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OUR PRECIOUS SEA



By Badrya Darwish

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Our sea is polluted. Thousands of fish are dying on the shore. The air also is polluted. Sandstorms and humidity and no rain. Our streets are polluted. Our systems are corrupt. Our soul is polluted. Everything around us is polluted. People are polluted with greed and discrimination and apartheid. Our society is polluted.

This is not the first time that fish are dying on the shores of Kuwait in their thousands. It happened before - a few years ago and was explained as 'red tide', something that suffocates the fish. But now it's happening again in Kuwait and we didn't hear a proper explanation from the government. Just rumors here and there about warning against eating fish as they might be poisoned and other rumors saying no, fish are safe, eat them. Then rumors about what caused the flood of dead fish. Is it heat or pollution or fishermen bombing the seas?

But the truth stays a secret. Where is KISR, our scientific research center? Where are the millions spent in KISR? Can't someone from KISR explain to us what is happening in the sea? There is sewage actually pumping into the sea in Kuwait City. Where is the Public Authority for Agricultural and Fish Resources? Why aren't they offering us any explanation? Aren't they qualified? And what about the EPA? - Kuwait's Environmental Protection Agency.

All of these government bodies mandated to protect our natural flora and fauna and not a peep. Where is the parliament? Where is the shouting and screaming notorious MPs who typically raise a ruckus over every little thing? The sea doesn't concern them? The life of Kuwait is the sea. Our ancestors lived and died by the sea. So the sea now is an extra thing that we don't give a damn about as we have oil, money and tenders? I'm fed up. Just depressed beyond belief. This is our country, our land, our sea. How did we fall so far?

conspiracy theories



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti students listen as National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem addresses the students during the opening of the fourth edition of the Student Parliament yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat (See page 2)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Opposition MP Riyadh Al-Adasani yesterday inquired about government measures with regard to corruption allegations in world football FIFA involving Kuwait. The issue unraveled after the head of Guam Football Federation Richard Lai confessed to US interrogators that he received graft worth \$850,000 between 2009 and 2014 from a senior member of Kuwait Football Association. The allegations led Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, a leading figure in world sports and in FIFA, to resign from FIFA and also dropped out of the election to the FIFA council scheduled for next week.

Sheikh Ahmad however categorically denied any involvement in the issue and said he will defend himself at any level. In a question to State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, MP Adasani asked about the measures taken by the Kuwaiti government and if it has succeeded in establishing whether the news is authentic. He asked about the expected legal measures the government intends to take in case the allegations are correct against those who might have squandered public funds, distorted the country's image and misused their posts to achieve personal benefits at the expense of public interests.

Adasani asked what would the government do if the allegations were proven to be false and what is the normal procedure taken against those who distort the image of the country.

Continued on Page 13

GERMANY SEEKS END TO YEMEN WAR

DUBAI: Germany has offered diplomatic help to try to end the war in Yemen, Chancellor Angela Merkel said yesterday as she ended a two-nation Gulf tour taking in the Arab world's largest economies with a stop in the United Arab Emirates. Merkel arrived in the seven-state federation following a visit to neighboring Saudi Arabia, where she held talks with King Salman and other senior leaders that touched on regional conflicts as well as women's inequality and other human rights issues.

She said Berlin is offering diplomatic support aimed at resolving the Yemen conflict and has been in contact with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres about its proposal, according to a transcript of her remarks provided by her office. "Germany has offered to support this UN process with its own diplomatic possibilities," she was quoted as saying. "That has met with the approval of Saudi Arabia. We will now move ahead with the necessary coordination with the UN secretary-general." A Saudi-led coalition backed by significant Emirati support has been bombing and battling Yemeni rebels for more than two years in support of the impoverished country's internationally recognized government.

Shiite powerhouse Iran supports the rebels, known as Houthis, and the Sunni-ruled Gulf states view the fight as a way to limit Iran's involvement in their backyard. While in Saudi Arabia, Merkel had said she does not believe there can be a military solution to the war, which has killed

Continued on Page 13



ABU DHABI: Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (center right) Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel (center left) pose for a photograph with students from the German International School in Abu Dhabi. Merkel met Abu Dhabi Crown Prince for talks on economic and security issues. — AFP

STEP BACK FOR SHEIKH AHMAD, ASIA'S SPORTING POWER BROKER

News

in brief

Iran, Israel 'benefit' As Arab World burns

DUBAI: Arab League chief Ahmed Abul Gheit warned yesterday that Iran and Israel were the main beneficiaries of turmoil across the Arab world, which he described as the worst he has ever seen. "I have never seen anything worse than what we are now seeing," Abul Gheit said at the Arab Media Forum in Dubai. "Iran is enjoying what the Arab world is going through. There are those in Iran who are watching and waiting for us to destroy ourselves." Ties between Iran and Arab states have grown increasingly tense in recent years, with Tehran backing Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, Yemen's Shiite Houthi rebels and armed Shiite groups in Iraq.

Two Muslims killed by Indian mob over cow

GAUHATI: Two Muslim men were beaten to death by a mob in northeastern India over allegations of cow theft, the latest in a series of similar attacks across the country, police officials said yesterday. Senior Assam state police official Mukesh Aggarwal said police have filed a criminal complaint and are trying to identify the members of the mob, but no arrests have been made so far. The attack took place Sunday in a village in Nagon district, 130 kilometers east of the state capital, Gauhati, when a mob accused the two men of trying to steal cows and began beating them with sticks and rocks.

HONG KONG: After almost a decade as one of the game's main power brokers, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah stepped away from his involvement in world football on Sunday as the US Department of Justice probe into FIFA's affairs claimed another victim. His decision came after US Court documents made reference to a Kuwaiti Olympic official as being involved in the bribery case of FIFA's audit and compliance committee member, Richard Lai.

Sheikh Ahmad has "strongly" denied any wrongdoing and said he resigned the

positions he held in football to avoid "distractions" for the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) as well as global governing body FIFA.

Whether it will end for good the fabulously wealthy Kuwaiti's involvement in football's power games is open to question. A high-ranking member of Kuwait's royal family and former Secretary General of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Sheikh Ahmad has been involved in power games of one sort or other for most of his adult life.

Continued on Page 13



PARIS: French CRS anti-riot police officers are engulfed in flames as they face protesters during a march for the annual May Day workers' rally in Paris yesterday. — AFP (See Page 10)

ANONYMOUS APP 'YIK YAK' SHUTS DOWN

WASHINGTON: Yik Yak, a mobile application which gained popularity for allowing users to make anonymous comments and which sparked debate on cyber bullying, has shut down. The app launched in 2013 and gained a following among high school and college students, pushing its valuation by investors to an estimated \$400 million at one point, according to some reports. The company, which had raised \$73 million, said in a statement over the weekend that "we'll begin winding down the Yik Yak app over the coming week as we start tinkering around with what's ahead for our brand,

our technology, and ourselves."

The statement offered no reason for the shutdown, but its rapid rise and fall highlights the fast-moving nature of social media applications. In 2015, another anonymous app called Secret was shuttered after reaching an estimated \$100 million value, while drawing complaints about its use for harassment. The mobile payments startup Square, led by Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey, indicated in a regulatory filing that it would pay \$1 million for "certain intellectual property of Yik Yak."

Continued on Page 13



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem poses for group photos with students following the 'Student Parliament' special session at the National Assembly yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HOSTS STUDENT PARLIAMENT SESSION

KUWAIT: The idea of the Student Parliament is an advanced and important one that catches the interest of everyone, said National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem yesterday. This came in Ghanem's speech during the opening of the fourth edition of the Student Parliament which was attended by Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudan in addition to ministries' officials, students and members of the Student Parliament.

The Student Parliament is an opportunity for students to say and deliver what they want of messages, ideas and visions in accordance with the regulations, agenda and in the framework of the Constitution, Ghanem added. Everyone should realize

that their children are mature students, despite their age and attempts to keep them young, he said.

Ghanem said the Assembly is considering the inclusion of students in private schools for the membership of the Student Parliament in the future to ensure that this parliament represents all Kuwaiti students.

Meanwhile, Minister Fares said the Student Parliament is a civilized way to meet the needs of the youth and help them come up with their own initiatives and interact positively with the democratic life, characterizing Kuwait's democratic practice.

This is best way towards strengthening the democratic system's principles in the hearts of students, he said, adding that the Student Parliament is an opportunity to reflect and exchange views and values of dialogue and enhance the ability they have. —KUNA



A general view of the session in progress.



Students have a side discussion during the session.



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem addresses students during the session.



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Youth Affairs Al-Zain Al-Sabah and other state officials attend the session.



Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares speaks during the session.



Students are seen during the session.



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem reacts during the session.



Students speak during the session.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. —Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



Official talks between His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his Italian counterpart Paolo Gentiloni.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi and board members on the occasion of the formation of the new board.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudan and Chairman of the National Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) Fund Abdullah Al-Joan and board members.

AMIR MEETS ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Advisor of King Abdullah II of Jordan and Rapporteur of the national policies council Abdullah Saleh Wreikat.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni and his accompanying delegation, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The two sides discussed deep-rooted relations between the two countries and ways of enhancing them as well as issues of common interest. The meeting was attended by 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, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh, Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Sulaiman Al-Jarallah, Head of the accompanying Mission of Honor, Advisor at His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikh Dr Salem Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

After that, His Highness the Prime Minister held official talks with his Italian counterpart as they discussed means of boosting cooperation in various domains between both countries to best serve the interests of both sides. They also talked over positions of Kuwait and Italy regarding the regional and international issues of mutual interest. Senior government officials attended the meeting.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also received Kuwait's Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi and Chairman of Kuwait Surgical Association Sheikh Dr Salman Khalifa Al-Sabah and board members on the occasion of the formation of the new board. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah. Furthermore, the new board members later met with His Highness the Crown Prince, who wished them best of luck and urged them to do their utmost to develop

the surgical sector and cope with world medical advancements.

Small businesses

His Highness the Amir later received Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudan and Chairman of the National Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) Fund Abdullah Al-Joan and board members on the occasion of the formation of the new board. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah.

The delegation later met with His Highness the Crown Prince, who wished the fund's board best of luck, saying the SMEs sector is a key pillar for promoting economic growth and diversification and creating jobs for young people. His Highness the Crown Prince urged them to develop creative and pioneering ideas that could serve various economic sectors in the country, reiterating the State's interest in this sector and its role in the promotion of sustainable development. The meeting was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Protocol Chief Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received Advisor of King Abdullah II of Jordan and Rapporteur of the national policies council Abdullah Saleh Wreikat on the occasion of his visit to Kuwait. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, as well as Guinea Bissau's Minister of Internal Administration, in charge of Hajj affairs Botche Cande.

Cande handed His Highness a letter from president of Guinea-Bissau, tackling bilateral ties between both nations and means of enhancing them in various fields. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and the Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Major General Mahmoud Al-Dosari. —KUNA



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Italy's Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni.

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NO BACKTRACKING ON FINANCIAL REFORMS: MINISTER SALEH VOWS 'NO PLANS TO EXTEND SUBSIDY CUTS'

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh has vowed to forge ahead with game-changing reforms to address financial imbalances and diversify national economy, even if oil prices surged again to \$100 per barrel.



Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh

"I have been very firm in saying there can be no backtracking, the reforms are going ahead," Saleh said in an interview the Arabian Business magazine published Sunday. Saleh has devised a package of fiscal reforms he hopes would change Kuwait's economic make-up for good.

Kuwait has already cut electricity, water and fuel subsidies as part of its reform plan, including hiking the cost of petrol by up to 80 percent. Kuwait has also begun looking at alternative means of raising finance, such as its \$8 billion debut international bond issue in March, for which orders totaled a reported \$29 billion.

Despite such progress, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in November that Kuwait would need \$114 billion to finance its deficit over the next six years. The deficit reflects the budget shortfall but does not take into account government revenue transferred to the Future Generations Fund or the vast wealth of the Kuwait Investment Authority, which is estimated at \$592 billion by the Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute.

Main challenges

In the interview, Saleh mentioned two main challenges. "The first is the short-term challenge, to close down the deficit, and the other is the medium to long-term one, diversifying the economy."

"On the first, we are doing well. We have a set of reforms we are now revamping to be more efficient. We have been in contact with industry associations from accounting, law, economics and other sectors to take long-term views on what is required, because we have to build up a consensus that reforms are necessary."

He stressed that previous limp efforts to reduce oil dependence must be sharpened and, finally, brought to fruition. "We still have 90 percent of our revenues coming from oil. Like many GCC states, we are oil dependent and this is definitely not sustainable. But we are dealing with it now and we are dealing with it even if the oil price goes back up to \$100 per barrel..."

The first version of the National Program for Fiscal and Economic Sustainability (FES) was published in March 2016 and includes measures such as subsidy cuts, which had already been partially implemented.

The five-year plan to 2021 sets out reforms

categorized into four areas: Improving government efficiency by cutting public spending while prioritizing capital spending; reducing expenditure by capping departmental budgets and rationalizing subsidies; shrinking the public sector wage bill; and diversifying public revenues by growing the private sector. The program has started to yield positive results, such as \$3.6 billion in savings from budgeted to actual expenditure for the last fiscal year, according to the Ministry of Finance.

Saleh is now preparing to publish a revised version of the FES in the next few weeks, in what he hopes would achieve further efficiencies and improve the business environment. The new FES version would focus on achieving greater efficiencies within government "tightening belts within the house rather than touching the pockets of citizens," Saleh made it clear.

Subsidy cuts

There are no plans to extend controversial subsidy cuts, he said; instead, government entities will face tighter fiscal constraints, such as a ban on signing leases for new office space. "I am saying to departments, it's top-to-bottom now, this is your budget, give me your priorities," Saleh stated.

The program also includes measures to help grow the private sector, particularly through public-private-partnerships (PPPs), such as the Al-Zour North power plant last year. Three more PPPs are planned for 2017, including the Al-Zour North Plant II, Umm Al Hayman wastewater treatment plant, and a solid waste management plant in Kabd.

Kuwait is also embarking on a nationwide privatization strategy. Saleh noted that the privatization touched three state assets - Kuwait International Airport, Sabiya power plant and the country's fixed telecoms network - is expected to commence this year. The government also plans to sell minority stakes in several units of state oil producer Kuwait Petroleum.

Other reforms are aimed at improving business environment, with a long-awaited insolvency law to be passed in the coming weeks; an amendment enacted this month to remove capital requirements for new businesses; and a decision to slash fees for corporate licensing renewals. "We are doing everything possible to enhance our ranking in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report," Saleh stressed.

The revised plan is intended to help close the deficit "tremendously," shrinking shortfall by at least \$3 billion annually over the next five years, with a targeted budget ceiling of \$65.7 billion each year to 2020, Saleh pointed out.

The plan is expected to support the New Kuwait 2035 economic diversification plan while maintaining the country's Aa2 sovereign credit rating. The privatization of government assets, which include Kuwait Airways and Sabiya power plant, are expected to begin this year.

Long-term sustainability

Despite his concern over Kuwait's long-term

fiscal sustainability, the minister insists in his interview he is not panicking. "Our reserves have given us a strong backbone to face the headwinds coming in..." he said.

He argued Kuwait Investment Authority's (KIA) investments - "made overseas for prudence and diversification" - further temper his anxiety about the budget shortfall and support his reasoning that there is no need to impose further cuts on the general public.

"Our reserves are just over \$500 billion and KIA has been (generating) average annual growth of 6.9 percent. If it does only three percent, I will still pay my deficit in the next five years," Saleh explained.

"Having said that, we don't want to rely on (that income stream). We want to benefit from the drop in oil prices and use it to implement reforms for sustainability." The minister is also optimistic about foreign investor interest in Kuwait - total foreign direct investment was \$1.18 billion last year, a 29 percent increase from \$920 million in 2015. High levels of demand for Kuwait's recent bond sale is further evidence of investor interest, Saleh said. "We were overwhelmed with demand from quality names and the book quickly filled up. We got a spread (calculation) of 75 (basis points) over five years - unheard of in the GCC."

Kuwait is drafting a law to permit the issuance of longer-term bonds - up to 30 years compared to the five- and 10-year debt issued in March. Saleh reveals such a bond could be issued in 2018, at a smaller scale, possibly with some Islamic instruments, too.

"Our plan is to be a rational prudent borrower and continue to be in the market over the coming years, even after we close our deficit. We want to build up a proper sovereign yield curve and help corporates back home to benefit from that," he said. "We also want to explore new financing instruments for our budget rather than financing it from our reserves."

Under the proposals, the legislation will permit the government to borrow up to \$65.7 billion over 20 years; the current ceiling is \$32.8 billion. Saleh added other planned legislation such as the insolvency law would encourage businesses to set up in Kuwait.

However, he admitted he has shelved plans to introduce corporation tax, fearing it could place Kuwait at a competitive disadvantage unless all of the GCC states impose it simultaneously. That is what the GCC is doing with a value-added tax (VAT) due to be implemented from January 1, 2018.

Saleh cautioned against presuming the VAT will bring about significant fiscal change in Kuwait. He said his present focus is top-down government rationalization. "I wouldn't lean on (VAT) too much. There is so much tightening we can do within the system that would pay us more. The procedures we are issuing in the new plan include more efficient tightening that will not hurt our tummies too much, but hopefully make sure we do not overeat," he said. - Material from KUNA and Arabian Business



KUWAIT: Officials observe environmental awareness books displayed during an exhibition held as part of the workshop. —KUNA

CALLS FOR BOOSTING AWARENESS ON ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY

KUWAIT: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil Sheikh Talal Al-Athbi Al-Sabah has stressed the necessity of disseminating environmental awareness and educating decision makers on the importance of biodiversity. Kuwait is going through a huge process of environment treatment of biodiversity, Sheikh Talal told a workshop organized by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) on behalf of Minister of Oil, Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq.

The event is themed 'biodiversity of animal organisms in Kuwait's tidal areas'. He explained that biodiversity is connected to climate change, and it is exposed to tremendous pressures in Kuwait. Part of this biodiversity is dying out. Sheikh Talal stressed the dire need for a swift and effective action through scientific research and planning as well as strict laws and policies to remedy the situation.

Since 2013, KISR has been carrying out the project on the biodiversity and the distribution of animal organisms in Kuwait's tidal areas, Executive Director of KISR's Environment and Life Sciences Research Center Dr Faiza Al-Yamani told the workshop. The workshop aims to review the outcome and the recommendations of the project, Yamani told the event on behalf of KISR's Director General Dr Samira Omar. Kuwait's coast, extending over 500 kilometers long from north to south is home to rich and unique biodiversity, which plays an important role for environmental integration and balance in this distinct sea environment, she said.

The project data sheds light on the hard efforts exerted by Kuwaiti researchers, experts, and technicians as well as international consultants, which will be of great benefit to government bodies when drawing up national plans for the preservation of the natural resources in Kuwait, Yamani noted.

Since the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) was established, it has been keen on organizing and supporting such projects in the region, especially in Kuwait, ROPME Executive Secretary Abdulrahman Al-Awadhi said. —KUNA



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil Sheikh Talal Al-Athbi Al-Sabah.



ROPME Executive Secretary Abdulrahman Al-Awadhi



Executive Director of KISR's Environment and Life Sciences Research Center Dr Faiza Al-Yamani



AL-ZOUR REFINERY STRATEGIC PART OF KUWAIT 2035 VISION

KUWAIT: The new Al-Zour refinery project is considered one of the most prominent strategic projects of 'Kuwait 2035' vision. The project is a significant edifice that would place Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) amongst the top global refining companies in

terms of refining capacity and producing environmentally-friendly fuel that meets all international environment conditions.

The new refinery is an essential part of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation KNPC's strategy to increase the refining capacity of Kuwait

up to 1.41 million bpd, from the current 615,000 bpd, including 225,000 bpd of low-sulfur fuel oil to meet the requirements of power generating stations in Kuwait, which will highly reduce the environmental impacts, too. —KUNA





KUWAIT: A general view of the Municipal Council's session in progress. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEMBERS CALL FOR BY-ELECTIONS TO FILL VACANT SEATS

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: With 11 members in attendance, the Municipal Council hosted an ordinary session yesterday, during which Chairman Muhamel Al-Khaled declared that five seats are vacant, after members resigned last December to contest for parliamentary elections.

Meanwhile, the council's Secretary General Yousuf Al-Saqabi read a letter from Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah concerning the nomination of five council members for the 2016 parliamentary elections. In addition, eight council members proposed declaring the five seats vacant and called for re-electing five other members through by-elections.

The council then discussed several issues on its agenda, including a request to name a street in Merqab after the late Jassem Abdul Hameed Al-Sager. It also debated the technology world project, the seventh ring road's developmental

project, developing the vegetable and fruits market in Sulabiya, and accelerating transactions related to development projects. Furthermore, the members discussed a request to allocate a session in order to discuss the issue concerning food unfit for human consumption that is found in crackdowns on restaurants and shops around the country; a problem that has persisted for years now. They also debated a request to refer blocks 3 and 4 in Kheitan to the Public Authority for Housing Welfare in order to carry out housing projects there, as well as a proposal to unify buildings' shapes and colors.

The council had failed to convene since the beginning of the year due to lack of quorum after the members' resignation, as the law stipulates that a Municipal Council member must step down if he decides to run for parliament. None of the nominated members won in the elections, and the law bars them from returning back to the council once they have resigned.

By Sara Ahmed

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's famous Al-Sawaber complex has been listed by the World Monuments Fund among its 'Modern Century' sites that need preservation. The social media campaign aims to "involve the public in a global discussion about modern architecture and preservation advocacy," according to the WMF website.

Designed in 1981 by Arthur Erickson, Al-Sawaber is an enormous futuristic-looking apartment complex, constructed with the idea of providing a community for Kuwaiti families of modest means. To accomplish this, the layout provides easy horizontal circulation between the apartment blocks, and the placement of the buildings creates intimate spaces sheltered from the rest of the city. In recent years a lack of maintenance, arson in some of the units, escalating land values in the surrounding area, and gentrification have rendered Al-Sawaber vulnerable to demolition.

In fact, the Cabinet issued a decision in January 2010 requiring the removal of all remaining tenants by March 2016 so that plans for demolition could move forward. Debate and discussions over how the land



KUWAIT: Al-Sawaber complex in the heart of Kuwait City. —Photo by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

will be used once Al-Sawaber is demolished continue until the present. Its planned to become either an investment area or divided up into

smaller sections and sold piecemeal. The Modern Century campaign will run until May 26 and sites are selected based on their architectural,

cultural, and historic significance and uniqueness. Supporters can vote for Al Sawaber by visiting wmf.org/modern-century#entry16758.

MINISTER EXPLAINS WHY CO-OPS MIGHT HAVE SHORTAGES IN GOODS SUPPLY

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Minister of Commerce and Industry, Acting Minister of Information Khaled Al-Roudhan stressed that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) is committed to insuring the availability of supply goods in Kuwait Supply Company's warehouses, so that they can be delivered to co-op societies and distributed to citizens according to schedule. Roudhan clarified that occasional shortages in some items might happen due to several reasons, mainly co-op societies' failure to pay off the company's overdue payments. He added that the company stopped delivering supplies on April 16, 2017, and then resumed it on April 18 when the late dues were paid.

Responding to an inquiry filed by MP Osama Al-Shaheen, Roudhan added that the second reason the shortage might happen is due to the transporter's failure to respect the time schedule set for transporting goods. He gave an example with Bayan Co-op Society's transporter, noting that he has contracts with over 15 co-ops, which sometimes causes delays in delivery.

Housing projects
The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) and a Korean construction company with whom it signed a contract to build the South Saad Al-Abdullah residential project have yet to finish determining the final number of housing plots to be built and distributed to citizens there. The project will be executed in a way that allows distribution of houses in phases over a period of two years, during which the total number of units is expected to exceed 25,000, informed sources said. A contract was also signed with the project's consultant last month, the sources said, adding that preparations for the second phase are currently in progress with the Republic of Korea.

Job positions
The Civil Service Commission (CSC) is expected soon to approve the allocation of new job positions for the Ministry of Health (MOH), informed sources said. The ministry had urged CSC to allocate 3,000 new job opportunities to cover up shortages that had been in effect for two years, the sources added.



DRUG CASES IN APRIL

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A total of 52 drug cases were registered in the first half of April, involving 66 suspects, according to the Drug Control General Department. The amount of contrabands seized during the operations are as follows: 1.264 kg hashish, 982g heroin, 609g shabu (methamphetamine), 2,296 illicit tablets, 100g marijuana, 542g 'chemical', which is a variation of Spice (syn-

thetic marijuana) with added chemicals, and 21 liquor bottles.

Fake visa trader busted
An Arab man was arrested after being caught selling fake work permits. According to Residency Affairs Detectives, the suspect admitted that he sold the visas and used local companies to obtain the visas, the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Information said in a statement. He claimed that he was only a

broker and charged a fee for each passport copy.

Female investigator appointed
Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah received investigator Dhaha Obaid Al-Azmi on the occasion of her appointment at the investigations department. Ministry Undersecretary Lieutenant General Mahmoud Al-Dousary, and Director General of Investigations department

Major General Dr Fahad Ibrahim Al-Dousary were in attendance.



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TRAVEL BAN MAN FOUND WITH KD 45,000 IN CASH

KUWAIT: An Egyptian man, facing a travel ban, was arrested while trying to leave the country with the help of a friend. He is now being questioned in several cases and interrogated regarding a large sum of money found in his possession. The man was reported to be holding KD 45,000 when he was arrested. He claimed the money was his life savings, but could not explain why he had the money in several different currencies including Kuwaiti, Iraqi and Bahraini dinars, Emirati dirhams, Saudi riyals and Egyptian pounds. He said he paid his friend \$2,900 to help him leave Kuwait. The man is facing several criminal complaints including ones for kidnapping and rape. The suspect and his friend will be sent to the prosecution.

Hit and run

A driver of a car with diplomatic license plates, ran over an Egyptian man, leaving him with a fractured ankle. The driver stopped, examined the victim and then drove off. The man, a carpenter, was crossing a street in Kheitan when he was hit. Passersby called police who arrived with paramedics. The license plate number was given to police who are working on identifying the driver who faces legal action.

Fight in cafe

An argument over a football match resulted in a fight between four Egyptians in a Nugra cafe, and one of them sustained injuries during the melee. The injured man got into an argument with three other men who then beat him up. The three escaped as police arrived while the injured man was taken to Mubarak Hospital. Detectives are looking for the suspects.

Drinkers to be deported

Fifteen Sri Lankans are being held pending deportation after being arrested for drunkenness by Maidan Hawally police. The suspects gathered in a room in Maidan Hawally where they were drinking. As they grew rowdy and disturbed residents, police were called. The 15 were arrested and face legal action and deportation.

Woman attempts suicide

A woman attempted suicide by ingesting a mixture of tablets at her sister's residence in Fintas. The woman was rushed to Adan Hospital where she was rescued. The Egyptian woman became ill and lost consciousness, so her brother-in-law took her to Adan hospital. Police are investigating an attempted suicide case, and the woman will be questioned when she recovers.

Drug users arrested

A citizen, an Iraqi and a Jordanian were arrested by Farwaniya police with illicit tablets and remains of two hashish joints, as well as a sword they use during fights when necessary. The three were arrested at a check point in Kheitan. — *Translated from the Arabic press*



الجريدة Al-Jarida

LEADERS

By Ali Mahmoud Khajah

The concept of leaders and followers should be minimally used, provided that the leader has certain characteristics such as deep thinking, being realistic in using his leadership tools, capable to objectively assessing things and capable to selecting team members who are able of achieving his profound vision. We are still dominated by the concept of having a leader surrounded by followers who believe in his thoughts and wait for his actions, to repeat them and do the same. Those followers usually disperse, issues, get lost and their sound fades away if the leader himself disappears.

The concept of the sole leader and his followers has completely vanished in advanced and developed countries

This idea might sometimes be true but will definitely be unaccepted as a rule we can always rely on because the general rule is definitely group work based on ideas and visions that have been rearranged, purified and assessed before determining the tools needed to put them into practice, which are almost missing in Kuwaiti politics, if not in those through the Arab world.

It is noteworthy to mention that the concept of the sole leader and his followers has completely vanished in advanced and developed countries because they realize that getting carried away behind someone has its dangerous consequences and would never achieve actual reform.

I do understand the enthusiasm someone can create or the charisma he might have. Yet, this does not mean alienating our own minds or getting carried away. I am not talking here about a certain person or incident. Nations are usually built through collectivism regardless of personal feelings or enthusiasm towards someone.

This is what we should focus on instead of prompting the concept of 'sole heroes' who do everything, carry out difficult tasks, never commit mistakes and have all the answers and solutions to problems, which we should all do without settling to praying for any such leader. Let us turn our individual domestic duties into group projects and substitute exams with joint presentations and research to enhance the idea of 'heroic groups' instead of that of individual heroes. — *Translated by Kuwait Times*

النجاح Al-Anbaa

A MOSQUE IN CANADA

By Saleh Al-Shayji

Two young Muslim Canadians of Syrian origin who were born and raised in Canada and never knew any other home country, who had received full healthcare, education and all citizenship rights for them and for their family, have suddenly disappeared from their school to appear on a video later on declaring that they have joined the terrorist Nusra Front for Jihad. They also tore their Canadian passports before the camera cursing both Canada and the 'West nonbelievers.' Furthermore, they threatened to tear the west apart and annex it to the Islamic State (IS) under the leadership of the Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi.

