groves from Deliveroo said: "As one of the nation's favorite cuisines, it's crazy to see that we avoid Italian when dating. With many dates now happening at home, we felt it was only right to inspire the UK to embrace the food of love in time for a budding summer romance." The two-day virtual dinner experience utilized Three's Feel at Home roaming service where you can use your phone abroad in 42 destinations worldwide, including Italy, at no extra cost. Food for the experience was provided by Italy's leading restaurant group Rossopomodoro, which offered its authentic Neapolitan dining experience in both Milan and London. The 'Milan Upon Thames' event was open from April 19 to April 20.

A mother sparks outrage after changing child's nappy in public

A mother caused a stir after she changed her child's nappy on the table in a cafe. A woman had just enjoyed a little feast with her baby and when the time came for her to freshen up her tiny tot she didn't think twice about laying the tiny tot on the space they had just eaten to change the soiled diaper. However, this sparked outrage with other diners, and another woman told the mother she thought it was "a bit grim". The angered female took to Mumsnet to vent her anger at the sight, she said: "So, I usually grab something quick and cheap for lunch but decided to treat myself to a nice baked spud in an art gallery cafe. "Half way through said spud, I looked up to see the people on the table nearby were changing a baby's nappy on the table where they'd just eaten. "My face must have been a bit of a picture because one of the women looked at me as if to say 'what?'. "Feeling I had to justify myself, I said 'it's just that it's a bit grim changing a baby's nappy on a cafe table'. The woman doing the changing asked if I was a mum. Instead of saying 'what difference would that make?', I said I had two children. She said she didn't realize I was watching. I said it was more of a hygiene thing, but yes, it had put me off my lunch somewhat. "She replied that it was 'only a bit of wee.'"