The story was so ironic and full of black comedy, insanity and total absence of mind. It was more like self-denial versus illusion and myth. However, the poor Canadian school's principal was so shocked with the news and almost cried while telling the story to an Arab lady expressing astonishment at such ingratitude towards the country that hosted and treated them and their families kindly, giving them full citizenship rights. The case of those two young men is not the first in a

series of deadly absurdity and bloody madness. It will not be the last, either. It is repeatedly happening all over Arab and non-Arab Muslim countries; Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Those two young men were not born in a Muslim Arab country. So, where did such destructive ideas come to their minds, forcing them into darkness and dismay? The answer comes quickly from the shocked school principal, who said that it came from the mosque near the kids' house, where their minds were filled with hate, turning them into ticking time bombs.

In that mosque, the boys were taught to hate this 'worldly' life and consider it only a passage towards Heaven. They were taught that this life was not worth living and that they are forgetting about the blessings in their afterlife in Paradise. They were taught that Paradise is a true Muslim's better house compared to this vanishing world. They were taught to abandon the world and join Jihadists. Those are the fatal thoughts put in young people's minds by Satan agents and slaves because their folks had not immunized them against such misleading ideas. — *Translated by Kuwait Times*

KUWAIT AIRWAYS DOUBLES MUMBAI SERVICE TO TWICE A DAY AS MARKET SHARE INCREASES

PASSENGERS BENEFIT FROM MORNING, EVENING DEPARTURES

KUWAIT: After recently concluding an agreement with the civil aviation authorities in India, Kuwait Airways has today confirmed that, from 10th May 2017, it will operate a twice daily (14 times per week) service to Mumbai.

According to industry data, Kuwait Airways, the official national carrier of

will provide more flexibility to passengers travelling to and from India's commercial capital; however, transit passengers will also benefit from shorter connection times to Cairo, Jeddah and other GCC and Levant-based destinations, on Kuwait Airways' network.

According to the airline, its two

As part of the announcement, Kuwait Airways also confirmed that its Mumbai destination will only be served by its Airbus A320ceo and Boeing 777-300ER aircraft; therefore, passengers on this route will be travelling on some of the airline's latest additions to its fleet. While standard on Kuwait Airways' new fleet of Boeing 777-300ER-s, Kuwait Airways has confirmed that all its A320ceo aircraft, serving the Mumbai route, will also guarantee Wi-Fi on-board.

Commenting on the additional services being added to and from Mumbai, Kuwait Airways' Deputy CEO, Kamil Al-Awadhi, said: "Traffic between Mumbai and Kuwait has seen a significant increase in demand over the last few years and Kuwait Airways has been working hard, with all the concerned parties, to ensure the airline can cater to this growth."

"We are delighted to have now secured an agreement with the Indian civil aviation authorities to increase our services to this important city destination and we would like to extend our thanks to everyone responsible for helping us to achieve this," Awadhi added.

"Kuwait Airways is also pleased to announce that by deploying some of the latest additions to our fleet on this route, passengers flying between Mumbai and Kuwait will be some of the first to appreciate the new products and services we have been enhancing and introducing - all across our network," he concluded.



the State of Kuwait, already has the largest market share of any single airline serving to Mumbai - Kuwait route; however, the latest figures indicate that this was further increased, by four percentile points, in 2016.

Undoubtedly, a twice a day service

outbound flights to Mumbai will depart at 05:50hrs and 21:40hrs (Kuwait time), with the two inbound flights departing at 05:25hrs and 13:25hrs (Mumbai time) respectively. The travel time between Kuwait and Mumbai is approximately four hours.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently received students from Al-Najat Primary School for boys at its Faiha branch. The kids were briefed about banking accounts, transactions, the importance of saving money and other banking-related issues.

Photo of the day



KUWAIT: Ancient copper and pottery household utensils put in display at a local museum. — KUNA photo



US rights watchdog against red carpet for Duterte

JAPANESE DESTROYER LEAVES PORT REPORTEDLY TO ESCORT US WARSHIPS



AZAZ: A displaced Syrian girl plays with a cuddly toy in front of a damaged wall in the city of Azaz, situated on the border with Turkey on Sunday. —AFP

US-BACKED FIGHTERS CORNER IS IN TABQA

SDF TAKES CONTROL OF 80% OF STRATEGIC SYRIAN CITY

TABQA, Syria: US-backed fighters cornered the Islamic State group in a last part of Tabqa yesterday, after tearing down a huge jihadist flag that had fluttered over the northern Syrian city. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an alliance of Kurdish and Arab fighters, were in control of all but a fifth of Tabqa as of early yesterday, a monitor said.

The city sits on a strategic supply route about 55 kilometres (35 miles) west of IS's main Syrian stronghold Raqa and served as a key IS command base. The SDF broke into Tabqa from the south a week ago and steadily advanced north, squeezing IS in three contiguous neighborhoods on the bank of the Euphrates River. At dawn yesterday, IS fighters withdrew from the western-most district towards the other two neighborhoods, said Rami Abdel Rahman, head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group.

"The SDF now controls more than 80 percent of Tabqa," Abdel Rahman said, with IS only holding the two northern neighborhoods of Hurriyah and Wahdah.

A total of 35 IS fighters were killed in 24 hours of clashes and air strikes in Tabqa, the Observatory said yesterday. It had no immediate information on casualties among SDF fighters.

In the aptly named Flag Roundabout in Tabqa's west, an AFP correspondent on Sunday saw an SDF fighter climb a ladder propped on a huge flagpole. He triumphantly pulled down an enormous

black IS flag, dropping it to the rubble-littered street as fellow fighters cheered and took pictures.

"We've brought down Daesh's flag and we'll hang our own—the flag of the Syrian Democratic Forces," SDF fighter Zaghros Kobane told AFP, using the Arabic acronym for IS. Other IS propaganda could still be seen around the city, including a billboard of a balaclava-wearing jihadist with three warplanes behind him. "We will be victorious despite the global coalition," the billboard read.

'Toughest battle'

Tabqa is home to an estimated 85,000 people, including IS fighters from other areas. Many families have fled the incoming offensive, lugging jerry cans, packed suitcases and blankets as they marched out of the city. But other civilians have stayed on in neighborhoods newly seized by the SDF, and AFP's correspondent saw women and toddlers timidly peering out at SDF fighters from behind the gates of their front yards. The city is also adjacent to the strategic Tabqa dam, which remains under IS control. The SDF said their hard-fought advance had seen jihadists surrendering in large numbers. "Tabqa is the toughest battle we've ever waged," said SDF commander Jako Zerkeh, nicknamed "The Wolf".

Zerkeh said the SDF had used new tactics—including the waterway supply line and an airlift behind enemy lines in late March—to kickstart the offensive.

"These were a huge surprise to them (IS) and shattered their morale... Dozens of Daesh fighters have surrendered. There were more surrenders here than any other town," he told AFP.

In an online statement yesterday, the SDF said its fighters had seized three IS tanks as well as a bomb-making factory in Tabqa.

'Wrath of the Euphrates'

The assault on Tabqa began in late March when SDF forces and their US-led coalition allies were airlifted behind IS lines. The SDF surrounded Tabqa in early April before pushing into the city on April 24, as part of their flagship offensive for Raqa further east.

That assault, dubbed "Wrath of the Euphrates", was launched in November and has seen SDF fighters capture swathes of countryside around the city. More than 320,000 people have been killed in Syria since the country's war began with anti-government protests in March 2011.

The US-led coalition bombing IS in Syria and Iraq said on Sunday that its strikes had unintentionally killed 352 civilians since the intervention began in 2014. From November to early March, coalition strikes killed 45 civilians, it said. Critics say the real total number of civilian deaths is much higher than the tally reported by the US military. The coalition says IS's use of human shields makes it difficult to avoid some civilian casualties. —AFP

VIOLENCE SCARS PRE-ELECTION MAY 1 MARCHES IN FRANCE

PARIS: France's traditional May 1 union marches erupted into violence yesterday, highlighting the divisions six days before a crunch presidential election. Four police officers were hurt in clashes in Paris between masked youths throwing molotov cocktails and riot police who responded with teargas.

One officer was engulfed in flames, an AFP photographer saw, and unconfirmed reports said he had suffered serious burns. Reacting to the scenes on Twitter, far-right presidential candidate Marine Le Pen said: "This is the sort of mess ... that I no longer want to see on our streets." The traditional May Day marches staged by France's powerful labour unions provided a useful gauge of the country's mood as it prepares to choose between Le Pen and centrist frontrunner Emmanuel Macron.

The protests underlined the conspicuous absence of the united front shown in 2002 when Le Pen's father Jean-Marie shocked the country by reaching the run-off. On this day 15 years ago, some 1.3 million people, including 400,000 in Paris, took to the streets of France in union-led demonstrations to protest against the founder of the National Front (FN).

That show of force, coupled with a political closing of ranks, helped centre-right Jacques Chirac inflict a crushing defeat on Le Pen senior. This time, with the left-wing candidates eliminated in the first round, the left is deeply divided over the choice between Le Pen's 48-year-old daughter and Macron, a 39-year-old former investment banker.

In Paris's Place de la Republique, 28-year-old teacher Camille Delaye was holding a placard that read: "Abstention is a political act"—meaning he is so disgusted by both candidates, he will not vote on Sunday. But Nastassja Naguszewski, 28, who works in

local government, said: "You have to put Le Pen as low as possible. One of them is a candidate who will uphold republican values and one is not."

Two unions, the CFTD and Unsa, have called for their members to back Macron on Sunday. But while three other more left-wing unions including the biggest, the CGT, have called for a demonstration against Le Pen's vision of French identity, they have stopped short of backing Macron whose economically liberal outlook worries many on the left.

Seeking to capitalise on those concerns, Le Pen told thousands of her supporters at a rally Monday to reject "the world of finance, of arrogance, of money as king" that she said Macron embodied. Her rival told France 2 TV on Sunday that "deep down, she doesn't care about the people".

'Not the same thing'

Some militants have formed a movement they have called "Social Front" to block both candidates and marched under a banner saying: "Rock and a hard place: Social Front, it will be won in the streets." CGT leader Philippe Martinez said he "deeply disagreed" with that approach, arguing that Le Pen and Macron "are not the same thing". "The National Front is a racist, xenophobic party that is anti-women and anti-workers because it is also an economically liberal party," he said.

Le Pen hit back that the unions "are not defending workers' interests, they are looking after their own interests". Macron is currently favourite to become France's youngest ever president, leading Le Pen by 19 points in the polls, but she has shown she is a cunning campaigner. —AFP

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POLICE HOLD 200 AFTER MAY DAY PROTESTS IN ISTANBUL

ISTANBUL: Turkish police yesterday fired tear gas and plastic bullets at protesters seeking to march to Istanbul's Taksim Square to celebrate May Day, in defiance of an official ban. Authorities said more than 200 people were detained for "illegal" protests in the city and using May Day celebrations as a "pretext". Police tried to stop around 200 protesters in the Gayrettepe district on the European side of Istanbul who wanted to walk to the famous Taksim square in spite of the ban by city authorities, an AFP journalist said.

The protesters-made up of left-wing groups-unfurled anti-government banners against the result of the April 16 referendum, which handed President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expanded powers.

"Long Live May Day, No to dictator!" the banners read. Turkish authorities imposed a ban on any demonstration at Taksim square, with police sealing off the avenue with barricades and halting traffic. Among those detained were two women who attempted to penetrate the ban and unfurl banners at the square, the private Dogan news agency reported. In a statement, Istanbul governor's office said some illegal groups sought to rally around Taksim square and elsewhere in the city by using May Day celebrations as a "pretext", adding that a total of 207 people were detained.

Police had also seized 40 Molotov cocktails, 17 hand grenades, 176 fireworks and seven masks.

And one citizen was killed in an accident when a TOMA, an armored water cannon truck designed for riot control, was doing manouevring, it said.

30,000 police in charge

Some 30,000 police were on duty in Istanbul



ISTANBUL: People chant slogans as they march with the red flags of the Turkish communist party, the Communist Movement of Turkey, while they gather in Bakirkoy district as part of the May Day rally in Istanbul yesterday.—AFP

alone, with the governor's office urging citizens not to heed calls for protests in non-official areas. Police checked tourists and citizens passing through Taksim and all streets leading to the square were

cordoned off with iron barricades. Metro lines did not stop at Taksim square, which was a rallying ground for May Day celebrations until 1977, when at least 34 people were killed during demonstra-

tions. Authorities later opened up the square for celebrations in 2010 but it was shut down again after it played host to anti-government protests in 2013 targeting Erdogan, then prime minister. "Our people were massacred," a protester who gave her name as Sevim told AFP.

"We are going to Taksim square because it is a meaningful place for the working class," she said shortly before the police intervention in Gayrettepe. This year's May Day celebrations also come after the 'Yes' camp won last month's referendum with 51.41 percent of the vote against 48.59 percent for the 'No' camp.

The opposition have alleged major irregularities but its complaints were thrown out by the election commission and a top court. Yunus Ozgur, another demonstrator, said he wanted to march to Taksim square to protest "irregularities" during the referendum.

"We are frustrated," he said. "Taksim has a political meaning. They (authorities) are scared of this. Taksim is ours." In the meantime, several thousand people and unions attended celebrations in an officially sanctioned rally in the Bakirkoy district near the international airport on the city's western side. In Ankara, at least 6,000 people demonstrated for May Day and against the referendum result, holding large letters spelling out "Hayir" meaning "No" in Turkish, an AFP photographer said.

Some held banners saying: "No means no". Earlier in the day, up to 60 people commemorated the 103 people killed outside the train station in Turkey's worst terror attack in October 2015.—AFP

CIVILIAN CASUALTY TOLL COULD COMPLICATE IRAQI CEASEFIRE

US-LED STRIKES AGAINST IS KILLED 352 CIVILIANS: PENTAGON

BAGHDAD: The US-led coalition has come under increasing scrutiny by monitoring groups regarding civilian casualties in the fight against the Islamic State group in Iraq, a turn that is worrying some in the country's political leadership who fear the destruction and loss of life could complicate hopes of reconciliation with the country's minority Sunnis.

The Pentagon acknowledged over the weekend that at least 352 civilians have been killed by coalition strikes in Iraq and Syria since the start of the air campaign against IS in 2014. However, activists and monitoring groups say the number is much higher. The coalition argues that casualties are inevitable in urban warfare with irregulars mixing with civilians and determined to stage a last stand. But critics see a degree of recklessness and excess that aligns with the

remain "the most precise air campaign in history." "But all the tactics, techniques and procedures and plans that we have, all these things are executed by people," he said, "and what that means is, it's not going to be perfect, it's going to be as good as we can possibly make it." More than a month since the incident, Dorrian declined to specify when the investigation - the most extensive single investigation into civilian deaths undertaken by the coalition since the fight against IS began - would be complete.

Why it's happening

Civilian deaths in the nearly three-year battle against IS spiked as Iraqi forces pushed into Mosul, undertaking some of the toughest fighting yet. The battle space, with its narrow streets, is claustrophobic and the Islamic State group is

coalition strikes in Iraq and Syria since the start of the air campaign against IS. Activists and monitoring groups put the number much higher, with London-based monitoring group Airwars reporting coalition strikes have killed more than 3,000 civilians in Iraq and Syria since 2014. The Pentagon's Sunday statement also included the findings of an audit begun in March that inspected the way the US-led coalition reports and tracks civilian casualties in the fight against IS. The statement said the audit found that 80 civilian deaths caused by coalition airstrikes had not been previously publicly reported and two civilian deaths previously reported were found to have not been caused by the coalition.

Some in Iraq's political leadership have expressed concern that the levels of damage and loss of human life in Mosul will make reconciliation with the country's minority Sunni population more difficult after a military defeat of IS.

What it means for post-war governance

Iraq's Parliament speaker, Salim al-Jabouri, one of the highest ranking Sunni government officials, has said that reports of increased civilian casualties in western Mosul are of "great concern." When Haider al-Abadi took office in 2014, he promised reforms that would hold corrupt Iraqi leadership accountable and allocate more of a political stake to the country's Sunnis. Al-Abadi has handed more control over to Iraq's regional leadership and appointed a Sunni to lead the Ministry of Defense.

Iraq's foreign minister has warned such a massive reconciliation effort will need funding and support akin to the Marshall Plan that helped western Europe recover from the devastation of World War II. In order for Iraq's military gains to stick, the international community needs "to present assistance to Iraqis and support development and overcome the effect of war against Daesh terrorist gangs," Jaafari said in a statement released by his office. Daesh is an Arabic name for IS.

Roots of is support

When the Islamic State group rampaged through northwestern Iraq in 2014, the extremists were welcomed by some Sunnis who thought IS represented a Sunni revolution that would deliver them from the country's Shiite-dominated government in Baghdad.

Under former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, many of Iraq's Sunnis began to view the country's security forces as an occupying force. Police and military units often swept through Sunni communities detaining all military-aged males in an attempt to quell dissent, filling the country's prisons with men arrested on trumped-up terrorism charges. Baghdad has not yet presented a comprehensive plan for the governance of Nineveh province once the fight for Mosul is concluded and plans for an Iraqi "national guard" that would give greater control of local security to regional leaders have languished in Parliament. The United Nations reports more than 800,000 civilians have returned to Anbar province after much of that territory was retaken from IS last year, but rebuilding there is mostly being financed with private money as Iraq is still battling an economic crisis sparked in part by the worldwide drop in oil prices.—AP

holding hundreds of thousands of civilians in the city as human shields. Since Iraqi forces pushed into western Mosul in February, the fighting has killed and wounded more than 4,000 civilians, according to the United Nations, a number that only counts civilians who reached a trauma hospital for treatment.

In the most recent report, the Pentagon announced on Sunday that investigations conducted during the month of March show that coalition airstrikes killed 45 civilians, mostly in and around Mosul. In each incident, the Pentagon said "all feasible precautions were taken," but the strikes still resulted in "unintentional" loss of civilian life. The report came days after President Donald Trump gave the Pentagon greater flexibility to determine the number of US troops in Iraq and Syria. The Pentagon had already been making quiet, incremental additions to the troop levels in both countries in recent months.

A look at the numbers

The Pentagon acknowledged over the weekend that at least 352 civilians have been killed by



MOSUL: In this April 1, 2017 file photo, children play inside a damaged car, amid heavy destruction in a neighborhood recently retaken by Iraqi security forces from Islamic State militants on the western side of Mosul.—AP

heavy-handed rule of the Sunni areas by the Shiite dominated Iraqi government. Here's a look at some aspects of the situation.

A devastating mistake

Last month, the Pentagon launched an investigation into an incident in which Mosul residents say a single airstrike killed more than 100 civilians sheltering in a house in the western part of the Iraqi city that was also being used by IS fighters. While both Iraqi and coalition planes are active in the skies above Mosul, the US acknowledged coalition planes conducted a strike "at the location corresponding to allegations of civilian casualties," but did not confirm the number of casualties inflicted or the circumstances of the event.

The incident sparked outrage in Iraq and beyond with calls from local government officials as well as the United Nations for greater restraint in the fight against IS for Mosul.

Despite the allegations surrounding the March 17 strike, the spokesman for the US-led coalition Col. John Dorrian told The Associated Press that the coalition's anti-IS operations



RAMALLAH: A banner with a picture of a Palestinian prisoner in an Israeli jail reads in Arabic "Karim Younis, the icon of patience and will, 35 years in captivity, for how long," in the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday.—AP

TRUMP SET FOR FIRST MEETING WITH PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT

RAMALLAH: US President Donald Trump meets Mahmud Abbas tomorrow for their first face-to-face talks, with the Palestinian leader hoping the billionaire businessman's unpredictable approach can inject life into long-stalled peace efforts.

Abbas makes the trip to Washington while politically unpopular back home, but hoping Trump can pressure Israel into concessions he believes are necessary to salvage a two-state solution to one of the world's oldest conflicts. Palestinian officials have seen their cause overshadowed by global concerns such as the Syrian war and Islamic State group jihadists, and want Trump's White House to bring it back to the forefront. "Palestinians are hoping that Trump's unpredictability might play in their favour," one Jerusalem-based European official told AFP on condition of anonymity. "They are going to be very disappointed. They can't be sure of anything." Examples were seen early on, with Trump backing away from the US commitment to the two-state solution when he met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in February.

He said he would support a single state if it led to peace, delighting Israeli right-wingers who want to see their country annex most of the occupied West Bank. Trump also vowed to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to the disputed city of Jerusalem, a prospect that alarmed Palestinians but which has been put on the back burner for now. At the same time, he urged Israel to hold back on settlement building in the West Bank, a longstanding concern of Palestinians and much of the world. One of Trump's top advisers, Jason Greenblatt, held wide-ranging talks with both Israelis and Palestinians during a visit in March. Abbas and Trump spoke by phone on March 11.

Pressuring Hamas?

Trump's unpredictability is far from Abbas's only concern, with polls suggesting

most Palestinians want the 82-year-old to resign. Abbas's term was meant to expire in 2009, but he has remained in office with no elections held. The bitter split between Abbas's Fatah party, based in the West Bank, and Hamas, the Islamist movement that runs the Gaza Strip, has also taken a new turn in recent days.

Some analysts say it seems Abbas is seeking to increase pressure on Hamas in the impoverished strip, but he risks being blamed for worsening conditions in the enclave of two million people. Israeli officials say the Palestinian Authority dominated by Abbas's Fatah has begun refusing to pay Israel for electricity it supplies to Gaza. Rights activists say exacerbating an already severe power shortage in the strip under an Israeli blockade for 10 years could be catastrophic. The reported move comes after the PA announced earlier in April it would temporarily cut stipends to its Gaza civil servants. The PA said it was forced into cutbacks by falling foreign aid, but others alleged it could be aimed at stirring discontent in Gaza and destabilizing the Hamas administration there.

Regional support

With those difficulties in mind, Abbas may face demands from Trump that could be "political suicide" for him to implement, the European official said. Such demands may include stopping payments to families of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel, a policy heavily criticized by Netanyahu as encouraging further violence.

Doing so could further open Abbas to accusations of bending to Israel's will, particularly with one of his rivals in Fatah, Marwan Barghout, leading a hunger strike involving hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails since April 17. Barghout is serving five life sentences over his role in the second Palestinian intifada, but he is popular and polls suggest he could win the Palestinian presidency.—AFP

AL-QAEDA LEADER: GROUP FOUGHT ALONGSIDE US-BACKED FORCES

CAIRO: The leader of Al-Qaeda branch in Yemen said that his militants have often fought alongside Yemeni government factions - including the ultraconservative Salafis, "the Muslim Brotherhood and also our brothers among the sons of (Sunn) tribes" - against Yemen's Shiite rebels known as Houthis.

Al-Rimi did not elaborate on what exactly fighting "alongside" meant but Al-Qaeda has emerged as a de facto ally of the government of President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi and his backers Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates against the Houthis in a grueling civil war that has wreaked devastation, caused widespread hunger and killed more than 10,000 since late 2014. Over the past decade, the terror group has built up ties of one degree or another with the country's many tribes - and has often used anger over civilians killed in American airstrikes to gain recruits.—AP

On the US most-wanted list with a \$5 million reward for his capture, Al-Rimi has been a top target of US airstrikes, which have soared in the past four months in southern Yemen. He spoke on Sunday to AQAP's media arm Al-Malahem from an undisclosed location in Yemen. "We fight along all Muslims in Yemen, together with different Islamic

RESIDENTS FORCED TO LEAVE HISTORIC TURKISH DISTRICT HIT BY VIOLENCE

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey: Residents of Turkey's historic Sur district in the Kurdish-majority province of Diyarbakir were forced to evacuate their homes by yesterday as the violence-ravaged region undergoes restoration.

The district in southeastern province has been hit by clashes between the Turkish army and outlawed Kurdish militants for over two years. Turkish authorities say they will restore the district, a UNESCO world heritage site with its ancient fortified walls, historic mosques, churches and syna-

gogues. Clashes between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) fighters and the Turkish armed forces erupted after the collapse of a two-and-a-half-year ceasefire in 2015. The Kurdish separatists have fought against the Turkish state since 1984 in a bloody conflict which has left over 40,000 people dead. Two more neighborhoods in Sur were being emptied yesterday but families told AFP they did not want to leave the homes they have lived in for many years.

Those who own their own homes have been given money but finding

property elsewhere is difficult, and for those who are not homeowners, the situation is worse. Sahin Darkan, who had lived in Sur for 11 years, told AFP that he did not have to pay rent while he lived in the district.

"Now we need to evacuate. We will have to pay a rent. They (authorities) placed pressure on us to leave. I don't know what will happen to us," Darkan, who works odd jobs, said. "Actually we do not want to leave but we must leave," Baris Umut, a member of one of Sur's oldest families, said. "Where should we go, leaving this beautiful

place, this paradise?" Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said last September 1.9 billion lira (\$535.5 million, 491 million euros) would be invested in the district with billions more poured into the southeast region for development after the violence.

But others including Zeliha Ceylan said they could not leave without getting enough money to buy a house elsewhere. "They gave me a small amount. I have nobody. I cannot buy a house or pay rent. The state is telling me to move, but where will I go?"—AFP

MAY DAY RALLIES ACROSS US TO TARGET IMMIGRATION POLICY

NEW YORK: Labor unions and immigrant advocacy groups will lead May Day rallies in cities across the United States yesterday, with organizers expecting larger-than-usual turnouts to protest the immigration policies of President Donald Trump.

The demonstrations could be the largest by immigrants since Trump's inauguration on January 20, activists say, and some immigrant-run businesses plan to shut down for some or all of the day to protest the administration's crackdown on immigrants living in the country illegally.

"To me, it's offensive the policies this president is trying to implement," said Jaime Contreras, vice president of the Service Employees International Union's 32BJ affiliate, which represents cleaners and other property service workers in 11 states. "It's a nation of immigrants, and separating immigrant families because of their immigration status, it goes against what we love about this wonderful country." May Day, also known as International Workers' Day, has typically been a quieter affair in the United States than in Europe, where it is a public holiday in many countries. In New York City, immigrant-run convenience stores and taxi services in upper Manhattan will close during the morning rush hour between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m., in a protest reminiscent of those staged on "A Day Without Immigrants."

At lunchtime, fast-food workers will join elected officials at a rally outside a McDonald's restaurant in midtown Manhattan, calling for more predictable work schedules. In the early evening, organizers expect thousands of demonstrators to gather at a rally in Manhattan's Foley Square for musical performances and speeches by union leaders and immigrants living in the country illegally. In Los Angeles, organizers expect tens of thousands of people to gather in the morning at MacArthur Park before marching downtown to a rally before City Hall.

Heightened precautions were also in place in Seattle, where officials were on the lookout for incendiary devices and gun-carrying protesters after a January shooting outside a political event and an incident during May Day 2016 when a protester threw an unlit Molotov cocktail at police.

Some Trump supporters said they would also turn out on May Day. Activist Joey Gibson said he and other conservatives will travel to Seattle to defend against what he described as communist and anti-fascist groups who have in the past faced off with police in the evening, after the conclusion of the usually peaceful daytime marches. "We're going to go down there to help build courage for other people, especially conservatives," Gibson said. — Reuters

MILITARY SEX ASSAULT REPORTS UP SLIGHTLY

WASHINGTON: Reports of sexual assaults in the military increased slightly last year, US defense officials said yesterday, and more than half the victims reported negative reactions or retaliation for their complaints. The defense officials, however, said an anonymous survey conducted last year showed some progress in fighting sexual assault, as fewer than 15,000 service members described themselves as victims of unwanted sexual contact. That is 4,000 fewer than in a 2014 survey. Sexual assault is a highly underreported crime, so the Pentagon uses anonymous surveys to track the problem.

The new figures are being released yesterday. Several defense officials spoke about the report on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss the data ahead of time. For more than a decade, the Defense Department has been trying to encourage more people to report sexual assaults and harassment.

The agency says greater reporting allows more victims to seek treatment. Overall there were 6,172 reports of sexual assault filed in 2016, compared to 6,083 the previous year. The largest increase occurred in the Navy, with 5 percent more reports. There was a 3 percent jump in the Air Force.

The Army and Marine Corps had slight decreases. Retaliation is difficult to determine, and the Defense Department has been adjusting its measurements for several years. It seeks to differentiate between more serious workplace retribution and social snubs that, while upsetting, are not illegal. Two years ago, a RAND Corporation study found that about 57 percent of sexual assault victims believed they faced retaliation from commanders or peers. Members of Congress demanded swift steps to protect whistleblowers, including sexual assault victims, who are wronged as a result of reports or complaints.

Data at the time suggested that many victims described the vengeful behavior as social backlash, including online snubs, that don't meet the legal definition of retaliation. Officials are trying to get a greater understanding about perceptions of retaliation. They've added more questions and analysis to eliminate instances when commanders make adjustments or transfer victims to protect them, as opposed to punishing them or pressuring them to drop criminal proceedings.

As a result, while 58 percent of victims last year said they faced some type of "negative behavior," only 32 percent described circumstances that could legally be described as retribution. This includes professional retaliation, administration actions or punishments. In 2015, 38 percent reported such actions.

Despite the small increase in reports last year, officials focused on the anonymous survey. The survey is done every two years and includes a wider range of sexual contact.

In 2012, the survey showed 26,000 service members said they had been victims of unwanted sexual contact, which can range from inappropriate touching and hazing to rape. The numbers enraged Congress and triggered extensive debate over new laws and regulations to attack the problem.

The surveys have shown a steady decline. Yesterday's report shows 14,900 cases were reported. Of those, 8,600 were women and 6,300 were men. It marks the first time more women than men said they experienced unwanted sexual contact. There are far more men in the military and the total number of male victims had been higher, even if by percentage, women faced more unwanted contact. The decrease in reports by men suggests a possible reduction in hazing incidents, officials said. — AP

US WATCHDOG OPPOSES RED CARPET FOR DUTERTE

PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT HESITANT ON US VISIT, WARM ON CHINA

MANILA: A US-based human rights group says President Donald Trump should not roll out the White House red carpet for Philippine leader Rodrigo Duterte, whom it accused of being a "mastermind" of mass murder because of his anti-drug crackdown in which thousands have died.

Human Rights Watch and other critics reacted with alarm yesterday at Trump's invitation to Duterte to visit the White House. In a telephone call, Trump also affirmed America's alliance and friendship with the Philippines and its president, who has maintained an antagonistic stance toward US security policies. The US and other countries close to the Philippines "have an obligation to urge accountability for the victims of Duterte's abusive drug war, rather than offer to roll out the red carpet for official state visits with its mastermind," said Phelim Kine, HRW's deputy director for Asia.

Kine said Trump may damage human rights by making overly friendly overtures to Duterte, who is facing a complaint for alleged mass murder before the International Criminal Court. Trump will cut a "bad deal" for the American and Filipino people if he fetes Duterte with a White House reception without assessing the implications "of hosting and toasting a foreign leader whose links to possible crimes against humanity for instigating and inciting extrajudicial killings has already



In this combination of file photos (from left to right): Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte in Tokyo and US President Donald Trump in Washington.—AP

prompted warnings from the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court," Kine said in an email.

Duterte has said his administration does not back extrajudicial killings, although he has repeatedly threatened drug suspects with death and violence in nationally televised speeches. Duterte's spokesman, Ernie Abella, did not immediately reply to a request for comment yesterday.

Duterte said he has not accepted the invitation because of scheduled trips to Russia, Israel and other countries. "I'm tied up," he told reporters yesterday in southern Davao city. "I cannot make any definite

promise." US and Philippine officials said Trump's calls and invitations to several Asian allies including Duterte were aimed at discussing the crisis over North Korea's nuclear threats. In his phone conversation with Trump, Duterte said he relayed the region's alarm over the North Korean standoff.

Duterte hesitant

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said yesterday he may turn down an invitation by Donald Trump to visit the United States, as he welcomed three Chinese warships to his home town. Duterte, who has loosened the Philippines' long alliance

with the United States while strengthening ties with China and Russia, said he could not commit to the American president because of a busy schedule that included a trip to Moscow.

"I am tied up. I cannot make any definite promise. I am supposed to go to Russia, I am supposed to go to Israel," he told reporters when asked about Trump's invitation made in a telephone call on Saturday. Duterte expressed concerns about not being able to fit in a visit to Trump even though no firm date has yet been proposed for it.

Nevertheless, Duterte said relations with the United States were improving now that Trump had taken over from Barack Obama, who criticized the Philippine president for his anti-drug war that has claimed thousands of lives. Rights groups have warned Duterte may be orchestrating a crime against humanity, with police and vigilantes committing mass murder. But Duterte insists his security forces are not breaking any laws.

Duterte last year branded Obama a "son of a whore" in response to the criticism. He also declared while in Beijing last year that the Philippines had "separated" from the United States. The United States is the Philippines' former colonial ruler and the nations are bound by a mutual defense treaty. Duterte said yesterday that his efforts to loosen the alliance were only a response to the drug war criticism.



CANTON: Kimberly Chandler stands by her destroyed truck and debris from her home in Canton, Texas, on Sunday.—AP



TEXAS: An overturned vehicle rests on the ground surrounded by debris in Canton, Texas, yesterday after tornadoes hit the area the previous night. — AP

MIDWEST, SOUTH BRACE FOR FLOODING AND TORNADOES

ATLANTA: Parts of the US South and Midwest braced for flooding and possible tornadoes yesterday following a weekend of deadly torrents and powerful winds that claimed at least 15 lives. Heavy rain caused the roof of a furniture store in northern Oklahoma to collapse early yesterday, although no one was injured, and parts of the state remained under flood and flash flood warnings after excessive rainfall over the weekend. The Illinois River that snakes through the eastern part of the state crested Sunday night at about 29 feet - well above major flood stage of 18 feet.

Tornado warnings were issued for parts of southeastern Alabama and central Georgia on Monday morning by the National Weather Service, which advised residents there to take cover. A severe thunderstorm located over Fort Benning in Georgia was at risk for developing into a twister,

the weather service said. Severe weather was expected elsewhere in the South. Parts of the Florida Panhandle could be affected by severe thunderstorms or high winds and dangerous rip currents. In Mississippi, a wind advisory was in effect in the northwest. A flood warning was in effect for rivers in Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana.

Over the weekend, tornadoes hit several small towns in East Texas, killing four people. Flooding and winds killed five people in Arkansas, including a fire chief who was struck by a vehicle while working during the storm. Three deaths were reported in Missouri, including a woman who drowned after rushing water swept away a car and a 78-year-old man who left his home to look at the floodwaters and was then carried away by the water. One of two deaths in Mississippi included a 7-year-old who was electrocuted after unplugging an electric golf

cart and dropping the cord in water on the ground. A 2-year-old girl died in Tennessee after being struck by a soccer goal post thrown by heavy winds.

Pockets of damage

The storms rolled through Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama on Sunday with strong winds causing isolated pockets of damage. Middle Tennessee was hit by a strong line of storms that knocked down trees and power lines earlier Sunday. Wind and flood advisories were in effect for much of the state yesterday. Flooding closed part of Interstate 44 near Hazelgreen, Missouri, and officials expected it would be at least a day before the highway reopened. Interstate 70 in western Kansas was closed because crews were waiting for snow falling at 3 to 4 inches (8 to 10 centimeters) an hour being blown by 35 mph (56 kph) winds to subside. — AP



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BREXIT PUTS TINY GERMAN VILLAGE 'GADHEIM' AT CENTRE OF EUROVERSE

GADHEIM, Germany: A European Union flag snapping in the wind in the tiny German village of Gadheim is the only hint at why the world's media are beating a path to this out-of-the-way spot. Its handful of houses are set in the rolling hills of Bavaria's wine country, clustered around a solitary road wending through fields overlooked by a clutch of wind turbines. When Britain's two-year negotiations on leaving the EU end in 2019, Gadheim's 89 inhabitants will find themselves at the geographic centre of the bloc, according to the IGN geographic institute in Paris.

Most here first heard the news on the radio, says Juergen Goetz, mayor of nearby Veitshoechheim-Gadheim being too small to have a Buergermeister (mayor) of its own. "We thought it was an April Fool's joke at first," Goetz laughs, as he recounts the story around a table in the village hotel. There's no doubt that locals are proud to see their countryside in focus, with its vineyards, endless fields and the winding Main river. "My husband has always said that we here the centre of the world," jokes Inge Diek, the village representative of the German Farmers' Association. "There's a pretty saying, 'God kissed the Earth only once, and that's where Veitshoechheim is'. Gadheim is a

part of that," beams Goetz. Gadheimers have set up a WhatsApp group to marvel at their newfound fame and mull how to mark the spot. Most surprised of all was Karin Kessler, dark-haired, slightly weather-beaten and dressed in warm, practical farming attire. Her son sent her a message with a map of the exact coordinates—which she at first thought were on her neighbors' land. "No, it's in your field!" her son shot back.

Bittersweet feeling

Kessler may be amused to find the centre of the EU in her unremarkable field of rapeseed. But "the fact that it's only happening because of this Brexit is a bit of a shame for me," she says. Like others in the village, Kessler still hasn't got over her disbelief, first that British voters would choose to quit the club, and that the process will now be seen through to its end.

For her, the most tangible impact of the EU-castigated for decades in some of the British press as a burdensome foreign yoke—is the fact that there are no border checks when she drives to France on regular holidays. "And then I think, my father was in World War II. He was a prisoner of war in France. That gives me good reason to value" the EU, founded to



GADHEIM: This file photo shows the road sign of the village of Gadheim near Wuerzburg, Germany.—AFP

bind historic enemies together, she explains. Some gathered around the table wonder whether Britons might change their minds before it's too late—or whether Scotland's simmering independence movement might keep a part of the island nation in the currently 28-member union. If, and when, Brexit is

final, Kessler is looking forward to pointing out to her father the flags marking the EU's centre flying in her field—although she muses that "if the British think again then I'll be happy too".

Moving on

In Westerngrund, some 60 kilometers

to the northwest, mayor Brigitte Heim also rues the British decision, not least because it will cost her small town its status as the centre of the EU, gained when Croatia joined in July 2013. That cachet put it squarely on the regional government's radar too. Since the centre has been here, "they know in (state capital) Munich that Westerngrund is still part of Bavaria," Heim says, despite the locals' dialect and fondness for Apfelwein (cider) — both of which owe something to neighboring Hesse state.

When local school pupils checked in 2015, around 6,000 people from 93 countries—some from as far away as Australia and Mongolia—had signed visitors' books kept at the neat lawn laid down to mark the spot, with a row of town, region, state, German and EU flags overlooking tranquil hillside fields.

"We thought Chinese buses would be coming there every week. It didn't really turn out that way," says local baker Christoph Biebrich, who crafted ring-shaped loaves with the hole representing the navel of the EU, surrounded by stars. Still, locals and tourists love picnicking there, or hiking and mountain biking along the trail linking Westerngrund to the previous EU centre point in nearby Meerholz, he goes on.—AFP

FRANCE'S LE PEN, MACRON FACE OPPOSITION ON FRACTIOUS MAY 1

FRANCE'S UNIONS TO STAGE MAY DAY MARCHES

PARIS: France's rivals for the presidency, centrist frontrunner Emmanuel Macron and far-right rival Marine Le Pen, braced for major shows of opposition to their programs yesterday on a fractious May 1 holiday. Both candidates will hold rallies just six days before the decisive second round. France's powerful unions will also stage traditional May Day marches but the

between his 48-year-old daughter and 39-year-old Macron. Two, the CFTD and Unsa, have called for their members to back Macron on Sunday.

But while three other more left-wing unions including the biggest, the CGT, have called for a demonstration against Marine Le Pen's vision of French identity and opposition to immigration, they have stopped short of backing Macron. For

will be won in the streets."CGT leader Philippe Martinez said he "deeply disagreed" with that approach, arguing that Le Pen and Macron "are not the same thing". "The National Front is a racist, xenophobic party that is anti-women and anti-workers because it is also an economically liberal party," he said.

Le Pen hit back that the unions "are not defending workers' interests, they are looking after their own interests". "To see the CGT call on its members to vote for Macron, who is going to weaken the workers' lot, is just astonishing," she said. Macron is currently favorite to become France's youngest ever president, leading Le Pen by 19 points in the polls, but she has shown she is a canny campaigner.

She took her campaign Monday to the working-class Paris suburb of Villepinte where the first key speaker was Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, a eurosceptic from outside the FN who Le Pen has said will be her prime minister if wins on Sunday. She is hoping to capture some of the 1.7 million votes he won in the first round, although his support for Le Pen has divided his own party. Macron was to speak later at a modern convention centre near the La Villette science park in northeastern Paris as he seeks to highlight his appeal as a future-oriented innovator. In Paris, Le Pen's 88-year-old father Jean-Marie—whom she kicked out of the FN in 2015 — led a march from a gilded statue of Joan of Arc, the FN's nationalist icon, to Paris' Opera Garnier.

His presence in the campaign is an irritation for his daughter, after he repeatedly called the Nazi gas chambers a "detail" of history. Marine Le Pen, who has worked to rebrand the FN to shed its associations with her anti-Semitic father, on Sunday laid a wreath at a World War II monument in the port of Marseille as France marked a day of remembrance for the victims of the mass deportation of Jews to Nazi Germany during World War II. Macron paid his respects at Paris's Holocaust memorial. The deportation of French Jews to Nazi Germany holds a highly sensitive place in the national psyche. "What happened is unforgettable and unforgivable," Macron said at the memorial after pausing before a wall bearing the names of 76,000 Jews who were deported, of whom just 2,500 survived. "It should never happen again."—AFP



LYON: A picture shows vandalized campaign posters of French presidential candidates Emmanuel Macron, left, of the En Marche! movement and Marine Le Pen, right, of the far-right National Front (FN) in Lyon yesterday ahead of the second and final round of the French presidential election on May 7.—AFP

demonstrations will underscore the conspicuous absence of the united front they showed in 2002 when Le Pen's father Jean-Marie shocked the country by reaching the run-off.

On this day 15 years ago, some 1.3 million people took to the streets of France in union-led demonstrations to protest against the founder of the National Front (FN), including 400,000 in Paris. That show of force, coupled with a political closing of ranks, helped centre-right Jacques Chirac inflict a crushing defeat on Le Pen senior. This time, unions are divided over the choice

many on the left, the former banker's outlook is too economically liberal. Le Pen has tried to capitalize on their fears, saying last week that Macron would turn France into "a space, a wasteland, a trading room where there are only consumers and producers."

Not the same thing

Some militants have formed a movement they have called "Social Front" to block both candidates and will march yesterday under a banner saying: "Rock and a hard place: Social Front, it



STOCKHOLM: Parts of the Imam Ali Mosque lay destroyed by fire in Jarfalla north of Stockholm, Sweden, early yesterday.—AP

SWEDISH POLICE INVESTIGATE FIRE AT MOSQUE AS POSSIBLE ARSON

STOCKHOLM: Swedish police say they are investigating a fire that caused major damage to a mosque near Stockholm as possible arson. Stockholm police spokesman Lars Bystrom says "it appears to have been lit from the outside." He couldn't give further details pending an investigation. No one was injured in the blaze, which started late Sunday. Only a handful of people were in the building but earlier up to 500 people

had attended celebrations at the mosque. Mosque spokesman Akil Zahiri told the national news agency TT yesterday that he was "very troubled" as the mosque wasn't only his workplace but also "felt like another home." As migrants have flooded into Sweden, there have been increasing xenophobic attacks, including 112 fires last year at refugee reception centers, most of them arson.—AP

CUBA FACES LAST MAY DAY PARADE UNDER CASTRO

HAVANA: The Cuban government's traditional May Day parade yesterday is the last to be overseen by President Raul Castro—and the first without his late brother and revolutionary predecessor Fidel. The May 1 rally draws hundreds of thousands of Cubans into Havana's Revolution Square in a sea of red, white and blue national flags and portraits of Fidel Castro. But he died in November and Raul Castro, after just over a decade in power, has said he will step aside in February 2018.

Raul Castro has been cautiously opening up Cuba's state-run economy and strengthening its foreign relations—notably by re-establishing diplomatic ties with the United States. But yesterday's parade has the feel of the end of an era. It is not clear who will take Castro's place next year. Most rumors suggest it will be Miguel Diaz-Canel, 56, vice-president of the State Council. Despite ministerial experience and party credentials, he is seen as lacking a

support base in the military. "There is very high uncertainty about 2018," said Pavel Vidal, a former official of Cuba's central bank and an academic at Colombia's Javeriana University.

"One could expect a process of continuity" of Raul Castro's reforms, he added, "but not at the same speed." Cuba's economic fortunes depend largely on another country that will see May Day marches on Monday: Venezuela.

Yesterday's parade in Havana will make a show of support for Venezuela's leftist government which is facing violent opposition protests, top Cuban labor union leader Ulises Guiliarte said. Venezuela sells cut-price oil to its leftist allies in Havana. Cuba is currently in recession, dragged down by its ally's economic crisis. Analyst Andrew Otazo of Washington-based Cuba Study Group said that Cuba has started looking to other oil exporters in case the Venezuelan government collapses.—AFP

ITALY'S FORMER PM RENZI RE-ELECTED HEAD OF RULING DEMOCRATIC PARTY

ROME: Former prime minister Matteo Renzi won the leadership of Italy's ruling Democratic Party (PD) in a primary election Sunday, propelling him back to the forefront of the national political scene. Renzi, 42, resigned as prime minister in December after Italians overwhelmingly rejected a constitutional referendum aimed at streamlining the parliamentary system. Some two million people voted and Renzi himself had set the bar for success at one million voters.

Renzi's win was announced by him and his two rivals-Justice Minister Andrea Orlando and Michele Emiliano—well ahead of the end of counting. According to preliminary estimates, Renzi bagged 70 percent of the vote. "It is a huge responsibility. I thank from the bottom of my heart those men and women who believe in Italy," he tweeted. "This is not the second half of the same match, it's a new match," he said in a victory speech. "This is the beginning of a completely new story."

When he first took over the leadership in December 2013, Renzi won the backing of close on 68 percent of 2.8 million voters. He managed to deliver significant labor market reforms and modest growth, while overseeing the granting of legal recognition to gay relationships for the first time. But the recovery was not strong enough to pay any real political dividends, and alienated many on his party's far left, who broke away in February to form the Progressive and Democratic Movement (DP).

Renzi then stepped down as party leader with the aim of regaining legitimacy in a future vote. The winner of Sunday's vote will lead the party during legislative elections slated for spring 2018, unless parliamentarians come to an agreement on electoral reforms before then and call for early elections. During the only televised debate between Renzi and his two competitors, the former prime minister said he would do "everything to bring back energy, momentum

and vigour to the country", and railed against "stagnation that seems to be blocking political and institutional life" since the referendum.

Crowning of Renzi

Lorenzo De Sio, a professor of political sociology at the Luiss University in Rome, said: "Rather than a competition, we're looking at a process of legitimization, a sort of crowning of Renzi as leader of the PD." In addition to the contrasting styles, with Orlando and Emiliano generally more reserved than the exuberant Renzi during the televised debate, the event laid bare key differences

over national politics. Renzi disagrees with his two challengers on a wealth tax, which he opposes. If the spring election outcome requires the formation of a coalition following the legislative elections, Orlando and Emiliano have said they would seek to govern with left wing defectors or other parties on the left. Renzi, meanwhile, has not ruled out forming an alliance with centre-right leader and former premier Silvio Berlusconi. But on Sunday he said: "We want to have a large coalition but with citizens and associations not with the self-proclaimed parties which only represent themselves."—AFP



ROME: Former Italian Premier Matteo Renzi celebrates after winning the Democratic party's primary elections, in Rome.—AP

POLISARIO SAYS READY FOR W SAHARA TALKS WITH RABAT

ALGIERS: The Algiers-backed Polisario Front independence movement said yesterday it was prepared to embark on negotiations with Morocco on the disputed territory of Western Sahara. The Polisario is "ready to hold negotiations with Morocco on the basis of the right of Saharawis to self-determination", senior official Mhamed Khadad told a news conference in the Algerian capital. He said the African Union and United Nations should both be involved in the peace process in which the Polisario would aim for "freedom and national independence".

On Friday, the United Nations set its sights on restarting political talks on the territory after the Polisario pulled back fighters from a tense zone on the border with Mauritania. UN military observers confirmed that the Polisario forces carried out the withdrawal from the Guerguerat area on Thursday and Friday. "This action should improve the prospects of creating an environment to re-launch the negotiating process with a

new dynamic and a new spirit," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

News of the pullback came as the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution endorsing the new peace initiative and renewing the mandate of its MINURSO peacekeeping mission in Western Sahara for a year. The 450-strong MINURSO is comprised mostly of military observers monitoring a 1991 ceasefire between Morocco and the Polisario. Rabat welcomed the Security Council resolution.

France, which has friendly ties with Morocco, had insisted on a Polisario pullback from Guerguerat after Rabat withdrew its forces from the zone in February. Morocco and the Polisario fought for control of Western Sahara from 1974 to 1991, when Rabat took over the desert territory before the signing of the UN-brokered ceasefire. Rabat, which considers Western Sahara an integral part of Morocco, proposes autonomy for the resource-rich territory, but the Polisario insists on an independence referendum.—AFP

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THAI PRIME MINISTER ACCEPTS TRUMP'S INVITATION TO VISIT US

BANGKOK: Thailand's prime minister has accepted an invitation from President Donald Trump to visit the United States, his office said yesterday, as the US leader made an unexpected diplomatic initiative toward several Southeast Asian counterparts. Trump telephoned Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha and Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on Sunday to reaffirm traditional close relations and invite them for meetings.

The invitations followed another one in

a call late Saturday to Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. Washington's diplomacy in Asia has focused recently on China and tensions with North Korea, although Vice President Mike Pence included Indonesia on a recent Asia tour.

Prayuth's office said he had accepted Trump's invitation, while a Singapore Foreign Ministry statement said the two leaders "looked forward to meeting each other soon." No dates were mentioned for the visits. Human rights groups have criticized Prayuth for seizing power in a coup

and curbing democratic rights, while Duterte is scorned for his deadly war on illegal drugs. Both bristle at the criticisms. However, Washington has strategic concerns in countering Chinese influence in Southeast Asia. Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines are historically the most pro-Western nations in the region, but China's influence has been increasing as it flexes its economic muscle and projects its military power into the South China Sea. Prayuth's government last week announced approval of a plan to purchase

a submarine from China. Prayuth's office said he and Trump reaffirmed the importance of their countries' long-standing alliance. It also said Prayuth invited Trump to visit Thailand at a convenient time. The White House statement about the call to Lee mentioned that "robust security cooperation and close collaboration on regional and global challenges" mark the two countries' partnership.

The New York-based group Human Rights Watch, which had already criticized Trump for his invitation to Duterte, also deplored his

invitation to Prayuth. "With one brief phone call, he essentially gave the Thai junta a green light to continue on its abusive path: harassing and abusing activists into silence, cracking down on independent media, banning public protests and political meetings, and allowing increased use of torture," said Brad Adams, head of the group's Asia division. "The only thing in the region that has fallen further and faster than Thailand's respect for human rights is America's previous practice of including human rights considerations in its foreign policy."—AP

WINTER FIGHTING TOOK HEAVY TOLL ON AFGHANISTAN FORCES

WASHINGTON: Afghan security forces were killed at a "shockingly high" rate during what historically has been a winter lull in fighting against the Taliban, a US watchdog said in a report yesterday. According to the US government's Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), 807 troops from the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces died between Jan 1 and Feb 24. "Afghanistan remains in the grip of a deadly war. Casualties suffered by (ANDSF) in the fight against the Taliban and other insurgents continue to be shockingly high," the report noted.

Levels of violence have traditionally dipped over Afghanistan's cold winter months, but this year the Taliban continued to battle government forces, most successfully in a horrific April 19 attack on a military base outside the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif. The massacre saw insurgents armed with guns and suicide bombs slaughter at least 144 recruits, a US official said, though multiple sources have claimed the toll was higher still.

Spring offensive

The Afghan Taliban launched their "spring offensive" Friday, heralding fresh fighting the group said would include "conventional attacks, guerrilla warfare, complex martyrdom attacks (and) insider attacks." Afghan police and army units in 2015 took over from NATO the task of providing security for the country. According

to SIGAR, 6,785 Afghan soldiers and police officers were killed between Jan 1 and Nov 12, 2016, with another 11,777 wounded.

The Afghan government has not provided US Forces-Afghanistan with data for the last seven weeks of that year, but even the partial numbers showed an increase of about 35 percent from all of 2015, when some 5,000 security forces were killed. The SIGAR report also found that both Afghan government and insurgent groups slightly increased the amount of territory they held, as the number of areas previously considered "contested" dropped.

Afghan forces now control 59.7 percent of the country, up from 57.2 percent the previous quarter. The Taliban and other insurgent groups meanwhile saw their areas of control or influence increase slightly from about 10 percent to 11.1 percent. The US Congress created SIGAR to provide oversight into how the more than \$100 billion appropriated for Afghan reconstruction has been spent since 2002.

Part of its remit is to compile quarterly reports providing snapshots of the country's progress-or lack thereof-and highlight ongoing challenges to the security situation. The SIGAR report also points to a UN tally showing that civilian casualties in 2016 were the highest since the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan began recording them in 2009. That count found conflict-related civilian casualties in Afghanistan rose to 11,418 in 2016, including 3,498 killed and 7,920 wounded.—AFP



KANAGAWA: Japan's Maritime Self Defense Forces helicopter carrier Izumo sails out its Yokosuka Base in Kanagawa prefecture yesterday.—AFP

JAPANESE DESTROYER LEAVES PORT REPORTEDLY TO ESCORT US WARSHIPS

JAPAN INCREASES MILITARY ROLE AMID TENSION

TOKYO: A Japanese naval destroyer left port yesterday on a reported mission of escorting US military ships off the coast as Japan tries to increase its military role amid heightened tension on the Korean Peninsula. The helicopter carrier Izumo departed from the Yokosuka port near Tokyo in the morning. The destroyer was to meet up and escort a US supply ship in the Pacific Ocean south of Tokyo later yesterday, a new mission under the new security legislation allowing Japan's military a greater role in overseas activity, according to Japanese media reports.

They said that the US supply ship is expected

to refuel other American warships, including the USS Carl Vinson strike group, currently in the region. Japan's defense ministry only said that the Izumo left yesterday to eventually participate in an international naval event in Singapore on May 15. Tensions have increased as North Korea pushes to develop its missile and nuclear weapons programs in defiance of international sanctions and President Donald Trump warns of the potential threat Pyongyang's action pose to other countries.

Trump sent the USS Carl Vinson toward the region, and the US and South Korea also started

installing a missile defense system that is supposed to be partially operational within days. In Australia, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull used a commemoration of a World War II naval battle to warn North Korea against military threat. "Today Australia and the United States continue to work with our allies to address new security threats around the world," Turnbull said. "Together, we're taking a strong message to North Korea that we will not tolerate reckless, dangerous threats to the peace and stability of our region." Turnbull will meet Trump for the first time Thursday in New York.—AP



AFGHANISTAN: Afghan security personnel stand guard at a checkpoint on the outskirts of Jalalabad.—AFP

NEPAL'S TOP JUDGE SUSPENDED AFTER IMPEACHMENT MOTION FILED

KATHMANDU: Nepal's first female Supreme Court chief justice was suspended after an impeachment motion was filed in parliament accusing her of bias and interfering with executive powers. Sushila Karki, who had one of the highest positions ever held by a woman in Nepal, was suspended automatically after the motion signed by nearly half the members in parliament was registered. Supreme Court spokesman Mahendra Nath Upadhyaya said yesterday.

Deputy Prime Minister Bimalendra Nidhi resigned in protest of the impeachment motion, an absence likely to cause problems because crucial municipal and district elections are planned in two weeks. Nidhi was also the home minister tasked with arranging security for the polls. Nidhi handed in his resignation because he disagrees with the motion filed against the chief justice, which will bring further distance between the legislature and judiciary, his press adviser Ramjee Dahal said.

There was no discussion on the issue within the party, Dahal said. Nidhi is from the Nepali Congress party, one of the two ruling parties whose members signed the motion. Karki was accused of interfering with executive powers and issuing biased decisions.

The motion cited a court order overturning the government's appointment of the police chief. The motion, filed late Sunday, needs to be debated in parliament and then receive two-thirds of the votes in the 601-seat parliament for it to be approved.

Karki was known for zero tolerance against corruption. She was appointed chief justice in April 2016 and was due to retire next month. Hundreds of protesters gathered outside the parliament building on Monday chanting slogans against the motion against Karki. Rows of police in riot gear and barbed wire barricades stopped the protesters from reaching the parliament building.—AP



KATHMANDU: In this file photo, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Sushila Karki, right, and Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal observe a minute's silence during Democracy Day in Kathmandu, Nepal.—AP

CONTROVERSIAL INDIAN TV ANCHOR TO LAUNCH 'NATIONALISTIC' NEW CHANNEL

MUMBAI: India's most brash and controversial TV news anchor Arnab Goswami, renowned for his hectoring style, is about to launch a new channel and he's unapologetic about what viewers should expect. "I'm patriotic and nationalistic and so will the channel be," the 43-year-old said in a mellow tone drastically different from his manner on-screen where he regularly shouts at guests.

Goswami-known simply in India as "Arnab", such is his celebrity status will launch "Republic TV" within the next fortnight, six months after quitting Times Now where he

hosted a nightly news show. The journalist is adored by many Indians for his jingoistic, anti-Pakistan views but is equally loathed by others, often on the left, who accuse him of noisily trumpeting a right-wing agenda.

Commentators also criticize him for promoting a biased approach to covering news, but Goswami is unrepentant, rejecting any notion that journalists' reporting should be balanced and impartial. "When a Pakistani terrorist group kills my soldier, I shall not try to look at it through this distilled lens of objectivity and say I must understand the



Arnab Goswami

soldier. If that violates a few rules of journalism then I would like to violate a few more rules of journalism. I don't believe in this fake objectivity. I'm an Indian and I will be on the side of India." The Oxford University graduate started his career at the Kolkata-based Telegraph in 1994 before joining NDTV. In 2006 he helped set up Times Now where he anchored "The Newshour" before leaving in November.

Fox News of India?

Goswami has built up a team of around 300 full-time journalists and commercial staff in just four months at Republic TV's shiny new newsroom and studio in central Mumbai. He has big plans for his new venture. Goswami is confident of defeating what he calls the "Indian media cabal operating out of Delhi" by making Republic TV the most-watched English-language news channel in India. Then he will set his sights on media giants in the West.

"I believe that the hegemony of the Western media has to end," says Goswami, wearing black-rimmed glasses. "There has been too much of a Western dominance over English news media in the world. In the course of the next three or four years I am certain that I will correct it and I think the challenge to organizations like the BBC or CNN can only come from a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, vibrant, growing democracy like India."

Goswami criticized Western media coverage of Donald Trump, saying it was "almost embarrassing"

to see some American media outlets "fight a battle" with the US president. But he denied claims he wants to make Republic TV the "Fox News of India". "It's the losers in the Indian media market who call us the 'Fox News'. I've never seen Fox News so I don't seek any inspiration from it." Goswami's shows are high-decibel affairs, usually featuring half a dozen panelists on the screen, all trying to get a word in at the same time as the anchor barks questions.

Catchphrase

"I shout because in India if you don't shout you're not going to be heard," he said, describing more sober news shows as "boring". "I would request all the Western audiences to loosen up, roll up their sleeves, have a cup of coffee and wake up when they're doing the news because some of the news channels abroad put me to sleep," Goswami added.

He insists he will continue to use the catchphrase "nation wants to know" despite his previous employer filing a legal notice against him trying to stop him from doing so, claiming it is his intellectual property. Detractors say Republic TV has the backing of investors sympathetic to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party but Goswami insists he has no party political interest.

He supported the government's decision to scrap high-denomination banknotes, its fight for a single goods and services tax and surgical strikes on Pakistan but wants it to be tougher on militants in Kashmir and Maoist insurgents. Goswami describes himself as a "liberal nationalist", saying he supports secularism, greater inclusion, has championed women and LGBT rights, and also questioned both Hindu and Muslim fundamentalism. "I just do whatever I think comes from the heart. I'm a person who shoots from the hip, I pull no punches, I will do nothing else," he said.—AFP

INDIA SAYS TWO SOLDIERS KILLED, MUTILATED IN PAKISTANI ATTACK

SRINAGAR, India: Pakistani soldiers killed two members of an Indian army patrol on the de facto border in the disputed Kashmir region yesterday and then mutilated their bodies, the Indian army said, vowing to exact revenge. Accusations that Pakistani forces have mutilated dead Indian soldiers have in the past outraged the Indian public and intensified demands for retribution.

The Indian army said Pakistani forces fired rockets and mortar bombs at two Indian posts on the Line of Control dividing Muslim-majority Kashmir between the two sides, in the Krishna Ghati sector. "In an unsoldierly act by the Pak army the bodies of two of our soldiers in the patrol were mutilated," the Indian army said in a statement, referring to Pakistani forces. "Such despicable act of Pakistan army will be appropriately responded."

There was no immediate response from the Pakistan army and Reuters was not in a position to independently verify the

authenticity of the Indian account. It was also not immediately clear what led to the latest clash between the nuclear-armed neighbors. The armies have been facing off for decades across the Line of Control, an old ceasefire line through the region that both countries claim in full but rule in part. Recently, a 2003 ceasefire in the region has frayed with sporadic cross-border firing.

Both sides have accused each of violating the ceasefire and of beheading soldiers in the past. In November, three Indian soldiers were killed in an ambush, and the body of one of them was mutilated, the Indian army said at the time. Peace talks between the two countries have been on hold for years and diplomatic engagement is at a minimum. India accuses Pakistan of backing Islamist militants and encouraging them to attack Indian forces in Indian-controlled Kashmir and, occasionally, in other parts of India. Pakistan denies that and says India must hold negotiations on the future of Kashmir.—Reuters

STEP BACK FOR SHEIKH AHMAD...

Continued from Page 1

In recent years, they have been played out in the sporting realm, where his acquisition of jobs alone is evidence of his huge influence.

His titles include President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), member of the International Olympic Committee, President of the Association of the National Olympic Committees (ANOC), President of the Asian Handball Federation and Honorary President of Kuwait Football Association (KFA).

In football, Sheikh Ahmad sat on FIFA's Reform Committee and the Executive Committee of the Asian confederation. He was appointed President of the OCA at the age of 27 in 1991, succeeding his father Sheikh Fahad who had been killed in the Iraq invasion of Kuwait the previous year. Sheikh Fahad, then president of the KFA, sparked one of the biggest controversies in World Cup history when he came down from the stands to summon his players from the pitch until the referee agreed to disallow a France goal at the 1982 finals.

The son shared his father's passion for football, even if his involvement in the game outside Kuwait was initially on an informal basis. As head of ANOC, he was a key supporter of Thomas Bach when the German replaced Jacques Rogge as president of the IOC in 2013 and it was in an attempt at king-making that he first stepped into the spotlight in football.

After years orchestrating campaigns behind the scenes through his Olympic connections, he publicly backed Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa's failed 2009 attempt to oust then-AFC president Mohammed bin Hammam from his seat on the FIFA Executive Committee. The move was the first of a series of proxy battles between Sheikh Ahmad and Qatari Bin Hammam, with the enmity

between the pair fuelling an escalation in the battle for control of the Asian game.

The Kuwaiti's camp had greater success two years later when the Sheikh Ahmad-backed Prince Ali bin Hussain defeated Bin Hammam ally Chung Mong-joon to become Asia's FIFA Vice President's position in 2011. He then backed incumbent Sepp Blatter against Bin Hammam in the FIFA presidential election later the same year, a poll from which the AFC President was ultimately barred. Sheikh Ahmad was a key supporter of Bahraini Sheikh Salman when he was elected president of the AFC in 2013 following Bin Hammam's lifetime ban from the game for corruption. Two years later, he won a place on the FIFA Executive Committee and backed Blatter as the Swiss saw off the challenge of Sheikh Ahmad's former protegee Prince Ali.

In the lead-up to last year's FIFA presidential election, he was courted by both Sheikh Salman and Gianni Infantino before the Swiss emerged victorious. Sheikh Ahmad's influence seemed to be at its peak but, while he was making waves on the global stage, there was controversy at home. He endured a very public family feud that saw him handed a suspended six-month prison sentence for quoting remarks by the country's ruler without permission in 2015. The conviction was later quashed.

Kuwait was also banned by FIFA and the IOC over government interference in sport stemming from the Sheikh Ahmad's domestic issues. The immediate impact of his decision to withdraw from all of his football positions means next week he will not stand for re-election for the FIFA Council, which replaced the Executive Committee, when the AFC meets for its congress in Bahrain. As he retains his place at the top table in the Olympic movement, however, the likelihood that he exercises no future influence on the world of football looks slim. — Reuters



ISTANBUL: People walk on a bridge as they gather in Bakirkoy district as part of the May Day rally, in Istanbul yesterday. — AFP

ANONYMOUS APP 'YIK YAK' SHUTS DOWN

Continued from Page 1

Yik Yak said that as part of its shutdown "a few members of the Yik Yak team will be joining the Square family here in Atlanta."

Yik Yak and similar apps gained momentum

as young users became attracted to the notion of anonymous comments about teachers and students. Yik Yak allowed smartphone users to see posts in a radius up to five miles (eight kilometers), part of a flurry of apps that offer novel ways to interact on social networks without revealing one's identity. Yik Yak co-founders Tyler

Droll and Brooks Buffington said the app was created "because we wanted to help you connect with the people right around you on campus, whether you knew them or not." But some schools sought to block the apps because of pranks, rumor-mongering and even bomb threats. — AP

OPPOSITION MP QUERIES GOVT OVER FIFA'S...

Continued from Page 1

A number of lawmakers have already called for probing the allegations especially their relations to the international sanctions against Kuwaiti sports.

In another development, MP Mohammad Al-Dallal asked the Foreign Minister if Iran was involved in the assassination of Kuwaiti businessman Mohammad Al-Shellahi who was gunned down in Istanbul on Saturday along with an Iranian personality considered to be from the opposition. The lawmaker asked about the official information

obtained from the Turkish official sides and the Kuwaiti Embassy in Ankara about the assassination incident.

Dallal queried if Iran is officially involved since the assassinated Iranian is from the opposition. He asked about the diplomatic, political and legal procedures the ministry plans to undertake to follow up the assassination issue and ensure that the culprits are penalized. Several lawmakers have already described the incident as a political crime and called on Kuwaiti authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure the arrest of the perpetrators.

GERMANY SEEKS END TO YEMEN WAR

Continued from Page 1

more than 10,000 civilians and created a humanitarian crisis in what was already the Arab world's poorest country. The UN recently said some 18.8 million people in the country need humanitarian help or protection.

The German leader was greeted by Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan upon her arrival yesterday in the Emirati capital, Abu Dhabi. The crown prince is the half-brother of the country's ailing president and his presumed successor. Emirati officials did not allow foreign journalists based in the country to witness Merkel's visit. German officials have said Merkel would press

Gulf rulers to do more to take in refugees and provide humanitarian relief for those fleeing conflict in Muslim-majority countries.

Germany has provided refuge to hundreds of thousands of people from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan in recent years. Trade is high on Merkel's agenda too. Her delegation includes prominent German business leaders looking to strengthen ties with the country's two largest trading partners in the Middle East. Her meetings in the Emirates, which includes the Mideast commercial hub of Dubai, would include discussion of a free-trade agreement between the Gulf states in the European Union and "how we can move ahead and intensify our economic relations still further," she said. — AP



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Focus

MACRON A SHOT IN THE ARM FOR JADED FRANCE

By Eloi Rouyer

Many French voters opted for Emmanuel Macron, the 39-year-old centrist now favorite to become the next president, just to block his far-right rival Marine Le Pen. A poll published last week showed that 41 percent of the voters who backed him in the April 23 first round did so out of tactical considerations rather than real conviction, believing he has the best chance of defeating 48-year-old Le Pen in Sunday's run-off. But the boyish-looking ex-banker also attracts true followers, who see his youth, pragmatism and optimism as the best remedy for a country mired in economic decline and crippling self-doubt.

"A strong turnaround, that's what I'm hoping for from Macron," said Isabelle Babin, a 55-year-old executive who joined dozens of campaigners from the candidate's "En Marche" (On The Move) movement for a symbolic march on Saturday in the city of Lyon. The former banker aiming to become France's youngest ever president may be "smooth, preppy and a little bit of a teacher's pet," she admits. But for Babin, his private sector experience is a breath of fresh air in a jaded political system, whose two main parties crashed out of the election in the first round. "They cannot understand society because they are outside of it," she said of his rivals.

'Only one choice'

Macron's meteoric rise from presidential advisor in 2012 to economy minister in Francois Hollande's Socialist government from 2014 to 2016 to presidential frontrunner has been attributed to a mix of talent, opportunism and sheer good luck. His top spot in the first round triggered rejoicing among members of his year-old "En Marche" movement, which he has positioned as "neither of the left nor the right."

And yet while he still enjoys a double-digit lead over Le Pen in second-round polls, the gap is narrowing, forcing his troops to re-mobilise. On Saturday, around 300 En Marche campaigners fanned out along the banks of the River Saone in Lyon to try to woo voters tempted to abstain in the run-off. "There is only one choice, that of the republic and Emmanuel Macron," France's deputy sports minister Thierry Braillard said as he led the supporters. In the first round, Macron polled 30.31 percent in the bourgeois southeastern city-six points above his national average.

'Trust younger generation'

Campaigners there are confident of victory over the anti-immigration, anti-EU Le Pen, who has cast her rival as a puppet of the "oligarchy". But they admit that their champion's mix of pro-business reforms and measures to boost take-home pay and integrate minorities has failed to garner much enthusiasm. "He's too capitalist for people on the left and too tainted by Hollande's presidency for people on the right," said Emmanuelle Vignaud, a 43-year-old employee of a multi-national company.

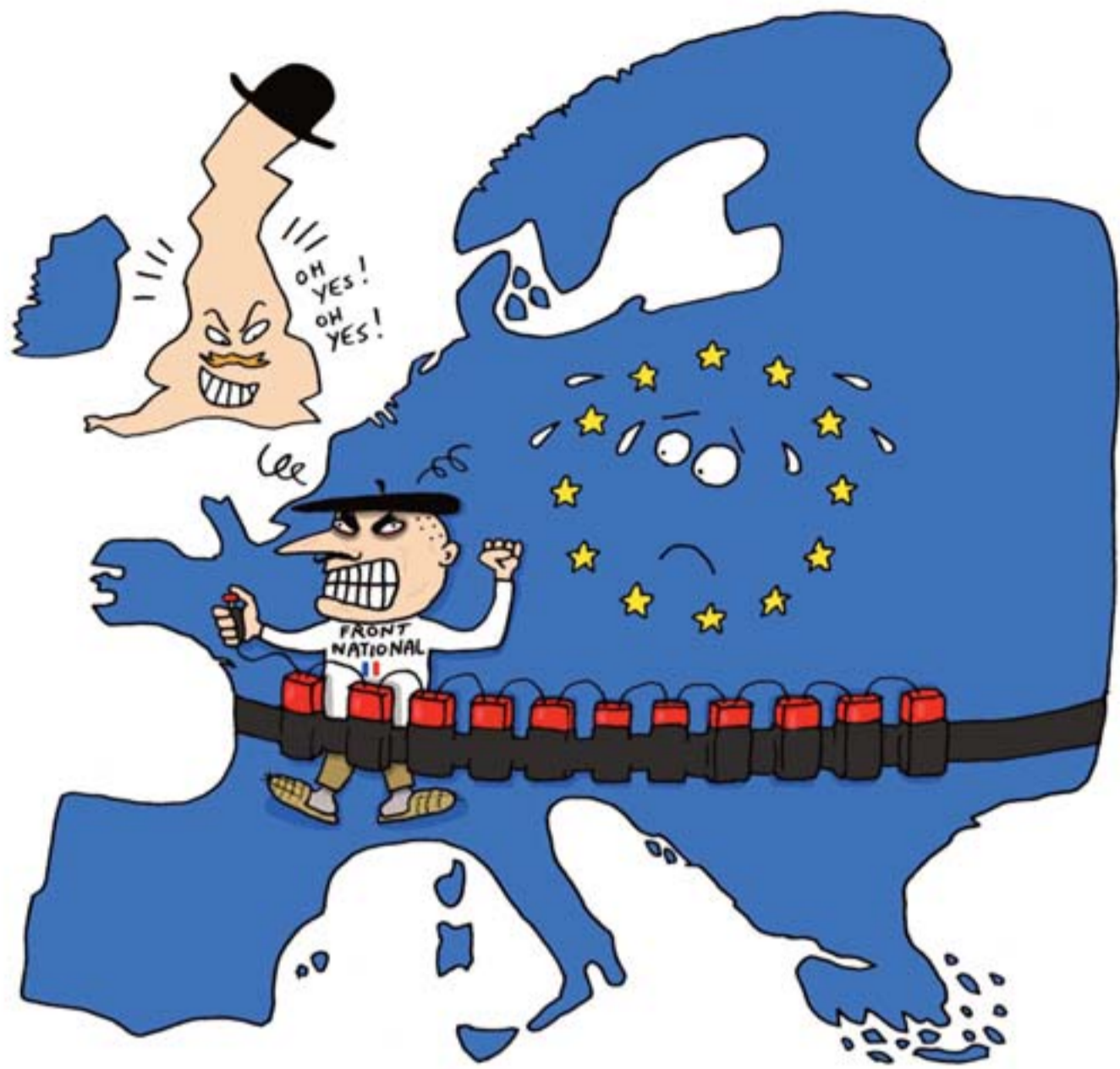
Vignaud admitted that Macron had "messed up" the start of his second-round campaign, appearing "quite arrogant at a time when, given he is facing Le Pen, he needs to show gravitas." "But he will be a very good president," she said, praising the intellect of the high-flying former philosophy student who attended France's top school for public servants. Jean Visconte, a 64-year-old salesman, said he was seduced by Macron's youth. "If we don't trust the younger generation, we're old fools who are beyond redemption!" he declared.

Going fishing

Others praised his attempt to transcend France's entrenched left-right divide, which has seen some accuse him of trying to be all things to all voters. "Macron chose the only possible alternative in taking the best of both sides," said Alain Jacquard, a 75-year-old doctor, accusing the Socialists and right-wing Republicans whose candidates were eliminated in the first round of "spending their time demolishing what the other side did."

"Macron is a politician who believes in redistributing wealth on condition that we can generate the wealth," he said, summarizing the candidate's program. That pragmatism has proven a hard sell among the 19.6 percent of voters who backed hard left radical Jean-Luc Melenchon in the first round, many of whom have announced plans to "go fishing"-French slang for abstentionism-on Sunday. But on the centre-left, it has found fertile ground. For Pierre, a 26-year-old civil servant and Socialist Party member who was among the campaigners in Lyon, Macron is the choice of the "realistic left." "He can unite society," said the farmer's son. — AFP

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ASIAN NATIONS PULLED INTO CHINA'S ORBIT

By Martin Petty and Manuel Mogato

Across Asia, more and more countries are being pulled into Beijing's orbit, with the timid stance adopted by Southeast Asian nations on the South China Sea at a weekend summit a clear sign this fundamental geostrategic shift is gathering momentum. US President Donald Trump's flurry of calls at the weekend to the leaders of the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore might cheer those who fear his predecessor Barack Obama's "pivot" to Asia has been abandoned in favor of an "America First" agenda.

But White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus said the conversations were aimed at lining up Asian partners in case tensions over North Korea lead to "nuclear and massive destruction in Asia," and mentioned no broader strategic goal. Southeast Asian nations will need more than that to convince them the United States still has their backs. In the meantime, some are leaning closer to China, soft-peddling quarrels over the disputed South China Sea and angling for a slice of Beijing's "One Belt, One Road" infrastructure investment program to compensate for the US abandonment of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact.

The unexpected bonhomie that has emerged between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping could give Asian countries further confidence to continue their swing towards Beijing. "Before, most Southeast Asian states wanted to benefit from Chinese regional economic initiatives and from American pushback against China," said Malcolm Cook, a senior fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore. "The second part of this balance is now in question. Hence, the pressure to acquiesce to China diplomatically and on security issues is stronger."

'It's pointless'

Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte, piqued by the Obama administration's criticism of his human rights record, last year announced his "separation" from longtime ally the United States while on a visit to Beijing. The White House described Trump's conversation with the firebrand Philippines leader as "very friendly" and - prompting criticism from Human Rights Watch for "effectively endorsing Duterte's murderous war on drugs" - invited him to Washington. But, underlining his new-found friendship with Beijing, Duterte on Monday inspected a Chinese naval ships docked at his hometown, the first visit of its kind to the Philippines in years. Duterte, who last year put aside a legal challenge to Beijing's sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea to start negotiating billions of dollars worth of loans and infrastructure investments, chaired the latest summit of the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Manila.

Several ASEAN diplomats said China sent officials to lobby the Philippines ahead of the summit, and before the leaders had even gathered Duterte said it was pointless pressuring Beijing over its maritime activities. An early draft of the summit statement seen by Reuters made references to land reclamation and militarization in the disputed



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte (center) poses for photos with Chinese sailors while visiting the guided missile frigate Changchun berthed at the Davao international port yesterday. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte visited Chinese warships docked in his home town and raised the prospect of future joint exercises, highlighting fast-warming relations despite competing claims in the South China Sea. — AFP

waterway, but they were subsequently dropped, as were references to "tensions" and "escalation of activities". Cook said it was clear that, with the Philippines steering the summit to this conclusion, "it is no longer just Cambodia that is acting as an agent of Chinese influence in ASEAN over the South China Sea dispute."

ASEAN risks losing leverage

Thailand and Malaysia have also moved closer to China. Thailand's relations with Washington came under strain during the Obama administration because of concerns about freedoms under its military-dominated government. Trump invited Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha to visit Washington during their call on Sunday, but the former general's government has its eyes elsewhere: last week it approved the first of three submarine purchases from China worth more than \$1 billion. Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong says Washington's new posture has shifted Asia's political and economic balance.

Lee, whose country, like Vietnam, has shown no signs of moving closer to Beijing, stressed to his ASEAN counterparts

on Saturday that, despite Trump's "radically different approach", they should balance their ties between the United States and China. Trump has said he will attend two summits in the region in November. But Southeast Asian nations are trying to gauge how far they can still rely on Washington as a shield against Chinese assertiveness. ASEAN foreign ministers will be seeking answers at a meeting with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in Washington this Thursday.

Uncertainty over Washington's commitment, analysts say, will only draw ASEAN countries further towards China, which can lure them with cheap loans, infrastructure investments and tariff cuts, but with a risk of diminished bargaining power. Thitinan Pongsudhirak, director of the Institute of Security and International Studies at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University, said it was imperative for ASEAN to regain leverage by bringing Washington back into the equation and expanding the influence of Japan. "ASEAN is in a precarious position now with the concessions, accommodation and even appeasement with China," Thitinan said. "If China continues to be shrewd and takes ASEAN on another ride, then ASEAN will be much worse off." — Reuters

OUTSPOKEN NIGERIAN EMIR FACING GRAFT PROBE

By Aminu Abubakar

One of Nigeria's most prominent Muslim leaders is under investigation on suspicion of embezzlement, fuelling rumors that some want him removed after he made a series of comments about the need for social reforms. Anti-corruption investigators are looking into the accounts of the Emir of Kano, Muhammad Sanusi II, following allegations of gross mismanagement of royal finances. "We have gone far in the investigation... to safeguard the honor and prestige of the emirate council," the head of the anti-corruption unit in the northern state of Kano, Muhyi Magaji said.

The treasurer and secretary of the state-funded royal court have been summoned for questioning today, he added. A source familiar with the investigation said the probe centred on the use of six billion naira (\$19 million, 17 million euros) of palace funds to pay for luxury cars, chartered flights, phone and internet bills as well as other personal expenses. The council has denied the allegations. "The emirate council has never bought a Rolls Royce for the emir," treasurer Mahe Bashir Wali told reporters last Monday. "These cars were given as gifts by his friends after he became emir." Wali maintained that the emir always bought his airline tickets with personal money and that the state government approved all his spending.

Courting criticism

The emir, who is revered in Nigeria's Muslim-majority north and whose guidance is sought in spiritual and temporal

matters, was appointed in June 2014 after the death of his predecessor, Ado Bayero. In the last three years, the Western-educated ruler has broken with royal tradition, speaking out about the need for social reform in a fiercely conservative region. To some extent, that is unsurprising. In his previous job as governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, as he was then known, caused shockwaves by alleging a \$20 billion fraud at the state-run oil company. In response, the president at the time, Goodluck Jonathan, suspended the trained economist and banker in what many saw as politically motivated retribution.

As emir, Sanusi has said that men without sufficient means should not take more than one wife, prompting protests from clerics and residents in a city where polygamy is deeply entrenched. He has also hit out at the federal government's economic policies, saying they have led to poor governance and lack of development in the north, setting him on a collision course with the authorities in both Abuja and Kano. Recently he publicly criticized the governor of the neighboring state of Zamfara, who blamed divine retribution and "fornication" for a mass outbreak of meningitis that has killed more than 800 people in the north.

'Truth to power'

The Kano emirate dates back more than 1,000 years, during which time it has developed norms and etiquette to which every emir is expected to adhere. That includes maintaining a dignified silence and avoiding open confrontation with political leaders, instead cultivating them in private for the greater public good. A Zamfara senator,

Kabiru Marafa, has accused Sanusi of "derailing from the tradition laid down by the former occupants of the throne he is sitting upon now." "He is no longer a whistleblower or a university lecturer," he was quoted as saying by The Punch newspaper in an interview. Sanusi's supporters reject the assertion. "Telling truth to power is in his blood, it runs in his lineage and nothing can make him change," one of the emir's aides said. "This is raw politics and nothing more," added Nura Ma'aji, an anti-corruption activist based in Kano. "The emir has come out bluntly and told truth to power... (and) the state government is using the anti-corruption commission to disgrace him."

History repeated?

The appointment of traditional rulers in Nigeria is agreed by a committee of "kingmakers" and subject to the ratification of the state governor, who also reserves the right to remove them from office. Sanusi's grandfather, Sir Muhammad Sanusi, found himself in a similar situation in 1963 after nine years as emir. He wielded power as one of Kano's most charismatic emirs but was forced to abdicate, allegedly for embezzling tax funds and insubordination to political authority. "The truth of the matter is that (he) was removed because of his arrogance and refusal to accord the then regional government the respect it deserved," said journalist and blogger Jaafar Jaafar. "His indictment by a report of a commission was only used as a pretext to dethrone him. And from all indication his grandson is following in his footsteps." The current emir has yet to make any comment on the claims. — AFP

HEARN TELLS CRITICS TO 'GET OUT OF THE SPORT'

LONDON: Snooker supremo Barry Hearn has said there's no going back to the days of huge pay-outs for 147 breaks, insisting those complaining about the current prize money on offer for maximums should "get out of the sport". There had been no 147s heading into the second day of the World Championship final at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre in northern England, with a relatively modest £5,000 on offer to a player achieving the feat during the tournament. No player has made a Crucible maximum since snooker great Stephen Hendry's 147 in 2012 and there have only been 10 in the history of the tournament, with Hendry and Ronnie O'Sullivan compiling three apiece. In 1997, O'Sullivan, nicknamed 'the Rocket' for his speed around the table, took just five minutes and 20 seconds to compile one of the most astounding maximums in snooker history, let alone at a World Championship. — AFP



USA CRICKET ASSOCIATION FACES EXPULSION FROM ICC

LONDON: The United States Cricket Association (USACA) faces expulsion from the International Cricket Council (ICC), the sport's global governing body said yesterday. The ICC Board said the ICC Full Council should "consider the expulsion" of USACA at its meeting in June, because the organization has failed to co-operate with efforts to unify cricket in the United States. USACA had already been temporarily suspended from ICC membership in 2015, the third time in the last 12 years. "The decision to pass this resolution was not taken lightly by the ICC Board," ICC chief executive David Richardson said in a statement. "Our focus throughout this two year process has been on the unification of the USA cricket community behind USACA to grow and develop the sport," he said. "But it has become clear that this is just not possible and, having invested so much time and resources into helping USACA and with little in the way of cooperation from USACA, the ICC Board now felt that the only remaining option was for the ICC Full Council to consider expulsion of USACA as a member of the ICC.—AFP

WEST HAM'S GAME 'CRUCIAL' FOR TOTTENHAM TITLE PUSH

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur must win their Premier League game against West Ham United on Friday to cut the lead at the top and put pressure on leaders Chelsea, manager Mauricio Pochettino has said. Tottenham, who beat rivals Arsenal 2-0 on Sunday, are four points behind Chelsea in second but can reduce the deficit to one point if they win against West Ham and Chelsea fail to beat relegation-threatened Middlesbrough. With four games left in the season, Pochettino said that his side had to win at the London Stadium and keep the title chase alive. "We have reduced the gap to Chelsea again. And now we have to be focused because we have on Friday a very important game against West Ham," Pochettino told reporters. "We will have the chance to play before. It will be a tough game and a difficult game and if we are able to win we will see what happens. "It could be (important). The race for the title is down to four points and we will see what will happen." — Reuters



BOSTON: Jon Jay #30 of the Chicago Cubs slides safely into home plate under the tag of Joe Kelly #56 of the Boston Red Sox in the seventh inning of a game against at Fenway Park on April 30, 2017. — AFP

NATIONALS MAUL METS; PADRES BEAT GIANTS

NEW YORK: Anthony Rendon went 6-for-6 with three home runs and a career-high 10 RBIs, and Matt Wieters had three hits, including two homers and four RBIs, as the Washington Nationals crushed the New York Mets 23-5 on Sunday, salvaging the series finale in convincing fashion. It was the first multi-homer game in the career of Rendon, who entered the day with five RBIs. He set a career high with six hits and lifted his average from .226 to .278. Washington hit a team-record seven homers. The Nationals are the first team in major league history to score at least 14 runs five times in April. Ryan Zimmerman also had three hits for Washington, which set a franchise record (including Montreal) for runs in a game.

INDIANS 12, MARINERS 4

Francisco Lindor had two hits, including a home run and three RBIs, and Michael Brantley capped an eight-run third inning with a home run as Cleveland collected 15 hits in support of starter Josh Tomlin (2-3). Right-hander Chase De Jong (0-2) made his first major league start for the Mariners, and he gave up six runs and nine hits in 2 2/3 innings.

BLUE JAYS 3, RAYS 1

Jose Bautista tied the score with a double, Russell Martin drove in the go-ahead run with a single and Toronto used a three-run eighth inning to help win a series for the first time this

season. The Blue Jays also won two consecutive games for the first time this season. JP Howell (1-1) allowed a walk in one-third of an inning to pick up the win. Roberto Osuna pitched around an error by shortstop Ryan Goins and an infield single in the ninth for his third save of the season. The Blue Jays lost starter Aaron Sanchez after one inning with what the club said was a split right middle finger.

TIGERS 7, WHITE SOX 3

Jim Adduci keyed a four-run fourth inning with an RBI double, Jose Iglesias had a two-run double and Justin Upton tagged a solo home run to help Detroit snap a four-game losing streak and end Chicago's six-game winning streak. Todd Frazier chased Detroit starter Jordan Zimmermann (3-1) when he led off the sixth inning with his third home run of the season. Zimmermann gave up seven hits, three runs, walked two and struck out five.

BREWERS 4, BRAVES 3

Domingo Santana hit a solo home run and a three-run homer, and Matt Garza turned in his best start of the season to lead Milwaukee. Garza allowed three runs on six hits through 6 2/3 innings after Atlanta scored 21 runs on 32 hits the previous two nights. Garza (1-0) earned his first victory in his third start after missing the first two weeks of the season with a strained groin.

MARLINS 10, PIRATES 3

Justin Bour went 4-for-5 with six RBIs to help Miami rally for a win. Bour, who fell a triple short of the cycle, capped his performance with a two-run homer in the seventh. Bour, who entered the game with a .184 batting average, helped the Marlins break a four-game losing streak. The Pirates had their four-game win streak snapped and missed completing their first road sweep of the Marlins since 1993.

ASTROS 7, ATHLETICS 2

Dallas Keuchel became the first pitcher in the majors to reach five victories on the season, carrying a shutout into the eighth inning, to lead Houston. Keuchel (5-0) was one strike shy of twirling eight shutout innings, but Athletics shortstop Adam Rosales' two-out single facilitated a pitching change. Rosales subsequently scored when first baseman Ryan Healy slapped a single to center field off Astros reliever Luke Gregerson, who limited the damage to one run. Keuchel allowed three hits and two walks while striking out nine over 7 2/3 innings. It marked the fifth time in six starts that he surrendered one earned run or none.

REDS 5, CARDINALS 4

Joey Votto singled with the bases loaded in the eighth inning to complete a Cincinnati comeback from a 4-0 deficit. The Reds loaded the bases against Trevor Rosenthal with a walk, single and another walk before Votto's one-out single let the Reds snap a four-game losing streak. The Cardinals had built the lead with one run in the first, which scored on a wild pitch, and Matt Carpenter's three-run double in the fifth.

ORIOLES 7, YANKEES 4 (11 INNINGS)

Mark Trumbo hit the tiebreaking single with two outs in the top of the 11th inning to lift Baltimore, which blew a two-run lead in the ninth before getting the extra-inning win. Trumbo gave the Orioles their second lead of the game when he grounded a clean single up the middle off Bryan Mitchell to put Baltimore ahead 5-4. The Orioles were one out from a 4-2 win in the ninth before Didi Gregorius hit a two-run single off Donnie Hart to tie it.

TWINS 7, ROYALS 5

Miguel Sano drove in five runs and Phil Hughes pitched effectively into the sixth inning to give Minnesota the win and hand Kansas City its ninth straight loss. Sano hit a three-run homer in the third to erase an early 2-0 deficit. He added a run-scoring single in the fourth and an RBI single in the sixth. It was his

fourth straight multi-hit game to raise his average to .316. Hughes (4-1) was charged with four runs on 10 hits, including a Lorenzo Cain home run, in 5 2/3 innings.

ANGELS 5, RANGERS 2

Jeffrey Marte drove in three runs with a single and home run to lead Los Angeles. Kole Calhoun hit a leadoff home run in the third inning for the Angels and Marte delivered a two-run single in the fifth. Marte's homer was a solo shot in the ninth that capped the scoring.

DODGERS 5, PHILLIES 3

Hyun-Jim Ryu earned his first win since 2014, Justin Turner extended his major-league-leading hitting streak to 16 games with a 3-for-4 day, and Los Angeles finished a sweep of the series. It was the sixth win in eight games for the Dodgers and a huge victory for Ryu, who suffered a shoulder injury and sat out the entire 2015 season. He rehabbed and returned in 2016 only to suffer an elbow injury in his only start, sidelining him again.

PADRES 5, GIANTS 2 (12 INNINGS)

Wil Myers hit a three-run home run in the 12th inning off George Kontos to give San Diego a comeback win. The Giants led 2-0 entering the ninth, but the San Francisco closer

Mark Melancon gave up a two-run homer to pinch hitter Hector Sanchez that sent the game into extra innings. Giants starting pitcher Ty Blach surrendered three hits in seven shutout innings.

DIAMONDBACKS 2, ROCKIES 0 (13 INNINGS)

Daniel Descalso belted a two-run homer in the 13th inning to drive in the game's only runs. The game was the first ever to go scoreless past the 11th inning at Chase Field, which opened in 1998. Descalso's homer came off Jordan Lyles (0-1) and drove in Brandon Drury, who reached on an infield hit. D-backs starter Patrick Corbin allowed no runs and just two hits in 6 1/3 innings. Rockies starter German Marquez matched him by shutting the D-backs out through six innings while allowing six hits.

RED SOX 6, CUBS 2

Marco Hernandez scored the go-ahead run on a wild pitch by Pedro Strop in Boston's four-run eighth inning. Hanley Ramirez homered for the second straight day for the Red Sox, who took two of three games in Chicago's first visit to Fenway since 2014. Kris Bryant extended his hitting streak to 11 games with his fourth homer, a solo shot. — Reuters

MLB results/standings

Boston 6, Chicago Cubs 2; Arizona 2, Colorado 0 (13 innings); LA Dodgers 5, Philadelphia 3; San Diego 5, San Francisco 2 (12 innings); LA Angels 5, Texas 2; Cincinnati 5, St. Louis 4; Minnesota 7, Kansas City 5; Milwaukee 4, Atlanta 3; Houston 7, Oakland 2; Washington 23, NY Mets 5; Detroit 7, Chicago White Sox 3; Miami 10, Pittsburgh 3; Cleveland 12 Seattle 4; Toronto 3, Tampa Bay 1; Baltimore 7, NY Yankees 4 (11 innings).

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division			
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	17	8	.680
Baltimore	15	8	.652	Miami	11	12	.478
NY Yankees	13	11	.542	Philadelphia	11	12	.478
Boston	12	14	.462	Atlanta	10	13	.435
Tampa Bay	8	17	.320	NY Mets	10	14	.417
Toronto	7	16	.304	6.5			
Central Division				Central Division			
Cleveland	14	10	.583	Chicago Cubs	13	11	.542
Chicago White Sox	13	10	.565	Milwaukee	13	13	.500
Minnesota	12	11	.522	St. Louis	12	12	.500
Detroit	12	12	.500	Cincinnati	11	13	.458
Kansas City	7	16	.304	Pittsburgh	11	13	.458
2				Western Division			
Western Division				Colorado	16	10	.615
Houston	14	13	.519	Arizona	16	11	.593
LA Angels	11	14	.440	LA Dodgers	14	12	.538
Oakland	11	14	.440	San Diego	11	16	.407
Texas	11	14	.440	San Francisco	9	17	.346
Seattle	11	15	.423	7			



PHOENIX: Daniel Descalso #3 of the Arizona Diamondbacks is dunked with gatorade after hitting a two run home run to defeat the Colorado Rockies 2-0 in the 13th inning of the MLB game at Chase Field on April 30, 2017 in Phoenix. — AFP



BUDAPEST: Mercedes' Finnish driver Valtteri Bottas performs his skills yesterday during a special car show in Budapest, Hungary. — AFP

MOTOR RACING

THE FIRST WIN IS THE HARDEST, LAUDA TELLS BOTTAS

SOCHI: Valtteri Bottas waited 81 races for his first Formula One win to come along but it will get easier for the Finn after Sunday's success in Russia, according to former world champion Niki Lauda. "To win the first grand prix...is always the most difficult one," the retired triple champion and non-executive chairman of Bottas's Mercedes team, told reporters. "This I know out of my own experience. So every one that comes next, for him his life is easier. He has proven that he can win.

"As soon as you win the first grand prix, a big load comes off," added the Austrian, who was surprised Ferrari did not win in Sochi given their race pace and having both cars starting on the front row. Instead, Bottas roared past both Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen to seize the lead into the first corner in a move that decided the outcome. The Finn has had to wait longer than most to scale the top step of the podium but the man he replaced in January, retired 2016 world champion Nico

Rosberg, took his first victory in his 111th grand prix start after also starting out at Williams.

Fellow-Finn Mika Hakkinen, world champion in 1998 and 1999 with McLaren, took 96 races. Only last week, reporters were asking Bottas about having to accept so-called 'team orders' and help triple champion team mate Lewis Hamilton in the title battle against Vettel but it looks different already. Bottas is now just 10 points adrift of Hamilton and, having start-

ed the season as an emergency stopgap, can now quite legitimately see himself in the championship mix. That situation poses another headache for Hamilton but is one that Mercedes are relaxed about having to manage. They do not expect the relationship to turn sour as it did between the Briton and Rosberg.

"He (Bottas) took up that risky move to be Lewis Hamilton's team mate, to take over the reigning world champion's car, and I think that

he has done a very good job," said team boss Toto Wolff. "The relationship between the two is very intact, Lewis was one of the first to congratulate Valtteri on his first race victory and I think that shows the respect that they have towards each other. "Nevertheless, both of them are fierce competitors and they will want to win races and fight for a championship; But I don't think it will affect the relationship and the dynamics within the team like it did in the last years between Nico and Lewis." — Reuters



PARIS: Stade Francais Paris' French fullback Djibril Camara (right) vies with Racing 92 French flanker Wenceslas Laurent (center) during the French Top 14 rugby union match between Stade Francais vs Racing 92 at the Jean Bouin stadium in Paris on April 30, 2017. — AFP

STADE WIN BATTLE OF PARIS TO KEEP THE PLAY-OFF HOPES ALIVE

PARIS: Stade Francais defeated Paris rivals Racing 92 by 27-23 on Sunday to keep their Top 14 play-off hopes alive in a bruising match which saw both sides have a man sent off in the first half. In the first clash between the sides since a controversial merger fell through, Stade ran in three tries to Racing's two but a penalty by Dan Carter 10 minutes from time allowed the visitors to take home a losing bonus point. Defending champions Racing remain in the sixth and final play-off spot with 58 points, just ahead of Stade, also with 58, with one weekend of the regular season left.

"Our chances of qualifying are tiny but they do exist," said Stade coach Gonzalo Quesada. "We will go to Montpellier next Saturday without some players who will be rested (ahead of the European Challenge Cup final against Gloucester) but we will still have a very competitive team." The two sides were locked at 13-13 at the break with a try apiece from Stade skipper Sergio Parise on 34 minutes and veteran Racing centre Casey Laulala on the stroke of half-time.

Three minutes before the interval, both packs squared up and locks Wenceslas Laurent of Racing and Stade's Pascal Pape were red-carded. Pape, 36, in what was probably his last match at the Stade Jean-Bouin after 10 years in the first team, received a standing ovation from the bench as he walked off. Stade stormed into a 27-13 lead after two tries in the space of four minutes early in the second half from winger Djibril Camara and centre Jonathan Danty, who outsprung All Blacks winger Joe Rokocoko to touch down his own kick ahead. Racing prop Ben Tameifuna cut the

deficit with a 62nd minute try which Carter converted.

Carter then added the crucial late penalty to complete his 13-point haul. Double World Cup winner Victor Vito crossed for a brace of tries as leaders La Rochelle withstood a fighting comeback from Montpellier to guarantee they finish first in the regular season. Montpellier's giant Fijian winger Nemani Nadolo had a try ruled out by the television match official in extra-time in a nail-biting match which sees La Rochelle now on 84 points. "We won, which was our goal," said La Rochelle back-row forward Romain Sazy. "We went missing for the final 10 minutes and they scored tries willy-nilly, we respected nothing."

A losing bonus point for Montpellier sees the southern club in third on 72 points, two behind Clermont, who occupy the second automatic semi-final spot. Toulon lie fourth (65), ahead of Castres (63). Willem du Plessis, with three South African namesakes also on Montpellier's team sheet, opened the scoring when he crashed over for a try he also converted.

La Rochelle's Australian fly-half Brock James and Du Plessis exchanged penalties shortly after in what would be a fine kicking display in rainy conditions by the two players. La Rochelle looked to have wrapped the game up with tries from Vito, hooker Jeremie Maouard and Pierre Aguilon. But at 40-16 up after 64 minutes, they hadn't counted on a ferocious comeback from the visitors, who scored three tries (penalty, Nadolo and Duhan van der Merwe) in the final six minutes after the sin binning of James for pulling down a maul. — AFP

CRICKET

TON-UP CHASE, HOLDER GIVE WEST INDIES EDGE

BRIDGETOWN: Roston Chase's second Test hundred and fine support from captain Jason Holder in a record unbroken partnership lifted the West Indies to 286 for six at stumps on the opening day of the second Test against Pakistan at Kensington Oval in on Sunday. Called upon to repair yet another debacle at the top of the order after Holder chose to bat first, Chase's unbeaten 131 was characterized by calm assurance and elegant strokeplay after he came to the crease at 37 for three.

Even if he lived a bit dangerously, the skipper also played positively and will resume on the second day alongside Chase on 58, their partnership so far worth 132 runs and establishing a new record for the seventh wicket in Tests for the West Indies against Pakistan. Chase has so far faced 207 deliveries in five hours at the crease, stroking 17 fours while Holder's innings has occupied 125 deliveries over three-and-a-half hours with eight fours decorating his knock.

On a surface offering very little assistance to the faster bowlers, the Caribbean team still managed to slip to 154 for six in mid-afternoon and at that stage it looked as if the tourists would have been well into their reply by the end of the day. Opening bowlers Mohammad Amir and Mohammad Abbas claimed a wicket apiece in each of the first two sessions while Shadab Khan, selected for a Test debut in support of senior leg-spinner Yasir Shah, earned his first success in the shape of Shane Dowrich after Shah had accounted for Shai Hope.

"There was very little assistance from this pitch and we will have to come back even harder on the second morning to break this partnership," said Abbas, who had figures of two for 47 off 18 overs, at the end of the day. "My experience of playing a lot of first-class cricket back in Pakistan would have prepared me for days like this." Amir was the first to strike for Pakistan at the start of the day against a batting line-up surprisingly unchanged from the seven-wicket defeat in Jamaica. Kraigg Brathwaite enjoyed a moment of good fortune when he was dropped at short extra-cover off Amir.

However the lapse did not prove costly for the visitors as Amir took the outside edge of the opener's bat in the same over to give a straightforward catch to wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed. Shimron Hetmyer, one of two batting debutants from a week earlier, faced just three deliveries before driving loosely at Abbas for Azhar Ali to take a sharp catch head-high at third slip. Hope's struggle for runs continued when he was caught at the wicket off Shah, the leg-spinner extracting sharp turn off the first-day pitch and appearing to justify Pakistan's decision to give a debut to



BRIDGETOWN, Barbados: Mohammad Abbas of Pakistan bowling, takes 4 West Indies wickets for 56 runs during the 2nd day of the 2nd Test match between West Indies and Pakistan at Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, Barbados yesterday. — AFP

Shadab at the expense of their fastest bowler, Wahab Riaz Kieran Powell, who batted through the morning session, departed on the resumption after lunch.

An lbw appeal off Amir with the batsman on 38 was ruled not out by on-field official Richard Kettleborough only to be overturned on review

of the television replays. Vishaul Singh's miserable start to his Test career continued with a low catch to Younis Khan at second slip off Abbas and Younis' secure pair of hands were again in evidence when Dowrich, on 29, pushed at a full length delivery from Shadab and the veteran made no mistake. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the first day in the second Test between West Indies and Pakistan on Sunday in Bridgetown, Barbados.		
West Indies 1st innings		Extras (b-4 lb-6 w-2) 12
K. Brathwaite c S. Ahmed b Amir	9	Total (for 6 wickets, 89 overs) 286
K. Powell lbw b Amir	38	Fall of wickets: 1-12 K. Brathwaite, 2-13 S. Hetmyer, 3-37
S. Hetmyer c Az. Ali b Abbas	1	S. Hope, 4-102 K. Powell, 5-107 V. Singh, 6-154 S.
S. Hope c S. Ahmed b Shah	5	Dowrich
R. Chase not out	131	To bat: D. Bishoo, A. Joseph, S. Gabriel
V. Singh c Y. Khan b Abbas	3	Bowling: Mohammad Amir 22-4-52-2; Mohammad
S. Dowrich c Y. Khan b S. Khan	29	Abbas 18-4-47-2(w-2); Yasir Shah 25-2-83-1; Shadab
J. Holder not out	58	Khan 23-3-90-1; Azhar Ali 1-0-4-0.

FIERCE CONTESTS AHEAD

SOCHI: After four evenly-contested opening 'fly-away' contests, Formula One returns to its European homeland with Ferrari revived and a fiercely-competitive season in prospect as champions Mercedes battle to retain their crown. This much became clear after a roller-coaster weekend at the Sochi Autodrom where the popular Valtteri Bottas secured his maiden victory for Mercedes to lay down a personal marker while his puzzled team-mate Lewis Hamilton struggled to fourth. The Mercedes pairing were separated by the two Ferraris of championship leader Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen on a day of little overtaking, but much tension. "It's going to be extremely close," said Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. "More than very close.

"Ferrari has a good car. They have come back from the winter with a very good car and it seems to suit Sebastian very well - so we just need to stretch ourselves to perform as good as

we can." Finn Bottas' win rescued Mercedes after Ferrari dominated qualifying, four-time champion Vettel taking pole with Finn Raikkonen alongside him - their first front row lockout for nine years. The unflappable Bottas has proved already that he is not only very different to retired 2016 champion Nico Rosberg, but likely to be just as formidable a team-mate to three-time champion Hamilton. "For me, it is just the start, the beginning of the year," he said. "It's too early to talk about the championship in any detail.

"We are just focusing on making the car better and that will give us more wins for both cars. "Getting the first win is something special, for sure, even though you always believe in yourself. If you think you are not able to win you should stay home, but to get confirmation and get a good result, that matters in this world. "How many races you can win and get on the podium is the name of the game. Getting the first win gives me a lot of confidence even



SOCHI: Ferrari mechanics work on the car of driver Sebastian Vettel of Germany during the Formula One Russian Grand Prix at the 'Sochi Autodrom' circuit, in Sochi, Russia. — AP

though I always knew I had the ability. It is not that simple this year. It's going to always be a massive fight."

MERCEDES SCRAP

After reigning supreme for three years, Mercedes face a scrap. Last year, they won 19 of the 21 races, failing only twice and already, in

four outings this year, they are two apiece with Ferrari. As a result, although Mercedes hold a one-point lead in the constructors' championship, Vettel leads Hamilton by 13 in the drivers' title race as the teams prepare for the introduction of major upgrade packages at the Spanish Grand Prix on May 14. Bottas's win, however, may make life awkward for Mercedes

and Hamilton if Ferrari show favor for Vettel, who has 86 points ahead of Hamilton on 73 and Bottas on 63, with Raikkonen fourth on 49. Wolff explained last week that he prefers to see Mercedes drivers racing each other, without team orders, because it pushed the team development and overall pace, but such a scenario is less likely at Ferrari. — AFP



Duajj Al-Otaibi gives a memento to Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah

SHOOTING TOURNAMENT ENDS IN STYLE

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah shooting tournament was concluded on Sunday with cups and prizes distributed to the winners at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex. The event marked the end of the 2016-2017 sporting season at Kuwait Shooting Sports club. A large number of shooters from clubs, National Guard and Sheikh Saad Shooting Academy participated in the tournament. In his speech, Engineer Duajj Al-Otaibi welcomed all those present at the closing ceremony. He thanked the patron Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah - the founder of Kuwait Shooting Sports.

The tournament included most Olympic shooting events like Skeet, Trap, Double Trap, Air Pistol and Rifle, 50 Meter Pistol and Rifle as well as Olympic archery. "I take this opportunity to congratulate all for the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS)'s ruling - in favor of Kuwait Shooting Federation to cancel the decision by the ISSF to suspend KSF activities at the international level," Al-Otaibi said.

Al-Otaibi also 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 and Kuwait people for this ruling, hoping that the suspension be lifted from all Kuwait sports association and all activities. Meanwhile, Sheikh Ali Bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa lauded the unlimited support Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah is giving to the Asian and Arab shooting. He also praised Kuwait Shooting and its achievements at the international and Olympic levels.

Also, Secretary General of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Obaid Al-Osaimi extolled the support the sport is receiving from Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, and congratulated the Shooting Community for CAS' ruling. He said Kuwait Shooting achievements come with generous support of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The results of the tournament were as follows:

10 M Air Pistol (Men) - Hamad Al-Namshan won first place, while Saad Al-Mane and Hassan Al-Mulla secured the second and third position respectively.

10 M Air Rifle (Men) - Abdallah Al-Harby snatched first place - leaving Mohammad Adel in the second place; Suleiman Al-Asousi ended third.

50 Meter Prone Rifle - First place went to Majid Al-Thafiri; Majid Al-Osaimi took second place, while Khalid Al-Subaie grabbed the third position.

Women's Skeet - Afrah Adel won first place; Sheikhha Al-Rashidi won second while Eman Al-Shakmma ended third.

Women's Trap - Al-Hawal sisters Shahad and Sarah battle to finish as Shahad won the first place leaving her sister in the second place. Fatima Fawzi secured the third position.

10 Meter Air Pistol (Women) - Yasneen Al-Tamimi won first place followed by Al Kawthar Nasser (second) and Mariam Shihab (third).

10 M Air Rifle (Women) - Munira Al-Anjari won first place; Zahra Safar (second); Yara Al-Khalaf took third place.

50 M Pistol (Men) - Hamad Al-Namshan won first place, while Ali Al-Mutairi won second while Saad Al-Mane won third place.

50 M Rifle - Abdallah Al-Harby (first);



Duajj Al-Otaibi presents a memento to Sheikh Ali Al-Khalifa

Mohammad Adel (second); Turki Al-Shemmari (third).

Skeet Men - Abdallah Al-Rashidi (first); Mansour Al-Rashidi (second); Zaid Al-Mutairi (third).

Men's Trap - Talal Al-Rashidi took the first position; Abdallah Al-Hamli (second); Mohammad Al-Rashidi (third).

Men's Double Trap - Saad Al-Mutairi (First); Jarrah Al-Shuwaier (2nd); Ahmad

Al-Afasi (3rd).

Men's 50 M Rifle - Abdallah Al-Harby (First); Mohammad Adel (Second); Khalid Al-Subaie (Third).

50 M Pistol Men - Hamad Al-Namshan (First); Saad Al-Mane (Second); Suhail Jassim (Third).

Olympic Archery Event - Faisal Al-Rashidi (First); Taha Abdallah (Second); Mohammad Musallam (Third).

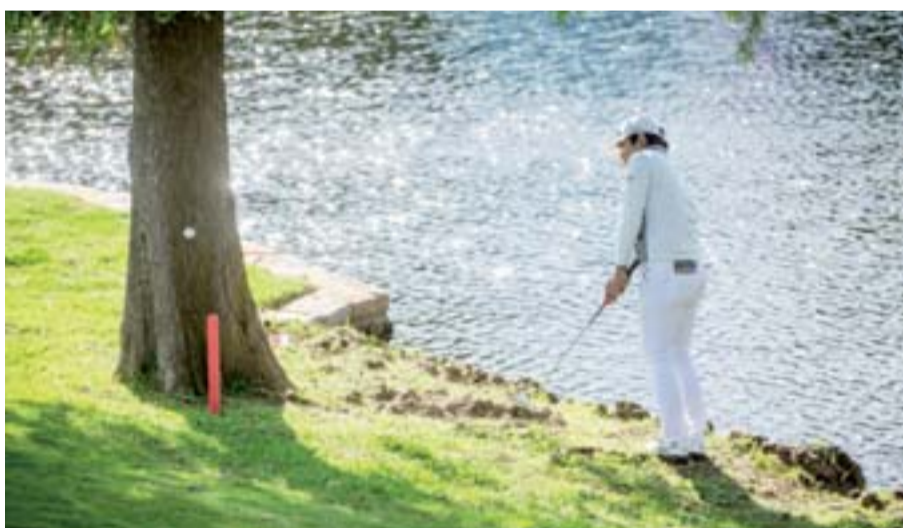


Shooting Club officials pose for a group photo



Sarah and Shahad Al-Hawal

GOLF



TEXAS: Haru Nomura of Japan plays her third shot at the 17th hole during the final round of the Volunteers of America North Texas Shootout at Las Colinas Country Club on April 30, 2017. — AFP

NOMURA OUTLASTS KERR TO WIN LPGA TEXAS SHOOTOUT

LOS ANGELES: Japan's Haru Nomura birdied the sixth hole of a sudden-death playoff to beat Cristie Kerr on Sunday for the LPGA Texas Shootout title in suburban Dallas. Nomura was the last woman standing on a brutally windy day that turned into even more of a marathon as she and Kerr both parred the first five playoff holes-all played at Las Colinas Country Club's par-five 18th hole.

As they returned for one more time before darkness fell, Nomura gave herself an eagle chance and tapped in from inches for the birdie. She then watched as Kerr's birdie attempt from outside 10 feet slid by. "I'm so happy to win again. I'm so excited," said Nomura, who captured her third LPGA crown, to go with the Women's Australian Open and Swinging Skirts LPGA Classic titles she won last year.

She had to dig deep to do so on a day when the scoring average was more than five strokes over par thanks to winds gusting up to 40 mph (64.37 Km/h). Nomura started the day with a two-stroke lead and did well in the conditions to finish the front nine in even par after one bogey and one birdie. She led by five heading into the back nine, but she bogeyed 10 and 11, and dropped two more shots at 14 and 16. She made a 12-footer to salvage a double-

bogey at 17, but that left her a stroke behind Kerr who had made the only birdie of the day at the par-three 17th.

After Kerr had completed her three-over 74 for a three-over par total of 281, Nomura birdied the 18th for a five-over 76 that forced the playoff. "I had a great comeback to even get into the playoff," Kerr said. "I had her on that second playoff hole when I was behind the green, and I just made an error and you can't do that in playoffs." "You have to take advantage of when you have the chance, and I didn't do that, so I lost." The top two finished regulation two strokes in front of American Jessica Korda, whose two-over 73 gave her a one-under total of 283 - the only other under par total for the week. South Korea's Park Sung-Hyun was fourth after a 74 for 284. World number two Ryu So-Yeon had the best weekend (68-75) of anyone in the field-but her share of ninth didn't come close to the first or second place finish she needed to have a chance of toppling Lydia Ko from the number one ranking. Third-ranked Ariya Jutanugarn of Thailand also had a shot at unseating Ko with a victory this week, but finished alongside Ryu on 286 - neither player able to take advantage after Ko withdrew from the tournament on Saturday with an eye infection.—AFP

DUCKS THUMP OILERS

PREDATORS TAKE 2-1 SERIES LEAD, BEAT BLUES

EDMONTON: Jakob Silfverberg scored twice to lead the Anaheim Ducks to a 6-3 victory over Edmonton on Sunday night, cutting the Oilers' series lead to 2-1. Ryan Getzlaf had a goal and an assist while Rickard Rakell, Chris Wagner and Ryan Kesler also scored for Anaheim, which lost the first two games at home. John Gibson stopped 24 shots. Connor McDavid scored his first of the series for Edmonton. Patrick Maroon and Anton Slepnychev also scored and Kris Russell had two assists. Cam Talbot finished with 22 saves. Wagner scored the tiebreaking goal midway through the second period, firing a shot that deflected off Talbot's arm and in. Silfverberg knocked in a feed from Josh Manson at 4:56 of the third to make it 5-3. The Oilers challenged the play for offside but the goal stood after a video review. Kesler swept in a rebound with 9 1/2 minutes left to cap the scoring. Game 4 is tomorrow night.

PREDATORS 3, BLUES 1

The Nashville Predators finally had a chance to show how they would react to their first loss this postseason. Returning home, they put their deep scoring on display and bounced back with a big victory. Cody McLeod scored the game-winner early in the second period, and the Predators beat the St Louis Blues 3-1 Sunday to grab a 2-1 lead in their Western Conference semifinal. "It shows a lot of character coming off a loss last game," Predators goalie Pekka Rinne said.

"We knew that coming in it's a huge game. Responded really well. It's a good feeling obviously, but you already start thinking about the next one and trying to keep this momentum going." Defensemen Ryan Ellis and Roman Josi also scored, and Colton Sissons added two assists. The Predators outshot St Louis 34-23, and they now are 6-1 this postseason. Nashville coach Peter Laviolette said it was good to be home before a standing-room only crowd coming off a 3-2 loss in Game 2 on Friday night.

"It was awesome today," Laviolette said. "That's a credit to our fans and the energy that comes into this building. You guys see that and get to experience it just like we do, so that's a real positive for us. Nobody likes losing, probably on any team, and you look for a response, and I thought the response was good today." Alexander Steen scored for the Blues, who lost for the first time on the road this postseason. Blues goalie Jake Allen kept St Louis in this game before being pulled by coach Mike Yeo for the extra attacker with more than 4 minutes

remaining and took his timeout with 1:25 left. "We had a decent start, but once they started to get to their game we didn't seem to have an answer for it," Yeo said. "They upped their game, they took their game to another level and we didn't match it." Rinne finished with 22 saves, including a flurry of stops to preserve the win. Game 3 is today's night.

With a national TV audience, Nashville had plenty of stars on hand for the matinee ranging from Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott to country star Luke Bryan and Tennessee Titans Pro Bowl running back DeMarco Murray. Country group Little Big Town became the latest to sing the national anthem, and Lee Greenwood sang during the second intermission. St. Louis came in undefeated on the road this postseason after winning three in Minnesota in the first round, while the Predators won both games in Nashville while sweeping Chicago. The Blues also had won nine of their last 10 road games overall.

Something had to give in this game. The Predators never got the man advantage in Game 2, and they got their first nearly midway through the first period. Just after the power play ended, Ellis gave Nashville a 1-0 lead with his slap shot from near the blue line at 10:34 off assists from Filip Forsberg and P.K. Subban. Ellis now has a

point in six straight playoff games, extending his franchise record for a defenseman and also leading the Predators. "It's the consecutive penalties that are getting us into trouble," Blues captain Alex Pietrangolo said.

McLeod gave Nashville a 2-0 lead with his first goal of the postseason just 2:29 into the second period with a backhand past Allen. McLeod became the 13th Nashville player to score this postseason, a goal that even got Laviolette to smile on the bench. "Anytime we can be a plus line or chip one in, it's going to obviously help," McLeod said. "Fidds (Vernon Fiddler) did that in Game 1, so yeah, so far, so good. We just have to make sure we continue to play strong defense and chip one in every once in a while."

St. Louis, which took eight of the first 12 shots, went without a shot in the second period until Steen tipped in a shot by Pietrangolo at 12:59 to pull the Blues within 2-1. The Blues had a chance to tie it up late in the second with a 2-on-1, but Rinne stopped the shot from David Perron from the slot. Nashville outshot St. Louis 18-4 in the period. Blues defenseman Robert Bortuzzo had a shot go off the post within the first five minutes of the third. Josi scored on a slap shot with 5:49 left to prompt yet another standing ovation by the standing-room only crowd.—Agencies



EDMONTON: Goalie Cam Talbot #33 of the Edmonton Oilers guards the net against Jakob Silfverberg #33 of the Anaheim Ducks during the 2017 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at Rogers Place on April 30, 2017. —AFP

BALDE AND BAKAMBU MAINTAIN HOT FORM

JOHANNESBURG: Senegalese Keita Balde and Congolese Cedric Bakambu maintained outstanding recent form in Italy and Spain by bagging braces at the weekend. Balde struck twice for Lazio in a 3-1 derby triumph over bitter rivals Roma while Bakambu netted his goals as Villarreal won 3-1 against Sporting Gijon. Another happy African in Spain was Ghanaian Thomas Parthey, who scored his

matches from the Ghanaian star.

ERIC BAILLY (Manchester United)

Has been outstanding for the hard-pressed United defense and for an hour he held the back four together as Swansea pressed hard with some delightful passing moves. United manager Jose Mourinho had pleaded with central defenders Chris Smalling and Phil Jones to

The 26-year-old played the whole match to boot, illustrating that he has stamina as well as skill.

IDRISSA GUEYE (Everton)

The Senegalese international, like most of his Everton team-mates, didn't really turn up for what should have been a testing examination of Chelsea's title credentials. However, with Europa League qualification secured, his apathetic performance reflected a lot of the play from the home side.

SPAIN

CEDRIC BAKAMBU (Villarreal)

Democratic Republic of Congo striker Bakambu continued his stunning form by netting twice as Villarreal maintained their push for a Europa League place with a 3-1 win over Sporting Gijon. Bakambu slotted home from close range twice after half-time to take his tally for the season to 10 with six of the goals coming in his last five games.

KEVIN-PRINCE BOATENG (Las Palmas), THOMAS PARTEY (Atletico Madrid)

Boateng had an afternoon to forget as he was sent off while Atletico romped to a 5-0 win at Las Palmas. The Ghanaian was shown two harsh yellow cards for leading with his elbow in aerial challenges either side of half-time. Parthey took full advantage of Atletico's extra man, though, as the Ghanaian international came off the bench to side-foot home his first goal of the season after a neat one-two with Angel Correa for the visitors' fourth.

ITALY

KEITA BALDE (Lazio)

A week after underlining his value to Lazio with a hat-trick in a 6-2 win over Palermo, Senegal striker Balde picked an even bigger stage—the Rome derby—to remind his employers why a number of

top European clubs are interested in his signature. He hit a brace in a 3-1 win over city rivals Roma to help cement fourth spot for Simone Inzaghi's men. To boot, Balde's brace came in what was billed as Francesco Totti's final derby game weeks before he is supposed to retire from the game. Lazio remain fourth, seven points behind third-place Napoli and 17 adrift of leaders Juventus.

MOHAMED SALAH (Roma)

Salah was a constant threat throughout a derby dominated by rivals Lazio but, like many of his teammates, was far from his best. Salah saw an early, angled drive turned round the post by Lazio 'keeper Thomas Strakosha.

SULLEY MUNTARI (Pescara)

A visit to Cagliari could change Muntari's Serie A destiny after the Pescara midfielder dramatically walked off the pitch after complaints to the referee of alleged racist abuse were met with a yellow card in the 90th minute. The former AC Milan and Inter midfielder also angrily confronted Cagliari fans, shouting at them: "This is my colour." Muntari could now face disciplinary measures after deciding, voluntarily, to leave the field seconds before full-time—a decision that earned him a second yellow card, and then a red, in the 96th minute of a game that his team lost 1-0.

GERMANY

PIERRE-EMERICK AUBAMEYANG (Borussia Dortmund)

The Gabon hot-shot drew a blank in Dortmund's goalless draw at home to Cologne and fell behind Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski in the race to be the Bundesliga's top-scorer. Lewandowski netted twice in a 6-0 win at Wolfsburg, which confirmed Bayern as 2016/17 champions



ROME: Lazio's forward from Senegal Balde Diaio Keita (left) celebrates with teammate Lazio's midfielder from Serbia Sergej Milinkovic-Savic after scoring during the Italian Serie A football match Roma vs Lazio at the Olympic Stadium on April 30, 2017. —AFP

and left him on 28 league goals - one more than Aubameyang with three games left.

FRANCE

OPA NGUETTE (Metz)

The 22-year-old France-born attacking midfielder, who only made his Senegal international debut in March, hit the winner in Metz's 2-1 win at home to Nancy, which boosted his team's hopes of beating relegation. His 53rd-minute goal came in fortunate circumstances as he got a final deflection off Simon Falette's fierce drive. —AFP



VILLARREAL: Villarreal's Congolese forward Cedric Bakambu celebrates a goal during the Spanish league football match Villarreal CF vs Real Sporting de Gijon at La Ceramica stadium. — AFP

first goal of the season for Atletico Madrid in a 5-0 thrashing of Las Palmas.

ENGLAND

JORDAN AYEWE (Swansea)

Produced an eye-catching display for the "Swans" as he was always lively in attack and constantly putting together neat passing movements and proving a handful for the United defenders, forcing David de Gea into a fine save. Swansea manager Paul Clement will be looking for more of the same in their final three

come back early from their injuries as Bailly could not be rested. However, before they can return the worst case scenario happened for the club and the player as the Ivorian star had to leave the fray limping.

VICTOR MOSES (Chelsea)

Another sparkling energetic display by the Nigerian, whose ability to shine at the top level at Chelsea after years of spending time on loan at smaller clubs has been one of Antonio Conte's big achievements.



Jurgen Klopp

LIVERPOOL'S KLOPP NOT SWEATING OVER TOP 4

LONDON: Liverpool have no reasons to fear losing their place in the Premier League top four as their rivals are bound to slip up in their remaining games, manager Jurgen Klopp said ahead of his side's trip to Watford. Liverpool are third in the table, level on points with fourth-placed Manchester City and one point ahead of fifth-placed Manchester United with four games left to play. Liverpool and City do not face teams from the top six during the run-in but United are yet to play sixth-placed Arsenal and second-placed Tottenham Hotspur and Klopp is confident his side can maintain their position.

"It is easy mathematics to know what points the other teams can get, but they play against each other and all that stuff. No team, of the teams we fight for top four, can win all the games," Klopp told British media. "They play in a few moments against each other. Why should we think about it too much? I do not feel fear - not one second so far." While

Liverpool's results along with those of their rivals will impact final standings, Klopp is not thinking too far ahead. "One of the first things I learned in football is that it makes sense only to think about the next game," Klopp told the club's website. (www.liverpoolfc.com)

"It has absolutely no influence on the games after that, and you have no idea who you can use in the game after this. You have another four, five, six days to prepare for this game and think about this game. They are important, we know," Klopp said that Liverpool must win at least three of their remaining four games to guarantee a top four finish and qualify for next season's Champions League. "If we win one, it will be unlikely. If we win two, it's not really likely... But if we start winning three, it can work. If we win four, I would say it's more likely it will happen," Klopp added. "We know all this. But the only way to do this is to win the next one, and that's what we should try." — Reuters

MOURINHO BLASTS JAMMED-PACKED UNITED'S SCHEDULE AS 'NOT HUMAN'

MANCHESTER: Jose Mourinho described Manchester United's jammed-packed schedule as "not human" after a growing injury list threatened to wreck hopes of a place in next season's Champions League. A 1-1 draw with Swansea on Sunday was a sixth stalemate in eight games at Old Trafford and harmed hopes of finishing in the top four.

To make matters worse for United, Luke Shaw and Eric Bailly also suffered game-ending injuries, leaving Mourinho with a major personnel crisis ahead of Thursday's Europa League first leg semi-final visit to Celta Vigo. The pair joined fellow defenders Chris Smalling and Phil Jones, who have been out since late-March, on the injury list and their absence means United will travel to Spain without a recognised centre-back.

"I don't know about the injuries," said gloomy United manager Mourinho. "I think Luke Shaw's must be a big injury, because to leave the pitch after 10 minutes I am expecting a very big injury," added the Portuguese boss, who has publicly criticized the left back several times this season. "I prefer not to speak about Phil Jones and Chris Smalling. I don't think they will play, that is my personal opinion. I prefer to speak about Juan Mata giving everything to be available. I am grateful for that."

Sunday's draw saw United set a new club record of 25 consecutive games without defeat in the same top-flight season. But it was also the team's 57th game of an exhausting campaign. In comparison,

Swansea have played 19 games fewer—exactly half an entire league season. "We lost players and we lost points, so yes today was a bad day," said Mourinho, whose side ended the weekend just outside the Champions League places in fifth spot, a point and a position below Manchester City.

'TIRED AND EXHAUSTED'

"We did not look tired and exhausted, we are tired and exhausted," he insisted. "You cannot isolate the performance out of the context. This is the ninth match of April, it is not human. We have a squad of 22 that is reduced to 13 or 14 players. The players are very tired." Paul Pogba and Marouane Fellaini will return against Vigo, from injury and suspension respectively, and Mourinho will have to explore emergency defensive options which could include veteran midfielder Michael Carrick and untried youngster Axel Tuanzebe. —AFP



Jose Mourinho

NOTTINGHAM FOREST AND BLACKBURN ROVERS ON THE BRINK OF RELEGATION

FORMER GIANTS FOREST, ROVERS IN THIRD-TIER PERIL

LONDON: Nottingham Forest and Blackburn Rovers, both once leading clubs, enter the final round of the season on the brink of relegation to the third tier in England. Forest's 2-0 defeat by Queens Park Rangers at the weekend, allied to wins for Blackburn (1-0) against Aston Villa and Birmingham (2-0) against Huddersfield, left the Midlands club one place above the Championship drop zone and ahead of Rovers on goal difference alone. Now Forest, who are at home to Ipswich on Sunday, must at least match Rovers' result at Brentford if they are to stay in the second-tier Championship. "It's an honest group of players we've got," said Forest manager Mark Warburton, himself controversially sacked by Scottish giants Rangers earlier this season.

"They have a responsibility to themselves, their families, the supporters and the club—we all do." It is all a far cry from Forest's glory days of the late 1970s when, under inspirational manager Brian Clough, the club were promoted from the old Second Division and twice won the European Cup all within three years. Forest went up in 1977 and, remarkably, took the old First Division title the very next season in a league featuring perhaps the best of all the Liverpool teams that between them won five European Cups and 18 domestic Championships.

Yet what happened next was just as extraordinary, with Forest winning back-to-back European Cups in 1979 and 1980 as the team built by Clough and assistant Peter Taylor, featuring a mix of world-class players such as England goalkeeper Peter Shilton and previously under-achieving journeymen including winger John Robertson, stunned the football world. Clough, later beset by alcoholism, arguably stayed too long and his 18 years at the City Ground ended with Forest's relegation from the inaugural Premier League in 1993.

There was a brief return before, in 2004, the club became the first former European champions to descend into their domestic third tier. Forest returned to the Championship and had become established in the division by the time the Kuwait-based Al-Hasawi family bought the club in 2012. They were eyeing promotion when, after a 4-2 win over Leeds United that December, manager Sean O'Driscoll was sensationally sacked, with Forest citing the need for a boss with Premier League experience. That man was Alex McLeish, yet just 40 days after taking charge he had left, with the Scot the first of six 'permanent' Forest managers in the past four years.

FOWL PLAY

Controversial foreign owners have also been a feature of Blackburn's recent struggles. One of English football's leading clubs in the 19th century, Blackburn had long since ceased to be a major force when lifelong fan Jack Walker, who had made a fortune in the steel industry, bought them in the 1990-91 season and promptly sank millions of his own money into a club he had loved since boyhood.

After a couple of near misses, Rovers won the 1994-95 Premier League in dramatic fashion when, with England striker Alan Shearer up front, they pipped Manchester United to the title despite losing to Liverpool, manager Kenny Dalglish's former club, in their last game. Rovers never hit those heights again, suffering relegation in 1999 but returning in 2001, the season after Walker died. In 2010 they were bought by the Indian poultry firm Venky's, who sacked experienced manager Sam Allardyce.

Relegation followed in 2012, with Steve Kean, Allardyce's successor, dismissed the following season as Rovers, like Forest, embarked upon a managerial merry-go-round. Venky's, who've spent millions on player wages, are highly unlikely to get their money back if they try to sell



BLACKBURN: A fan in fancy dress is pictured outside Ewood Park stadium in Blackburn, England. — AP

Rovers as a third-tier club. "We go to the last day—that's what we were looking to do," said Rovers manager Tony Mowbray. Now all con-

ected with Blackburn must hope his side live up to the club's motto of "Arte Et Labore"—by skill and by labor—at Brentford. —AFP

UNDERDOGS AIZAWL CROWNED I-LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

NEW DELHI: Aizawl FC have clinched the I-League title to become the first club from the India's north-east region to win the country top flight after a Leicester City-like fairytale season. Aizawl's championship win, which was sealed with a 1-1 draw against Shillong Lajong on Sunday, has drawn comparisons in India with Leicester's escape from relegation in 2014-15 to winning the English Premier League last year.

Coached by Khalid Jamil, the Kuwait-born former India player, Aizawl were given a lifeline to be reinstated into the top-flight competition this season by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) despite being relegated in 2015-16. The Mizoram-based club's superb showing in the domestic Federation Cup where they twice beat last year's I-League

champions Bengaluru FC was the main reason for their re-entry.

Aizawl had the odds stacked against them this season with West Bengal giants Mohun Bagan pushing them all the way but eventually coming up one point short despite a 2-1 win against Chennai FC in their last match. "Aizawl FC's triumph unfurls a new chapter in Indian Football history," AIFF president Praful Patel said in a statement. "This victory will encourage the youth of the country and create a self-belief that on the football pitch you can pull it off with teamwork," Patel added. However, Aizawl may still not find themselves defending their title next season with the AIFF planning to restructure their system with the India Super League (ISL) likely to become the top-tier competition. —AFP

AUSTRIA OLDEST FOOTBALL CLUB FACES FINAL WHISTLE

VIENNA: "Vienna til I diel!" chanted the fans, in accented English, at a recent rainy match, testament to the British roots of Austria's oldest football club: the once-mighty First Vienna FC 1894. But while the few hundred diehard supporters give it their all week in week out, the now dilapidated terraces of what was once continental Europe's biggest stadium may soon fall silent for ever. In March the 123-year-old club, which even under the Nazis was allowed to keep its English name "Vienna", declared itself insolvent and is trying to hammer out a survival plan.

The players haven't been paid since December and automatic relegation looms from Austria's already lowly third division, the Austrian Regional League East, making finding new sponsors even harder. "If it all ends, it will be the end of an era," sighed Robert Haidinger, head of the supporters club, as he charged five euros (\$5.50) for the trickle of cars arriving for the evening match. "A piece of Viennese history would disappear," he said.

BRITISH IMPORT

Like elsewhere in Europe and beyond in the late 19th century, British immigrants were a major driving force in the birth of Austrian football. The "Vienna" was founded, in a pub, in 1894 by British gardeners together with locals smitten with this exotic new combination of exercise and gentlemanly "fair play". The club quickly became an all-Austrian affair but its three-legged logo, the triskelion, still survives in tribute to the homeland of one of the founders, William Beale from the Isle of Man. To this day many of the chants on the terraces are in English. "Hey ho let's go," says a sign, in English, on the way out of the ground. "To hear lots of voices singing all together something like 'Come on Vienna' is, well, it gives you goosebumps," said Josef Keglevic, a lifelong fan.

'WUNDERTEAM'

"Vienna" used to be a force to be reckoned with not only in domestic football but internationally too. Visiting Spain in 1925, they thrashed Barcelona 4-1. Its Hohe Warte stadium, the biggest in Europe outside Britain when it opened in 1921, was also the home ground for Austria's legendary national "Wunderteam." As many as

85,000 supporters watched trainer Hugo Meisl's men-slayers of allcomers and unlucky favourites for the 1934 World Cup play Italy here in 1923.

When Hitler, no fan of football, annexed his native Austria into the Third Reich in 1938, the club's many Jewish players and functionaries were quickly expelled. Rudolf Spitzer, who took part in the club's first official match in 1894, was one of several people associated with the club murdered in the Holocaust. But from a sporting point of view the Nazi era went well for the Viennese. In 1943 they won the Tschammerpokal cup at the since-renamed "Adolf-Hitler-Kampfbahn" stadium in Stuttgart.

"It was one of most successful teams in World War II," historian Alexander Juraske, author of a book on the club's history said. After 1945, once Austria was re-established and life returned to normal, the club remained highly successful and in 1955 won the Austrian championship for the sixth and, so far, final time. Plagued by poor performances, a slow decline set in over the following decades and in 1992 it slipped out of the Bundesliga top league for the final time. "The club also made a lot of mistakes," Juraske said. "Financially it bit off more than it could chew."

VIENNA GOT SOUL

Chief executive Gerhard Krisch is trying to cut spending by 700,000 euros a third of the club's costs-but faces an uphill battle to save this piece of sporting history. Regulations only allow the stadium-now a "nature arena" with a grass bank on three sides-to hold 5,500 people, stymying efforts to make money through events like concerts. And in this small Alpine country, only the big clubs like Red Bull Salzburg can make any money, filling their stadiums with 15,000-20,000 fans. "All the others have problems, including in the Bundesliga, with fewer than 2,000-3,000 supporters. That's not enough to run a club economically," Krisch said. But Josef Keglevic, a supporter since he was six years old, said "Vienna" still has something special. "At clubs like Barcelona, Real Madrid or Bayern Munich... there is no humanity any more. There as a supporter you are just a number, a revenue generator," he said. "But here there is something, a feeling... A soul, yes."—AFP



MADRID: Combo picture shows Real Madrid's French coach Zinedine Zidane (left) shouting during the UEFA Champions League quarter-final second leg football match Real Madrid vs FC Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid's Argentinean coach Diego Simeone gesturing during the Spanish league football match Club Atletico de Madrid vs Sevilla FC at the Vicente Calderon stadium. —AFP

ATLETICO AIMING FOR REVENGE AGAINST REAL AT 4TH ATTEMPT

MADRID: Real Madrid are the only team who have stopped Atletico Madrid adding a Champions League triumph to their achievements under Diego Simeone and for the fourth year running the Rojiblancos' illustrious neighbors block their path to European glory. Atletico under their charismatic Argentine coach have seen off the giants of the European game past and present, beating AC Milan, Chelsea, Juventus, Bayern Munich and twice knocking out Barcelona, but they have repeatedly fallen to their neighbors.

Atletico have shaken off their inferiority complex against Real in every other competition under Simeone, beating them twice in the King's Cup and winning four of their last eight league derbies, but not in Europe's elite arena. Real host Atletico in today's semi-final, first leg having beaten them 5-3 on penalties in the 2016 final and 4-1 in extra time in the 2014 showpiece when defender Sergio Ramos's 93rd minute equalizer denied Atletico a first Champions League crown. Real's European dominance over Atletico runs as far back as Alfredo di Stefano and Ferenc Puskas deciding a semi-final in 1958/59, while Javier Hernandez got the only goal in a quarter-final in 2014/15, the other two-legged affair between them. While Atletico are waiting to win the European Cup for the first time, Real want a 12th triumph to become the first team to retain the trophy in the Champions League era. The winners of the tie will face Monaco or Juventus, who play on Wednesday.

ATLETI INJURIES

Atletico's preparations for their fourth consecutive European showdown with Real were hit by Jose Gimenez sustaining a groin injury in Saturday's 5-0 hammering of Las Palmas, leaving Simeone missing three defenders for the first leg as right backs Sime Vrsaljko and Juanfran are also out. Winger Yannick Carrasco hurt his collarbone in Tuesday's 1-0 home defeat by Villarreal, Atleti's first loss in 13 games in all competitions, although the Belgian returned to full training on Sunday to boost his chances of facing Real.

Simeone praised his team's resilience after they responded to the Villarreal loss by ruthlessly thrashing Las Palmas helped by three early goals. "The team's response fills me with pride, I never tire of praising these players, they are incredible," he said. "Four days after that defeat they killed the game off in 18 minutes and that's down to one word, the team."

Atletico will need to magnify their collective efforts if they are to finally topple a Real Madrid side who have perfected the art of winning in this campaign without hitting top form. Zinedine Zidane's side shook off a dogged Valencia side 2-1 at the Bernabeu on Saturday with a late winner by Marcelo, the 20th goal Real have scored in the final 10 minutes in the league this season, which kept their bid for a 33rd title on track. "We showed great spirit and proved to everyone who we are," said the Brazilian. "With our fans behind us, it's very difficult to beat us here."—Reuters

REAL'S DEPTH KEEPS RARE DOUBLE ALIVE

MADRID: Real Madrid welcome Atletico Madrid for the first leg of their Champions League semi-final today hoping to do something that has been beyond the reigning 11-time European champions for six decades. Alfredo Di Stefanot Cristiano Ronaldo-was Madrid's star man the last time Los Blancos won La Liga and Europe's top club prize in the same season.

The eight times Real have been crowned champions of Europe since they have always done so happy to sacrifice La Liga for the tournament they see as defining their role as the biggest and best club in the world. "I won a Champions League with Madrid in a year in which we trained horribly," former Spanish international goalkeeper Santiago Canizares told radio station Cadena SER of the 1997/98 season. "There was very little commitment, but it was like there was psychological doping when we played in the Champions League. Everyone performed." Two years later he experienced the power of Madrid's commitment to the Champions League from the opposite side.

"Then I lost a final with Valencia against Madrid in another horrible season for them. "They finished the league terribly, there were problems in the dressing room... and then they arrived in Paris and played us off the park." Even this season the lure of becoming the first side to successfully defend the Champions League has edged out that of ending Barcelona's domi-

inance of La Liga. That has been evidenced by coach Zinedine Zidane's line-ups for a string of recent Liga games sandwiched between big European ties. None of Ronaldo, Gareth Bale, Karim Benzema, Luka Modric or Toni Kroos started any of Madrid's last three away games. In their absence the likes of Isco, Alvaro Morata and Marco Asensio have shone and Madrid won all three games, scoring 13 times in the process. Real have already played 53 games this season across five competitions and even two continents after travelling to Japan for the Club World Cup. Yet they remain on course for the most successful season in the club's storied recent history thanks to the depth of their resources.

ONE-SEASON LUXURY?

Which has thrown up a new dilemma: the performances of Madrid's youngsters have left question marks over whether a few star names deserve their place in the team for today's semi-final. Real smashed Deportivo la Coruna 6-2 on Wednesday with a team containing nine changes from the side that lost El Clasico to Barcelona days previously. Yet they laboured to beat Valencia 2-1 thanks to Marcelo's late strike when Zidane resorted to largely his preferred XI on Saturday. "For me, it is harder to play against Madrid's B team than their A team," said Deportivo boss Pepe Mel.—AFP



MADRID: Real Madrid's head coach Zinedine Zidane (right) watches as Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo kicks a ball during a training session in Madrid yesterday. Real Madrid will play Atletico Madrid today in a Champions League semifinal, 1st leg soccer match. —AP

'ENOUGH' AS MUNTARI WALKS OFF AFTER RACIAL ABUSE

MILAN: Ghana's Sulley Muntari dramatically walked off the pitch while playing for Pescara at Cagliari on Sunday after his complaints of racist abuse were met with a yellow card. The former AC Milan and Inter midfielder, who claimed the abuse also came from children, angrily confronted Cagliari fans, shouting at them: "This is my color." Muntari, 32, could now face disciplinary measures after deciding to leave the field seconds before full-time-a decision that earned him a second yellow card, and then a red, from referee Daniele Minelli. Earlier, he had spoken directly with a section of the Cagliari supporters targeting him with racist abuse.

"They shouted at me from the beginning of the game, and in the first half I saw children in the group, so I went to their parents and gave them my jersey to set an example and to say you are not supposed to do that," he said. "I tried to reason with them but the referee told me I had to stop. That's when I got pissed off. Why did he not stop the match? I am not a victim,

but I am convinced that if they stopped the matches, this kind of thing would not happen any more." While leaving the pitch in frustration and murmuring "Basta! (Enough)", Muntari went to address more supporters, showing them his arm and shouting: "this is my color, this is my color."

His protest was later backed by Pescara coach Zdenek Zeman, although in comments to Sky Sport the Czech veteran said Muntari should not have quit the game. "He asked the referee to intervene, but he (said he had) neither heard nor seen anything," Zeman said. "Muntari was right, but he shouldn't have left the pitch." Muntari was at AC Milan when former teammate Kevin Prince Boateng angrily walked off the pitch while being targeted with racist abuse during a friendly with lower league side Pro Patria in January 2013. It prompted a wave of support on social media, although football's ruling body FIFA, while applauding Boateng's principles, said it did not condone his decision to walk off.—AFP



CAGLIARI: Referee Daniele Minelli shows the yellow card to Pescara's Sulley Muntari (second from right) during a Serie A soccer match between Pescara and Cagliari, at the Cagliari Sant'Elia stadium on Sunday, April 30, 2017. Pescara midfielder Sulley Muntari walked off the pitch in protest during his side's Serie A match at Cagliari after being booked for complaining to the referee about racist abuse from fans. —AP

DEPORTIVO STILL NOT SAFE

MADRID: Deportivo La Coruna midfielder Juanfran scored a late own-goal in a 2-2 draw Sunday at last-placed Osasuna to keep his team from securing a spot in the top tier of the Spanish league - for now. Deportivo could have mathematically avoided relegation with victory against already demoted Osasuna, but Juanfran found his own net in the 78th minute while trying to clear a free kick into the area. Jhon Steven Mondragon had put the hosts ahead in the fourth minute, but Brazilian forward Guilherme scored in the 18th and 70th minutes to put Deportivo ahead at the El Sadar Stadium.

Deportivo, the 2000 Spanish league champion, needs at least a draw in one of its final three games to escape relegation for the first time since 2011. "The team has improved," Deportivo coach Pepe Mel said. "We are only one point away, and if we keep playing like this, we will earn this point. We have to remain optimistic." Deportivo is 16th in the 20-team standings and has an eight-point gap over the first team in the relegation zone, Sporting Gijon, which lost 3-1 at Villarreal on Friday to virtually seal its demotion after two straight seasons in the top flight.

Osasuna, promoted to the first division this season, had its relegation confirmed last round after a 7-1 loss against league leader Barcelona at the Camp Nou. Granada was also relegated after a 2-1 loss at Real Sociedad on Saturday. Before Osasuna's home match on Sunday, play-

ers entered the field displaying a banner thanking the local fans for their support throughout the season. The team has won only one home game, with two more victories away. Osasuna endured a 21-game winless streak in the league, and has only 19 points from 35 matches. Barcelona and Real Madrid remain at the top with 81 points each. The Catalan club is ahead on the head-to-head tiebreaker but it has three games left while Madrid has four. Barcelona won 3-0 at Espanyol on Saturday with a pair of goals by Luis Suarez, while Madrid scored late with Marcelo to defeat Valencia 2-1 at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. Third-placed Atletico Madrid routed Las Palmas 5-0 in the Canary Islands to open a three-point gap to fourth-placed Sevilla, which visits Malaga on Monday. The third-placed team automatically qualifies for the Champions League, while the fourth-placed club has to go through a playoff.

CELTA VIGO 0, ATHLETIC BILBAO 3

Athletic Bilbao stayed in position to qualify for the Europa League with the convincing win at Celta Vigo, which rested its regular starters ahead of the game against Manchester United in the competition's semifinals on Thursday. Raul Garcia scored twice and Mikel Rico added another to leave Athletic in sixth place - the final qualifying slot for the second-tier European competition. Celta stayed 11th in the Spanish league.

EIBAR 2, LEGANES 0

Leganés remained in danger of being relegated after its third straight away loss. Kike and Sergi Enrich scored four minutes apart in the second half for mid-table Eibar. Defeat for Leganes left the club six points ahead of Sporting, which has the head-to-head tiebreaker in case both teams finish level on points after the final three matches. Leganes is playing in the first division for the first time this season.

REAL BETIS 1, ALAVES 4

Alaves conceded early at Real Betis but came from behind with four second-half goals to extend its unbeaten streak to four games. Alaves, 10th in the standings, is trying to get in form for the Copa del Rey final it will play against Barcelona on May 27. Real Betis stayed 15th, and is mathematically sure to avoid relegation.—AP



Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
Real Madrid v Atletico de Madrid 21:45
beIN SPORTS HD

Sports

'Enough', As Muntari walks off after racial abuse



Atletico aim for revenge against Real; 4th attempt



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SHOOTING TOURNAMENT ENDS IN STYLE

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LOS ANGELES: Austin Rivers #25 of the Los Angeles Clippers shoots over Gordon Hayward #20 of the Utah Jazz during the first half of Game Seven of the Western Conference Quarterfinals at Staples Center on April 30, 2017. — AFP

JAZZ FLATTEN CLIPPERS 104-91

THOMAS IGNORES HEARTACHE, LOST TOOTH TO LEAD BOSTON WIN

LOS ANGELES: Gordon Hayward scored 26 points and collected eight rebounds to lead seven Utah players in double figures, and the Jazz eliminated the Los Angeles Clippers from the Western Conference playoffs with a 104-91 road victory in Game Seven on Sunday at Staples Center. George Hill and Derrick Favors contributed 17 points apiece as the Jazz advanced to the second round, where they will meet the Golden State Warriors. Game One is Tuesday at Oracle Arena in Oakland, California. Favors also grabbed 11 rebounds before fouling out with 5:24 remaining to fill a void left by Jazz center Rudy Gobert, who also was plagued by fouls. Gobert finished with one point and four rebounds in 13 minutes.

The Jazz won three of their four games on the Clippers' home court. DeAndre Jordan had 24 points and 17 boards to lead the Clippers. Jamal Crawford added 20 points and Chris Paul scored

13 points and handed out nine assists. The Jazz used a third-quarter spurt to grab a double-digit lead and retained it for almost the rest of the contest. Clippers forward Paul Pierce, in his final NBA game, scored six points.

CELTICS 123, WIZARDS 111

Isaiah Thomas shook off having a tooth knocked out and the heartache of his sister's funeral to score 33 points Sunday, powering the Boston Celtics over Washington 123-111 in an NBA playoff game. Thomas went 11-of-23 from the floor, 6-of-7 from the free throw line and contributed nine assists as the Celtics battled back after surrendering the game's first 16 points to beat the visiting Wizards in their best-of-seven Eastern Conference second round opener. "It was a team effort," Thomas said. "We got down big. We didn't give up. We didn't put our head down. From the first guy to the last, everybody con-

tributed and we got the win." The Boston guard flew across the country to play after speaking Saturday at his sister Chyna's funeral in Washington state. She was killed two weeks ago in a car accident. "Basketball, when I'm on the court, it just keeps me going," Thomas said. "I do everything for my sister now and that's all I can do. That's all I can do." In the weekend's only other playoff game, the Utah Jazz beat the Los Angeles Clippers 104-91 to win their first-round Western Conference series 4-3. They will face NBA win leader and defending conference champion Golden State in the second round starting Tuesday. Thomas napped at home and on the flight to Boston and ignored coach Brad Stevens saying he didn't have to play. "It's tough, but it's the playoffs," Thomas said. "No excuses. I decided to play and I just tried to give it all I got for my team, and we came out with the win." Thomas also had his left front tooth knocked out after

being struck in the face by an elbow from Washington's Otto Porter midway into the first quarter. Thomas saw his tooth pop out and fall onto the court and, not missing a beat, went over and picked up the tooth off the floor and later handed it to a Celtics trainer, broadly displaying a bloodied gap-toothed smile on the bench after going 3-for-3 following the dental mishap and leading all first-half scorers with 19 points. "It just bothers me to talk," Thomas said. "My tongue goes right through my tooth... I've always had teammates that I've always clowned them about their tooth being out, and now I'm one of them. Hopefully, we can replace it as soon as possible."

'CONTINUAL AMAZEMENT'

The effort by Thomas left both coaches awestruck. "I don't know (how Thomas does it). I wish I had that kind of character," Stevens said.

"Just been in continual amazement the last couple of weeks with his ability to function and excel on the basketball court. Today is just another chapter of that." "He's one of the biggest winners in this league," Wizards coach Scott Brooks said. "He plays with everything he has. I can't imagine being able to do it myself if I were in the same situation." The Celtics outscored Washington 36-16 in the third quarter, in which they seized their first lead at 73-71 and stretched it to 95-80 entering the fourth before holding off the Wizards down the stretch. Jae Crowder added 24 points for the Celtics while center Al Horford had 21 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds. Bradley Beal scored 27 points while John Wall added 20 points and 16 assists. Washington's Markieff Morris injured his left ankle when he landed on Horford's foot after a second-quarter jump shot. Morris said he will play in game two Tuesday but medical tests will be done Monday.

'NO REGRETS' AS PAUL PIERCE DEPARTS NBA

LOS ANGELES: Paul Pierce said Sunday he departs the NBA with "no regrets" despite the bitter disappointment of the Los Angeles Clippers first-round playoff loss to the Utah Jazz. "I really enjoyed myself with this group this year. Regardless of what happened today with the basketball, I'm happy," he said. "What I've been able to accomplish, what I've been able to do with my career, I gave every ounce I could. I have no regrets." After the retirements of Kobe Bryant and Tim Duncan, the NBA is bidding farewell to another star of the 2000s in Pierce. The 39-year-old won a title with the Boston Celtics in 2008 and competed for another in the NBA Finals. But his bid to recapture that magic with former Celtics coach Doc Rivers in Los Angeles—where he signed with the Clippers as a free agent prior to the 2015 season—didn't pan out. But he was hailed by his peers as one of the greats. "Paul Pierce is 'The Truth,'" Bryant told The Players Tribune website—a nod to Pierce's nickname. A video tribute on the website featured Bryant, Shaquille O'Neal, Oscar Robertson and an emotional Kevin Garnett, Pierce's teammate in Boston and Brooklyn, among others. Pierce later tweeted his thanks.

"Thanku to all my NBA brothers and sisters associated with the game a game I've loved my whole life but now ready for a new chapter stay tuned," he posted on the social media site. Pierce leaves the game with 26,397 career points, the 15th-most on the league's all-time scoring list. On Sunday he played 22 minutes, scoring six points and pulling down three rebounds. He left the court waving to fans in his hometown, where his time with the Clippers at last let him play regularly in front of family members, including his mother, Lorraine.

"It's tough if you come up short of your goals," Pierce said. "Every year you set a goal to be champions and it's a tough pill to swallow every year." "I've been in the league 19 years and had to swallow 18 tough pills." Preparing to leave Staples Center on Sunday, Pierce indicated the magnitude of retirement had not fully sunk in. With his departure, Dirk Nowitzki and Vince Carter are the only members of the 1998 NBA draft class still playing. Perhaps when next season is approaching, and he isn't trying to gear himself up for another long campaign, he will understand what retirement means, he said. "Maybe in those months, when I get up and I don't have to practice, it'll hit me more," he said. When it does, he does not expect to have any second thoughts about the decision to depart. "I enjoyed this ride," Pierce said.—AFP



LOS ANGELES: Utah Jazz forward Gordon Hayward (left) shoots as Los Angeles Clippers forward Paul Pierce defends during the first half of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series on Sunday, April 30, 2017. —AP

WE MEET AGAIN: CAVS, RAPTORS BACK TOGETHER IN POSTSEASON

CLEVELAND: We The North vs. We Are The Champions. One round earlier than a year ago, Toronto and Cleveland are meeting again in the NBA playoffs. On the way to winning their first title last season, LeBron James and the Cavs took care of the Raptors in the Eastern Conference finals, a series that was tied 2-2 before Cleveland won the final two games. The teams finished this season with identical 51-31 records and their history makes for an intriguing May matchup. "They know us," James said, "and we know them."

After sweeping Indiana in the opening round, the Cavs will have waited a full week before Monday's Game 1 tips off at Quicken Loans Arena, where Cleveland is 15-1 against conference opponents over the past three postseasons. The down time gave James and his teammates a chance to recharge, heal some nagging bumps and bruises and prepare for a Toronto team that not only added Serge Ibaka (acquired from Orlando in February) and PJ Tucker (acquired from Phoenix at the trade deadline) this season, but is looking for revenge after having its season ended by Cleveland in 2016. These Raptors don't want that to happen again.

"We've got some fighters and scrappers," coach Dwane Casey said after Toronto eliminated Milwaukee in

six games. "The guys are going to compete. We make it hard on ourselves sometime, but at the end of the day we're going to go down swinging." They submitted last year in Game 6 at home, when James scored 33 points with 11 rebounds, six assists and three blocks in Cleveland's 113-87 win. "He canceled Christmas," Casey said earlier this season. "One of these days ... one of these days." For the Raptors to knock off the Cavs, whose shaky defense still showed some significant holes against the Pacers, Toronto stars DeMar DeRozan and Kyle Lowry will have to be at their best. "The two-headed monster," Cleveland coach Tyrone Lue said.

DeRozan averaged 23.5 points per game in the opening round against the Bucks and may need to bump that into the 30s for the Raptors to have a chance. He believes the Raptors are better equipped to battle the Cavs this time. "It's just on us to put it together consistently," he said. "We showed spurts of how great a team we can be then we have lapses here and there. If we come together out there on the floor no matter what happens, as long as we come together, we can compete with anybody." Toronto lost three of four against Cleveland this season with the only win coming in the season finale, when Lue rested James, Kyrie Irving and Kevin Love.—AP

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US stocks rise after deal
to avert govt shutdown

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NBK launches
'digital solutions'
branch in Bayan

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Huawei's OpenLab
Dubai officially
starts operation

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IBS BECOMES A TRUSTED PARTNER OF LIBF

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MOSCOW: Russian Trade Unions' members holding balloons and flags parade on Red Square during their May Day demonstration in Moscow yesterday.—AFP

\$1 TRILLION PLAN TO AVOID US GOVT SHUTDOWN

LAWMAKERS UNVEIL SPENDING BILL TO FUND GOVT OPERATIONS

WASHINGTON: US lawmakers yesterday unveiled a huge \$1 trillion-plus spending bill that would fund most government operations through September but would deny US President Donald Trump money for a border wall and rejects his proposed cuts to popular domestic programs.

The 1,665-page bill agreed to on Sunday is the product of weeks of negotiations. It was made public in the predawn hours yesterday and is tentatively scheduled for a House vote tomorrow. The catchall spending bill would be the first major piece of bipartisan legislation to advance during Trump's short tenure in the White House. While losing on funding for the wall along the US-Mexico border, Trump won a \$15 billion down payment on his request to strengthen the military, though that too fell short of what he requested.

Vice President Mike Pence said the administration "couldn't be more pleased" and noted that it would include a boost in military spending, a "down payment" on border security and provide money for health benefits for coal miners. "It will avert a government shutdown but more important than that, it's going to be a significant increase in military spending," Pence said in an interview with "CBS This Morning." He called it a "budget deal that's a bipartisan win for the American people." The measure funds the remainder of the 2017 budget year, through Sept. 30, rejecting cuts to popular domestic programs targeted by Trump such as medical research, the Environmental Protection Agency, and infrastructure grants.

"The omnibus (spending bill) is in sharp contrast to President Trump's dangerous plans to steal billions from lifesaving research, instead

increasing funding for the NIH (National Institutes of Health) by \$2 billion," said House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-California.

Successful votes later this week would also clear away any remaining threat of a government shutdown - at least until the Oct. 1 start of the 2018 budget year. Trump has submitted a partial 2018 budget promising a whopping \$54 billion, 10 percent increase for the Pentagon from current levels, financed by cutting to foreign aid, the EPA, and other nondefense programs by an equal amount. Negotiators on the pending measure, however, rejected a smaller \$18 billion package of cuts and instead slightly increased funding for domestic programs.

Democrats were quick to praise the deal. "This agreement is a good agreement for the American people, and takes the threat of a government shutdown off the table," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-NY, a key force in the talks. "The bill ensures taxpayer dollars aren't used to fund an ineffective border wall, excludes poison pill riders, and increases investments in programs that the middle class relies on, like medical research, education and infrastructure."

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., praised the bill as well, saying it "acts on President Trump's commitment to rebuild our military for the 21st century and bolster our nation's border security to protect our homeland."

Some Republican conservatives, however, were wary. "I think you're going to see conservatives have some real concerns with this legislation," Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio said on CNN, citing domestic spending obtained by Democrats and other issues. "We told (voters) we were going to do a short-term spending bill that was going to

come due at the end of April so that we could fight on these very issues, and now it looks like we're not going to do that."

Trump said at nearly every campaign stop last year that Mexico would pay for the 2,000-mile (3,200-kilometer) border wall, a claim Mexican leaders have repeatedly rejected. The administration sought some \$1.4 billion in US taxpayer dollars for the wall and related costs in the spending bill, but Trump later relented and said the issue could wait until September. Trump, however, obtained \$1.5 billion for border security measures such as 5,000 additional detention beds, an upgrade in border infrastructure and technologies such as surveillance.

Bipartisan support

The measure is assured of winning bipartisan support in votes this week; the House and Senate have until midnight Friday to pass it to avert a government shutdown. It's unclear, however, how much support the measure will receive from GOP conservatives such as Jordan and how warmly it will be received by the White House. Democrats played a strong hand in the talks since their votes are needed to pass the bill, even though Republicans control both the White House and Congress. As a result, the measure doesn't look much different than the deal that could have been struck on President Barack Obama's watch last year.

But Republicans are eager to move on to other issues such as overhauling the tax code and reviving their moribund effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act, Obama's health care law. While the measure would peacefully end a battle over the current budget year, the upcoming



This file photo taken on August 1, 2015 shows the US Federal Reserve building in Washington.—AFP

cycle is sure to be even more difficult. Republicans have yet to reveal their budget plans, and battles between Trump and Congress over annual agency budgets could grind this summer's round of spending bills to a halt. Among the final issues resolved was a Democratic request to provide the cash-strapped government of Puerto Rico with \$295 million to cope with its Medicaid burden, a top Pelosi priority. House Republicans succeeded in extending a private school vouchers program for students in Washington, DC's troubled school system through 2019.

Democrats were successful in repelling many

conservative policy "riders" that sought to overturn dozens of Obama-issued regulations. Such moves carry less urgency for Republicans now that Trump controls the regulatory apparatus.

GOP leaders decided against trying to use the must-do spending bill to "defund" Planned Parenthood. The White House also backed away from language to take away grants from "sanctuary cities" that do not share information about people's immigration status with federal authorities. Trump's request for additional immigration agents was denied and the IRS budget would be frozen at \$11.6 billion instead of absorbing cuts sought by Republicans.—AP



YADKINVILLE: In this Oct 21, 2016 file photo, pellets from recycled plastic bottles is exposed to ultraviolet light as it is processed at the Reprive Bottle Processing Center, part of the Unifi textile company, in Yadkinville, NC. — AP

US FACTORY ACTIVITY SLOWS; CONSUMER SPENDING FLAT

WASHINGTON: US factory activity slowed in April while consumer spending was unchanged in March and a key inflation measure recorded its first monthly drop since 2001, but economists still expect an interest rate increase in June as the labor market tightens.

The weak reports yesterday came ahead of the Federal Reserve's two-day policy meeting today. The US central bank is not expected to raise interest rates at the end of the meeting tomorrow. The reports did little to change expectations of a rate hike in June. "We don't expect that will prevent the Fed from hiking interest rates again at the June meeting, at least not as long as employment growth rebounds in April and May," said Paul Ashworth, chief US economist at Capital Economics in Toronto.

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said its index of national factory activity dropped to a reading of 54.8 last month, the

weakest reading since December, from 57.2 in March. A reading above 50 indicates an expansion in manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy. The ISM index had risen since last November, scaling a 2-1/2-year high in February, amid optimism over President Donald Trump's pro-business policy proposals.

It has declined in the last two months and some economists say the retreat probably reflects caution among business as they await implementation of the proposals. The Trump administration last week proposed a tax plan that includes cutting the corporate income tax rate to 15 percent from 35 percent, but offered no details. The manufacturing recovery is being supported by the energy sector as steady increases in crude oil prices boost drilling activity. The government reported on Friday that spending on mining exploration, wells and

shafts surged at a record rate of 449 percent in the first quarter.

Last month, the ISM survey's new orders sub-index fell to its lowest level since November and a measure of factory employment fell to a six-month low. Prices for US government bonds were trading lower, while the dollar was marginally lower. US stocks were little changed.

The Fed lifted its overnight interest rate by a quarter of a percentage point in March and has forecast two more hikes this year. The consumer spending data was included in last Friday's first-quarter gross domestic product report, which showed consumer spending increasing at a 0.3 percent annual rate - the slowest pace since the fourth quarter of 2009. Consumer spending accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity. The economy grew at a 0.7 percent rate in the first quarter, the worst performance in three years.—Reuters

Chart 1: Real estate sales



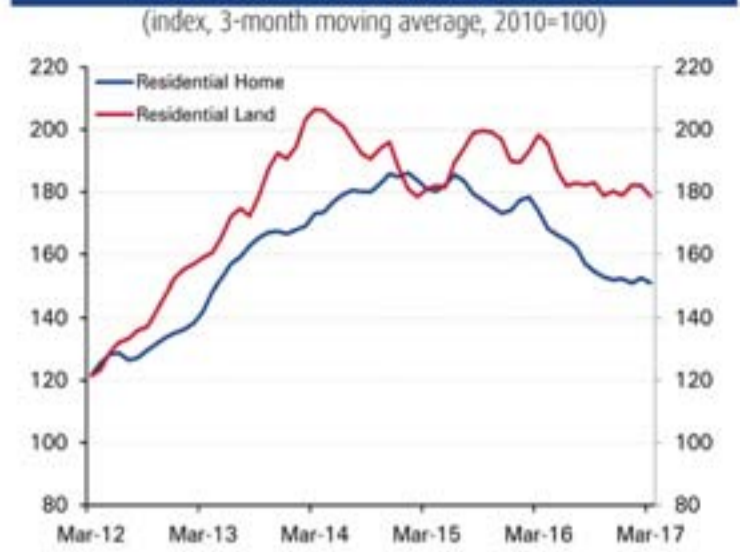
Source: Ministry of Justice

Chart 2: Residential real estate sales



Source: Ministry of Justice, NBK estimates

Chart 3: Residential real estate price indices



Source: Ministry of Justice, NBK estimates

KUWAIT REAL ESTATE SECTOR REMAINS BUOYANT

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: The real estate market ended the first quarter on a positive note, with total sales breaching the KD 200 million mark in March amid continued price stability. Real estate sales totalled KD 590 million by the end of 1Q17, down 17 percent compared to the first quarter of last year despite a slight pickup in transaction volumes, which rose by 3 percent year-on-year (y/y). However, March alone saw sales up by 9 percent y/y to KD 255 million, supported by a jump in residential sales. The month saw continued stabilization in prices across both the residential and the investment sectors.

The residential sector was the main driver behind the pick-up in activity in March. Sales reached KD 175 million during the month, on 358 transactions. Of these, 185 were land sales with a heavy concentration in Abu Ftaira and Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City. Interest in residential land has been low for the last two years, with 90 land sales per month on average in 2016 compared to 300 land sales in 2014 as speculative trading was dominating the mar-

ket. Residential real estate prices retreated slightly in March, but continued to show a stabilizing trend. The NBK residential home price index stood at 150.9 point, down 0.6 percent for the month. The index has been in the vicinity of 151-152 points for the seven months, though it is down 13.2 percent y/y. The NBK residential land price index retreated slightly in March to 178.1 points. This index was down 10.2 percent y/y, although it remained relatively stable for ten months.

Investment sector

Investment sector activity softened in March. Sales came in at KD 60 million, down 27 percent y/y. The number of transactions lagged as well, dropping by 30 percent from previous year. The number of less expensive single investment apartments continued to be

the sector's main driver. The shift in the composition of the investment sales towards more single-apartments than buildings resulted in a 30 percent decline in quarterly KD sales from a year ago, while the number of transactions declined by 3 percent y/y in 1Q17.

Investment building prices were flat in March. The NBK investment building price index stood at 183.5 points, up 0.3 percentage point for the month. Though the index is down 15.1 percent y/y, it appears also to have bottomed out in tandem with prices in the residential sector; the index has hovered around similar levels for four months.

Commercial sector activity was weak during the first quarter of the year with only 25 transactions. Sales for the quarter totalled only KD 77 million, down 56 percent compared to 1Q16; some softness was expected as the

Table 1: Real estate sales

	Monthly average		2017		March 2017		
	2015	2016	Jan	Feb	Mar	% m/m	% y/y
Sales (KD mn)	253.5	195	179.5	155.0	255.3	64.7	8.7
Residential property	113.4	79	78.4	77.1	175.5	127.6	82.6
Investment property	102.2	68	66.8	54.9	59.8	8.9	-26.9
Commercial property	37.9	48	34.3	23	20	-13.0	-65.0
Number of transactions	452	354	368	353	436	23.5	2.6
Residential property	323	237	240	227	358	57.7	16.6
Investment property	120	108	115	119	73	-38.7	-29.8
Commercial property	8	8	13	7	5	-28.6	-64.3
Transaction size (KD '000)	566	547	487.8	439.1	585.6	33.4	5.9
Residential property	352	332	326.7	339.6	490.2	44.3	56.6
Investment property	882	646	580.9	461.3	819.2	77.6	4.1
Commercial property	5,185	5,204	2638.5	3285.7	4000.0	21.7	-1.9

commercial sector saw an exceptionally strong performance in March, including a KD 8.3 million transaction for a building in Salmiya. The sector recorded sales of KD 20 million

HUAWEI'S OPENLAB DUBAI OFFICIALLY STARTS OPERATION

PROGRAM TO ACCELERATE MIDEAST DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

DUBAI: Huawei, a leading global ICT solutions provider, yesterday announced the launch of its OpenLab Dubai, its first to serve customers and partners in the Middle East, and an important part of Huawei's Global OpenLab program. Huawei plans to add seven new OpenLabs across the world in 2017, and in the next three years will invest \$ 200 million and nearly 1,000 people globally, bringing the total number of OpenLabs to 20 by the year 2019. OpenLab Dubai is committed to providing innovative solutions for IoT, cloud computing, large data, intelligent analysis, eLTE, converged communications and other new technologies to build public safety, smart city, oil and gas solutions, and has attracted YITU, Zenith, Walkbase, 7G, IOMniscient, Nedap, Richfit and more than 20 other partners.



Alaa ElShimy

With the "Platform + Ecosystem, accelerate the Middle East digital transformation of the industry", OpenLab Dubai brings together partners and customers from around the world to discuss the importance of collaboration in the development of a local digital ecosystem.

At the launch ceremony, Fan Siyong, President of Public Sector, Huawei, said, "The digital transformation is causing disruption across every industry. Huawei has established OpenLabs across the world with the theme "platform + ecosystem", and is committed to working with global multi-specialty and industry partners to build customer-centric, innovative industry solutions to promote digital transformation and promote ecosystem development through the creation of an 'open, flexible and safe' platform that fully supports the ecosystem. Huawei is committed to helping governments and enterprises in the Middle East to rely on new ICT technology and applications to maintain steady growth, achieve excellence and enhance the competi-

tiveness of the ICT industry in the region. Huawei's OpenLab Dubai was built based on local market demands, talents, and technologies, and will focus on cooperation between enterprises, services, partners and customers in Middle East. "The special climate, resources, culture and industry in the Middle East posed different challenges compared to other regions," said Xijiang Lin, Director of Middle East Solution Development Center, Huawei EBG.

"OpenLab Dubai will aggregate the world's best resources to meet local digital transformation needs, and continuously enhance the ICT platform capabilities and development of local ecosystems. OpenLab Dubai is focused on building capabilities to easily apply technical solutions in the actual network environment; developing competitive, commercially viable and industry-oriented solutions; empowering innovation capabilities, rapid response to market demand; achieving industrial chain value aggregation and a customer/partner/vendor win-win-win situation. OpenLab Dubai has been jointly launched with more than 30 solutions and over 20 partners in Public Safety, Smart city and Digital Oil & Gas.

OpenLab Dubai gives customers a hands-on experience of public safety, smart city, oil and gas solutions:

Public safety sector: Based on Huawei's

strong infrastructure of, wireless network, eLTE-LiTRA, cloud computing, large data technology integration, Dubai OpenLab is working with YITU, Zenith and other partners, for face and license plate recognition, population density analysis, public opinion analysis solutions, working towards creating a harmonious and safe social environment

Smart City: Huawei combines low-power, wide-coverage NB-IoT / eLTE-IoT, Smart Gateway, cloud computing and large data, working with Honeywell, Nedap, Johnson Controls, and other partners. Huawei is also working with Esri in data management to jointly build intelligent parking, intelligent buildings, smart meters, intelligent lights and many other smart solutions.

Oil and Gas: Huawei will combine 4G wireless broadband network eLTE with Honeywell and Emerson's various oilfield sensing devices to provide digital field-wide connection solutions to solve real-time communication problems in oil fields, help oilfield visualization production, improve oil recovery and reduce security risks.

As part of Huawei's commitment to innovation, OpenLab Dubai will be connected to Huawei's global OpenLab network, to promote new business models, market demand and technical solutions for the exchange. At the opening ceremony, eSri, Zenith, Honeywell shared their solutions in public safety, smart city and oil and gas sectors, and their involvement with Huawei's OpenLab Dubai aiming for a successful digital transformation trend.

At the opening, Huawei also signed a strategic cooperation agreement with Zenith, Esri and Smart IOT LLC. To establish long-term solutions partnerships, aimed at providing customers with industry-leading solutions.



Hong-Eng Koh, Global Chief Public Safety Expert of Huawei Enterprise.



Fan Siyong, President of Public Sector, Huawei Enterprise Open.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.772
Indian Rupees	4.730
Pakistani Rupees	2.908
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.004
Nepali Rupees	2.964
Singapore Dollar	219.690
Hongkong Dollar	39.243
Bangladesh Taka	3.716
Philippine Peso	6.128
Thai Baht	8.891

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.428
Qatari Riyal	83.867
Omani Riyal	793.009
Bahraini Dinar	810.810
UAE Dirham	83.136

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.150
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.777
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.226
Tunisian Dinar	133.540
Jordanian Dinar	430.030
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.034
Syrian Lira	2.176
Morocco Dirham	30.823

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	305.150
Euro	332.310
Sterling Pound	391.510
Canadian dollar	227.130
Turkish lira	85.240

Swiss Franc	308.230
Australian Dollar	232.220
US Dollar Buying	303.950

GOLD	
20 Gram	260.990
10 Gram	133.410
5 Gram	67.550

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.800
Canadian Dolla	226.525
Sterling Pound	392.135
Euro	328.485
Swiss Frank	305.110
Bahrain Dinar	808.430
UAE Dirhams	83.380
Qatari Riyals	84.605
Saudi Riyals	82.175
Jordanian Dinar	429.815
Egyptian Pound	16.978
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.005
Indian Rupees	4.728
Pakistani Rupees	2.907
Bangladesh Taka	3.742
Philippines Peso	6.121
Cyprus pound	168.208
Japanese Yen	3.795
Syrian Pound	2.420
Nepalese Rupees	3.950
Malaysian Ringgit	70.185

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.745
Thai Bhat	9.860
Turkish Lira	84.130

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.383340	0.393340
Czech Korune	0.004321	0.016321
Danish Krone	0.040485	0.045485
Euro	0.325889	0.334889
Norwegian Krone	0.031665	0.036865
Romanian Leu	0.073011	0.073011
Slovakia	0.009130	0.019130
Swedish Krona	0.030477	0.035477
Swiss Franc	0.299342	0.310342
Turkish Lira	0.078977	0.089277
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.222210	0.234210
New Zealand Dollar	0.208110	0.217610
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.220906	0.229905
Georgina Lari	0.137777	0.137777
US Dollars	0.300950	0.305350
US Dollars Mint	0.301450	0.305350
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003419	0.004003
Chinese Yuan	0.042801	0.046301
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037132	0.039882
Indian Rupee	0.004272	0.004960

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002682	0.002862
Kenyan Shilling	0.002945	0.002945
Korean Won	0.000259	0.000274
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065645	0.071645
Nepalese Rupee	0.003014	0.003184
Pakistan Rupee	0.002692	0.002982
Philippine Peso	0.006009	0.006309
Sierra Leone	0.000038	0.000044
Singapore Dollar	0.213235	0.223235
South African Rand	0.017413	0.025913
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001636	0.002216
Taiwan	0.009958	0.010138
Thai Baht	0.008510	0.009060
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.802580	0.811080
Egyptian Pound	0.014043	0.019951
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000195	0.000255
Jordanian Dinar	0.4248948	0.433894
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020378	0.044378
Nigerian Naira	0.000396	0.001031
Omani Riyal	0.785917	0.791597
Qatar Riyal	0.082978	0.084428
Saudi Riyal	0.080260	0.081580
Syrian Pound	0.001293	0.001513
Tunisian Dinar	0.124511	0.132511
Turkish Lira	0.078977	0.089277
UAE Dirhams	0.081629	0.083329
Yemeni Riyal	0.000992	0.001072

NISSAN AL BABBAIN HOLDS 'BEWARE OF FAKE PARTS' SEMINAR

GENUINE PARTS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & EDUCATION SEMINAR



In Collaboration with Nissan Gulf & The General Administration of Customs



KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babbain Co. (AABC), the authorized dealer of Nissan vehicles and spare parts in the State of Kuwait, in collaboration with Nissan Gulf FZCo. and the General Administration of Customs recently held a knowledge-based seminar themed 'Beware of Fake Parts' on the importance of using Nissan Genuine Parts versus counterfeit products.

Nissan Al Babbain held the seminar at the General Administration of Customs auditorium in Shuwaikh in the presence of representatives of the General Administration of Customs headed by, - Acting General Manager of the General Administration of Customs - Mr. Sulaiman Abdulaziz Al Fahad, Board Member of Al Babbain Group - Mr. Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babbain, and representatives from the Ministry of Interior, from Nissan Middle East & Nissan Gulf headed by Mr. Tomita Koji and David Graves, along with Top management from Al Babbain Group led by, Chief Operating Officer - Mohammed Shalaby and Chief Legal Officer - Adel Alwakkad, Executives from the Aftersales Automotive industry, representatives of key media institutions, along with several stakeholders and the automotive sector.

The Nissan Al Babbain's educational seminar conducted in response to the rising challenges and dangers as a result of wide variety of counterfeit parts being sold in the market by unauthorized spare parts retailers. Counterfeit parts available across the market consist of safety related parts, service parts and body panels. It's believed that counterfeit parts is one of the major causes of the accidents on the roads today. Many

of these accidents are due to the widespread fake car parts. Accidents may involve not only substandard panel parts, but also safety components like brake parts, filters and air-bags etc.

Al Babbain Group's Chief Operating Officer - Mohammed Shalaby, stressed on the importance of driving with genuine car parts and reiterated Nissan's fervent belief in stringent guidelines to ensure everyone's Safety on the roads.

"With ever-increasing road accidents, we urge customers to be vigilant. We thank the General Administration of Customs for their continuous support and are committed to continue working with our partners to raise awareness and put an end to the unhealthy trade of counterfeit parts to guarantee the safety of our customers, which is our top priority", he concluded.

Group General Manager Marketing - Al Babbain Group, Makram Khater said, "With several wide-spread regional and global campaigns and road safety initiatives, Nissan Al Babbain's latest educational & awareness seminar is a testament to the brands deepened commitment to safeguarding consumers' safety and delivering exceptional Aftersales services." Adding, "We have developed a full fledge communication plan focusing on targeted online campaigns spreading the right message to the Kuwaiti public. The online campaigns are also supported by strong PR efforts and other offline media messaging."

In view of safeguarding Nissan vehicle owners and to ensure quality, reliability and competitive prices, Al



Babbain advise all consumers to use Nissan Genuine parts supplied by Al Babbain service and parts network or by authorized dealers. Nissan Al Babbain is also equipped with several associated products for post war-

ranty vehicles / customers called "Nissan Key Value" parts. Today Nissan Kuwait has the largest Aftersales Service and Parts Network in the State of Kuwait with 9 Service Centers and 14 Parts Outlets.

HOT EARNINGS TO KEEP FIRE UNDER GROWTH-STOCK RALLY

NEW YORK: Don't look for the outperformance of growth stocks to fade any time soon, as long as corporate earnings continue to improve and hopes remain for stronger economic growth. The Russell 1000 Growth index, which tracks such shares, is up 10.9 percent so far this year, outpacing the US benchmark S&P 500 stock index's 6.6 percent rise and the 2.8 percent advance of the Russell 1000 Value index.

And it's not just a US phenomenon. Growth stocks - whose profits are expected to grow at a faster pace than the broader market - are also outperforming their value counterparts in Asia and Europe. Still, the appeal of riskier stocks perceived as better positioned to ride an accelerating global earnings tailwind, as opposed to those with a greater cushion of safety, is nowhere as far ahead as it is on Wall Street.

In the United States, an improving outlook for corporate earnings should help keep growth names in vogue, according to John Praveen, chief investment strategist at Prudential International Investments Advisers LLC in Newark, New Jersey.

The average estimate of analysts for earnings per share growth this year of S&P 500 companies has risen to 11.3 percent from 10.9 percent at the start of the month, according to Thomson Reuters data, a trend that should continue to blunt concerns about lofty growth valuations.

"When you have an earnings recovery, growth stocks will outperform. When you don't have good earnings, that's when people are looking for value," said Praveen. Hopes for pro-business US policy changes under the administration of President Donald Trump will likely also keep expectations for economic growth elevated, helping to maintain the case

for growth stocks. "The value stocks have done okay but growth has done so much better in the anticipation we'll see a pickup in economic growth," said Paul Nolte, portfolio manager at Kingsview Asset Management in Chicago. "Companies that are going to be more levered to economic growth tend to be growth stocks." "Right now I don't see a long term condition for value stocks to outperform growth," said Nolte. To be sure, some strategists are less convinced that growth stock outperformance will continue indefinitely.

While value stocks, which are cheaper relative to their earnings potential, have tended to do better in slower growth environments historically, JP Morgan Asset Management's global market strategist David Lebovitz says that trend has been changing. "It's not going to be smooth sailing for one or the other. We think there'll be times people are more optimistic about the economy and in those cases, value can rally. Then you'll see periods where people are less optimistic about the economy, as we've seen over the course of the first quarter," he said. If economic trends look better in the second quarter, value stocks will do better, Lebovitz said. In Asia, the MSCI AC Asia ex Japan growth index, is up 18.5 percent so far this year, compared with a 12.6 percent gain for the comparable MSCI value index.

Investment in India, traditionally a growth-driven market, has adjusted in recent years as value stocks have narrowed the gap with growth, which still lead, said Jayesh Shroff, co-founder of investment advisory Cask Capital in Mumbai. "That is because people were paying a premium for growth and somehow the growth did not materialize. That's why value came back and growth has taken a slight back seat," said Shroff. — Reuters

US CONSUMER SPENDING FLAT FOR SECOND MONTH IN MARCH

WASHINGTON: US consumers cut back sharply in spending on durable goods such as autos in March, leaving overall spending unchanged for a second straight month. The slowdown in consumer activity was a major reason overall economic growth slowed so sharply over the winter.

Consumer spending was unchanged in March after also being flat in February and posting only a modest rise of 0.2 percent in January, the Commerce Department reported yesterday. For the January-March quarter the sharp slowdown in consumer spending was a key reason growth, as measured by the gross domestic product, slowed to an annual rate of just 0.7 percent, the poorest performance in three years.

Economists believe growth will bounce back in the current April-June period, helped by continued strong job gains, rising wages and increased consumer confidence. Many analysts are looking for a second quarter surge to growth of 3 percent or better and they are forecasting growth for the entire year of around 2.3 percent, up from 1.6 percent GDP growth in 2016, the poorest showing in five years. Analysts believe the bounce back in the current quarter will be helped by continued strong job gains, rising wages and increased consumer confidence.

But the poor first quarter performance underscored the challenge President Donald Trump faces in lifting economic growth, which has lagged over the nearly eight years of this economic expan-

sion, the slowest in the post-war period.

Trump promised during the campaign to double economic growth to 4 percent or better through a combination of tax cuts for individuals and businesses, deregulation and tougher enforcement of America's trade deals. But private economists contend that Trump's growth goal will be hard to achieve given the headwinds the economy faces with an aging workforce and scant gains in recent years in productivity.

The March spending report showed that incomes grew a modest 0.2 percent after stronger increases of 0.3 percent in February and 0.4 percent in January. The combination of weak spending growth and stronger income growth left the saving rate at 5.9 percent of after-tax income in March, up from 5.7 percent in February.

A key inflation gauge closely watched by the Federal Reserve showed a 0.2 percent decline in March while core inflation, which excludes food and energy, fell 0.1 percent, the first decline since September 2001. For the 12 months ending in March, core inflation has risen 1.6 percent, down from a 1.8 percent increase in February. That performance represented a small setback for the Fed's goal of getting inflation back to annual increases of 2 percent. Fed officials meet this week but economists are not looking for the central bank to raise interest rates at this meeting although many economists do expect a rate hike at the next meeting in June. — AP



PITTSBURGH: This Jan 12, 2017 file photo shows cars on a dealer lot in Pittsburgh. US consumers cut back sharply in spending on durable goods such as autos in March 2017, leaving overall spending unchanged for a second straight month. — AP

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Kuwait Territory

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US STOCKS RISE AFTER DEAL TO AVERT GOVT SHUTDOWN

NEW YORK: US stocks rose early yesterday at the start of a heavy week of earnings and a Federal Reserve meeting, and as lawmakers reached a deal to avert a government shutdown.

The Fed is not expected to raise the benchmark interest rate tomorrow after increasing in March. Analysts said sentiment was boosted by a deal among US congressional leaders to fund government operations through the end of the fiscal year September 30, averting a shutdown.

About 12 minutes into trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up a hair at 20,942.80. The broad-based S&P 500 rose 0.2 percent to 2,388.38, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index gained 0.4 percent to

6,069.71. Major economic data releases this week include the April jobs report on Friday and readings on the services manufacturing and services sectors. Earnings thus far this quarter have generally bested expectations. The calendar this week includes Apple, which reports today, Facebook and Pfizer. Dish Network lost 0.5 percent after reporting revenues of \$3.7 billion in the first quarter, missing analyst estimates by \$100 million.

Meanwhile, Asian shares were mostly higher yesterday despite worries over regional tensions after a North Korea missile launch failed over the weekend. Many markets in Asia and Europe were closed for Labor Day. Japan's benchmark

Nikkei 225 gained 0.6 percent to 19,310.52. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was up 0.4 percent to 5,949.20.

The North's failed attempt to launch a mid-range ballistic missile on Saturday added to regional uncertainty. President Donald Trump has warned that the US "can't allow" North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un to develop better missiles. "The market mood remains relatively cautious ahead of a big news week that will include the French election and US jobs data," Ric Spooner, chief market analyst at CMC Markets, said in a commentary.

A runoff election is set for Sunday for the French presidency between centrist Emmanuel

Macron and far-right National Front leader Marine Le Pen. There are worries about growing nationalism.

Benchmark US crude fell 6 cents to \$49.27 a barrel. It rose 36 cents, or 0.7 percent, to settle late Friday at \$49.33 per bar-

rel in New York. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 13 cents to \$51.92 a barrel in London. The euro edged down to \$1.0889 from \$1.0924 late Friday in Asia. The dollar strengthened to 111.69 yen from 111.44 yen. — Agencies



NEW YORK: A Wall Street sign outside the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks opened slightly higher on Wall Street yesterday led by gains in technology companies and banks. — AP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report																																																																																																																																																																																																											
Monday 01 May 2017																																																																																																																																																																																																											
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low																																																																																																																																																																																																						
Price Index	▼ -49.95	6,793.06	6,843.01	6,843.46	6,782.65																																																																																																																																																																																																						
Weighted Index	▼ -2.96	405.35	408.31	408.40	404.04																																																																																																																																																																																																						
KSX 15	▼ -6.02	912.70	919.38	919.38	907.44																																																																																																																																																																																																						
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Volume</th> <td>115,816,634</td> </tr> <tr> <th>Value (KWD)</th> <td>11,352,184</td> </tr> <tr> <th>Number of Trades</th> <td>3,137</td> </tr> </thead> </table>							Volume	115,816,634	Value (KWD)	11,352,184	Number of Trades	3,137																																																																																																																																																																																															
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MARIN	60	60	109	7	1	60	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
NAFESCO	1.560	1.360	43,356	62,215	55	1,300	▲ 40.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ENERGYH	46.0	43.5	392,229	17,383	36	44.0	▼ -2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
GPI	46.5	45.0	1,153,300	52,251	36	45.5	▼ -0.5																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ASAR	92	88	104,019	9,323	23	88	▼ -2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Oil & Gas			1,893,813	141,178	151	1061.72	▲ 8.06																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KFOUC	310	275	311	87	2	310	▲ 20.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
BPCO	570	570	3,465	1,975	8	570	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ALQURAIN	330	325	498,455	154,485	21	330	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Basic Materials			502,231	166,547	31	1306.29	▲ 12.75																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KCEM	485	485	1,768	857	3	485	▼ -25.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
CABLE	440	430	809	353	5	440	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SHP	230	224	25,395	5,719	5	226	▼ -4.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
PCEM	960	950	5,279	5,125	6	970	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
PAPER	300	300	2,867	890	1	300	▼ -15.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MRC	75	71	140	10	2	71	▼ -0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ACICO	290	285	48,200	13,918	5	290	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	208	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KBMAC	146	146	1,000	146	1	146	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
NICBM	204	204	7	1	1	204	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
EQUIPMENT	60	58	580,000	34,338	18	60	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
NCCI	85	80	715	60	2	80	▼ -5.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
GYPISUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SALBOOKH	65	64	227,089	14,534	11	65	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
AQTY	630	620	32,106	19,920	7	630	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
EDU	305	290	8,515	2,482	4	290	▼ -25.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
CLEANING	52	49.0	3,874,162	156,819	73	49.5	▲ 0.5																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KGL	96	92	962,484	62,555	39	96	▲ 4.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KCPK	168	164	11,600	1,909	4	164	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
HUMANSOFT	3,840	3,780	131,353	494,718	11	3,840	▲ 100.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
GFC	80	80	700	42	1	80	▼ -3.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MAYADEEN	28.5	28.0	540,718	15,216	13	28.0	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
GGC	580	570	297,606	170,486	45	570	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
LIPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	780	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ALAFCO	244	244	3,960	966	2	244	▼ -6.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MUBARRAD	77	77	22	2	1	77	▼ -2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
LOGISTICS	72	67	5,965,796	421,146	107	71	▲ 3.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SCM	92	86	612	56	2	82	▲ 2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
QCM	79	78	80,120	6,249	6	79	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
GIC	83	83	300	29	1	83	▼ -2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
FCEM	85	83	812,422	68,311	13	84	▼ -2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SPEC	88	87	235,471	20,571	13	88	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Industrials			13,881,216	1,557,452	402	1777.35	▼ -11.45																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	188	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	48.0	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
PAPCO	102	102	265	27	1	102	▼ -8.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
CATTL	210	204	7,034	1,405	5	204	▼ -6.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
DANAH	88	87	149,050	13,017	5	88	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
FOOD	2,400	2,400	41	98	1	2,400	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Consumer Goods			156,390	14,608	12	1103.45	▼ -19.18																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MHC	310	310	1,000	310	1	310	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
YIACO	200	200	300	78	2	200	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Health Care			1,390	388	3	1340.72	— 0.00																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KCN	1,320	1,320	1,000	1,320	2	1,320	▼ -8.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
IFAHY	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
QULAFUEL	124	124	63,110	7,826	22	124	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MUNTAAZAH	81	78	11,165	804	3	81	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
JAZEERA	530	510	29,064	15,336	8	520	▼ -30.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SOUR	126	122	18,088	2,239	14	126	▲ 4.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
FUTUREKID	124	118	215	26	2	124	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ALRAI	156	156	50	8	1	156	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ZIMAH	60	58	85,810	5,112	9	60	▲ 1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Mazzan	990	990	50,817	50,467	5	990	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Consumer Services			258,479	83,227	66	905.77	▼ -14.70																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ZAIN	445	440	1,330,532	595,677	42	445	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
OOREDOO	1,200	1,200	4,668	5,602	9	1,200	▲ 20.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
HISTELECOM	46.5	45.5	416,600	19,087	12	46.0	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
VIVA	840	820	29,807	24,636	40	830	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Telecommunications			1,790,667	645,631	103	623.85	▼ -2.67																																																																																																																																																																																																				
NBK	680	670	1,036,235	706,650	37	680	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
GBK	248	248	825	205	3	248	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
CBK	385	365	38,133	13,422	7	385	▼ -5.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ABK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	310	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ALMUTAHED	435	425	8,809	2,904	5	435	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KIB	248	248	2,006,211	494,705	17	248	▼ -3.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
BURG	320	310	681,451	214,274	21	310	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KFIN	500	495	999,192	456,489	33	495	▼ -5.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
BOUBYAN	410	405	1,687,779	867,733	50	405	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
AUB	218	214	893,055	192,902	19	214	▼ -4.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ITHMR	51	48.0	27,218,843	1,345,482	317	48.5	▼ -2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
WARABANK	248	244	396,165	89,791	91	246	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Banks			34,943,698	4,243,526	600	932.24	▼ -10.54																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KINS	238	238	10,000	2,380	1	238	▼ -10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
GINS	550	550	5	3	1	550	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
AINS	485	485	10	5	1	485	▲ 5.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
WINS	88	87	5,263	463	6	88	▼ -4.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	194	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
FTI	58	55	517	28	2	58	▲ 2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
WETHAQ	52	51	2,645	136	2	51	▼ -3.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
BKQWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
Insurance			18,440	3,016	13	1035.73	▼ -15.90																																																																																																																																																																																																				
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Security</th> <th>High</th> <th>Low</th> <th>Volume</th> <th>Value (KD)</th> <th>Trades</th> <th>Last</th> <th>Change</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>SOKOLK</td> <td>52</td> <td>50</td> <td>208,967</td> <td>134,846</td> <td>68</td> <td>51</td> <td>▼ -1.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>KRE</td> <td>58</td> <td>57</td> <td>1,491,795</td> <td>88,301</td> <td>26</td> <td>58</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>URC</td> <td>95</td> <td>90</td> <td>35</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>90</td> <td>▼ -5.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NRE</td> <td>106</td> <td>104</td> <td>427,091</td> <td>44,494</td> <td>38</td> <td>104</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SRE</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>380</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TAM</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>425</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AREFC</td> <td>168</td> <td>160</td> <td>405</td> <td>67</td> <td>2</td> <td>168</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MASSALEH</td> <td>50</td> <td>48.5</td> <td>321,171</td> <td>15,708</td> <td>20</td> <td>48.5</td> <td>▼ -1.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ARABREC</td> <td>37.0</td> <td>35.5</td> <td>341,180</td> <td>12,333</td> <td>16</td> <td>36.5</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ERESCO</td> <td>42.0</td> <td>41.5</td> <td>245,001</td> <td>10,290</td> <td>16</td> <td>42.0</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MABANEE</td> <td>820</td> <td>800</td> <td>512,003</td> <td>412,972</td> <td>22</td> <td>820</td> <td>▲ 10.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INJAZZAT</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>93</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INVESTORS</td> <td>26.5</td> <td>26.0</td> <td>1,228,236</td> <td>32,087</td> <td>32</td> <td>26.5</td> <td>▲ 0.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IRC</td> <td>36.0</td> <td>35.5</td> <td>358,120</td> <td>12,808</td> <td>14</td> <td>36.0</td> <td>▼ -0.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ALTUJARIA</td> <td>78</td> <td>75</td> <td>77,005</td> <td>5,845</td> <td>8</td> <td>75</td> <td>▼ -1.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SANAM</td> <td>48.5</td> <td>48.5</td> <td>115</td> <td>6</td> <td>1</td> <td>48.5</td> <td>▼ -3.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AAYANRE</td> <td>83</td> <td>83</td> <td>209,931</td> <td>17,424</td> <td>5</td> <td>83</td> <td>▼ -5.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AGAR</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>82</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ALAGARIA</td> <td>43.0</td> <td>41.5</td> <td>121,360</td> <td>5,067</td> <td>6</td> <td>43.0</td> <td>▲ 0.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MAZAYA</td> <td>120</td> <td>118</td> <td>1,830,195</td> <td>216,152</td> <td>38</td> <td>120</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ADNC</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>11.0</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>THEMAR</td> <td>90</td> <td>90</td> <td>10</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>90</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TUARA</td> <td>58</td> <td>56</td> <td>485</td> <td>27</td> <td>2</td> <td>58</td> <td>— 0.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TAAMEER</td> <td>41.5</td> <td>40.5</td> <td>5,559,103</td> <td>228,100</td> </tr></tbody></table>							Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change	SOKOLK	52	50	208,967	134,846	68	51	▼ -1.0	KRE	58	57	1,491,795	88,301	26	58	— 0.0	URC	95	90	35	3	2	90	▼ -5.0	NRE	106	104	427,091	44,494	38	104	— 0.0	SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	— 0.0	TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	425	— 0.0	AREFC	168	160	405	67	2	168	— 0.0	MASSALEH	50	48.5	321,171	15,708	20	48.5	▼ -1.5	ARABREC	37.0	35.5	341,180	12,333	16	36.5	— 0.0	ERESCO	42.0	41.5	245,001	10,290	16	42.0	— 0.0	MABANEE	820	800	512,003	412,972	22	820	▲ 10.0	INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	93	— 0.0	INVESTORS	26.5	26.0	1,228,236	32,087	32	26.5	▲ 0.5	IRC	36.0	35.5	358,120	12,808	14	36.0	▼ -0.5	ALTUJARIA	78	75	77,005	5,845	8	75	▼ -1.0	SANAM	48.5	48.5	115	6	1	48.5	▼ -3.5	AAYANRE	83	83	209,931	17,424	5	83	▼ -5.0	AGAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	— 0.0	ALAGARIA	43.0	41.5	121,360	5,067	6	43.0	▲ 0.5	MAZAYA	120	118	1,830,195	216,152	38	120	— 0.0	ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	11.0	— 0.0	THEMAR	90	90	10	1	1	90	— 0.0	TUARA	58	56	485	27	2	58	— 0.0	TAAMEER	41.5	40.5	5,559,103	228,100
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SOKOLK	52	50	208,967	134,846	68	51	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
KRE	58	57	1,491,795	88,301	26	58	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
URC	95	90	35	3	2	90	▼ -5.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
NRE	106	104	427,091	44,494	38	104	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	425	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
AREFC	168	160	405	67	2	168	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MASSALEH	50	48.5	321,171	15,708	20	48.5	▼ -1.5																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ARABREC	37.0	35.5	341,180	12,333	16	36.5	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ERESCO	42.0	41.5	245,001	10,290	16	42.0	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MABANEE	820	800	512,003	412,972	22	820	▲ 10.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	93	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
INVESTORS	26.5	26.0	1,228,236	32,087	32	26.5	▲ 0.5																																																																																																																																																																																																				
IRC	36.0	35.5	358,120	12,808	14	36.0	▼ -0.5																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ALTUJARIA	78	75	77,005	5,845	8	75	▼ -1.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
SANAM	48.5	48.5	115	6	1	48.5	▼ -3.5																																																																																																																																																																																																				
AAYANRE	83	83	209,931	17,424	5	83	▼ -5.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
AGAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ALAGARIA	43.0	41.5	121,360	5,067	6	43.0	▲ 0.5																																																																																																																																																																																																				
MAZAYA	120	118	1,830,195	216,152	38	120	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	11.0	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
THEMAR	90	90	10	1	1	90	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
TUARA	58	56	485	27	2	58	— 0.0																																																																																																																																																																																																				
TAAMEER	41.5	40.5	5,559,103	228,100																																																																																																																																																																																																							



NBK LAUNCHES 'DIGITAL SOLUTIONS' BRANCH IN BAYAN

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait opens another fully digital customer care center in Bayan area. The innovative banking branch provides a range of customer care using the latest innovative digital and technological solutions aimed at enhancing customer convenience and ease of completing transactions.

The official opening of the new branch in Bayan was done in the presence Hawally Governor, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, NBK CEO Salah Al-Fulajj and Mohammed Al-Othman, Deputy General Manager at NBK's Consumer Banking Group.

Customers can use iPads to browse information on

nbk.com about NBK offers, access information about NBK products and services as well as access NBK Online Banking etc. Highly trained staff will assist customers in registering for NBK Mobile and Online Banking using these iPads and guide customers through the user experience in becoming comfortable with the service available through these digital channels. Customers further have the option of using these iPads to conduct day-to-day transactions. NBK is the only bank in Kuwait to provide its customers with the option of PIN retrieval for credit cards via NBK Online Banking.

Moreover, visually impaired customers will now have access to spoken 'terms and conditions' to help them fully understand all product and service offerings. This text to speech functionality is available in English and Arabic.

Digital solutions reinforce NBK's safe and secure banking strategy are implemented throughout the branch, which will offer access to banking services for corporates, small business customers and individual accounts.

"NBK adopts the latest cutting edge technology but always reinforces its safety-first protocols," explains

Mohammed Al-Othman, Deputy General Manager, National Bank of Kuwait. "We align customers' needs and lifestyle - especially in this digital age of smart phones and social media - to their banking requirements without sacrificing security or safety."

National Bank of Kuwait has been listed among the 50 safest banks in the world by Global Finance magazine for 11 consecutive times. It was also named Best Bank in Kuwait in 2016 by the Banker, Euromoney and Global Finance. NBK also has the largest branch network of any bank in Kuwait, with 68 branches, 266 ATMs (184 ATMs and 82 CDM).

MARGINAL DECLINE, MINIMAL VOLATILITY

KUWAIT: GCC indices traded within a tight range during April-17 as lack of any major catalyst left the markets without any direction bias. The 3 percent decline in oil price with relatively higher volatility during the month on the back of talks of extended production cuts also had minimal impact on GCC markets. Two out of the seven GCC markets closed the month in the positive zone with Abu Dhabi witnessing a gain of 1.8 percent followed by 0.2 percent for Saudi Arabia. The gain seen in Abu Dhabi was primarily on the back of the Banking index that surged 5.3 percent after the merger of First Gulf Bank and National Bank of Abu Dhabi to create First Abu Dhabi Bank sent positive signal across the sector, although the performance of banks were mixed in the rest of the GCC markets. On the decliners chart, Qatar topped the list with a monthly decline of 3.1 percent followed by Dubai at -1.9 percent and Bahrain at -1.5 percent.

The merger of NBAD and FGB garnered significant attention in the GCC after several other combinations failed in the recent past. The combined synergy augurs well to deal with the current economic situation with low oil prices and diversification on cards. In Saudi Arabia, a potential merger is being discussed between Alawwal Bank and Saudi British Bank that could create a sector behemoth with almost \$80 billion worth of assets, third largest in Saudi Arabia after NCB and Al-Rajhi Bank and seventh largest in the GCC.

Trading activity continued to decline for the third consecutive month with total value traded witnessing a steep decline of 21 percent to reach \$23 billion. The decline was seen in all the GCC markets with Qatar seeing the biggest month-on-month fall of 55 percent primarily due to a high base effect as liquidity during March-17 was one of the highest in almost two years. Saudi Arabia's decline in value traded was the smallest during April-17 that partially offset the higher decline in other markets. Volume traded on the GCC exchanges also declined month-on-month by 14 percent to 16.2 billion shares.

Bursa Kuwait

Stocks continued to slide in Kuwait during April-17 as reflected in the declines recorded by all the three benchmark indices. After a positive performance during March-17, the Kuwait Price Index witnessed the steepest monthly decline of 2.7 percent and traded below the critical 7,000 mark to reach 6,843.01 points by month end. The Weighted Index declined by 1.2 percent and traded above the 400 mark to close at 408.3 points, while the Kuwait 15 Index declined by 1.5 percent to reach 919.4 points. Nevertheless, despite the weak monthly performance in April-17, Kuwait continues to record the best YTD-17 performance in the GCC with a return of 19 percent for the Price index, 7.4 percent for the Weighted Index and 3.9 percent for the Kuwait 15 Index.

Trading activity on the exchange declined in line with the rest of the GCC markets with monthly volumes down by 16.9 percent to reach 5.9 billion shares as compared to 7.1 billion shares traded during March-17. The monthly value traded declined by a higher 20.8 percent to reach KD 517 million as compared to KD 653 million during the previous month. The average daily volume and value traded during the month also declined by 8.5 percent and 12.9 percent, respectively. The monthly volume chart was topped by Al-Tameer Real Estate Investment with 393 million shares traded during the month followed by Ithmaar Bank and Manazel at 362 million and 340 million traded shares, respectively. On the monthly value chart, Kuwait Finance House (-5.7 percent) topped the list with KWD 39.4 million worth of shares traded during the month followed by KWD 38.1 million for Alimtiq Investment (-6.7 percent) and KWD 25.5 million worth of shares for Zain (-2.2 percent).

GCC Equity Markets	Index Closing	MTD Chg%	YTD Chg%	M-Cap (USD Bn)	Monthly Value Traded (USD Mn)	P/E (x) TTM	P/B (x) TTM	Div. Yield
Kuwait - Weighted Index	408.3	(1.2%)	7.4%	92.7	1,712.9	16.0	1.2	3.8%
Kuwait - 15 Index	919.4	(1.5%)	3.9%					
Kuwait - Price Index	6,843.0	(2.7%)	19.0%					
Saudi Arabia	7,013.5	0.2%	(2.7%)	439.2	16,391.1	14.6	1.7	4.3%
Abu Dhabi	4,522.6	1.8%	(0.5%)	127.3	894.8	10.6	1.5	5.3%
Dubai	3,414.9	(1.9%)	(3.3%)	96.2	1,794.9	9.4	1.1	5.1%
Qatar	10,064.4	(1.1%)	(3.6%)	149.0	1,285.6	14.4	1.4	4.0%
Bahrain	1,335.7	(1.5%)	9.4%	20.1	51.4	9.6	0.9	5.0%
Oman	5,513.5	(0.7%)	(4.7%)	15.6	117.5	10.8	1.1	5.7%
Total GCC				942.0	22,248.2	13.1	1.5	4.4%

In terms of sector performance, the Oil & Gas index recorded the highest monthly return of 9.8 percent on the back of 26 percent surge in shares of NAPESCO, the best performing stock during the month, after the company recorded 63 percent increase in Q1-17 net profits. Shares of the Energy House also surged by 22.7 percent followed by 7.1 percent gains in shares of Burqan Co for Drilling that more than offset decline in shares of the remaining companies in the sector. The Industrial and the Banking indices recorded marginally positive returns during the month. The gain of 0.3 percent for the Banking index primarily reflected 4.5 percent returns for NBK that was almost completely offset by 5.7 percent decline in shares of KFH despite the latter reporting the highest growth in quarterly earnings for Q1-17 at 13.1 percent. Moreover, quarterly earnings for banks shows positive y-o-y growth for the six banks that reported Q1-17 earnings. The monthly gainers chart also included Humansoft with a gain of 23 percent as the company reported 15 percent increase in

higher, on general optimism in the sector and potential for further possible consolidation in the sector, which resulted in the sector moving higher by 5.3 percent m-o-m. Energy index was the best performing index, gaining by 8.2 percent m-o-m, as Abu Dhabi National Energy moved up by over 28 percent, as compared to the previous month. Telecoms was the worst performing index as it declined by 3.3 percent m-o-m, followed by the Consumer Goods index & Services index as each of the indices went down by 3.1 percent respectively. The Real Estate index also moved down by 2.3 percent m-o-m, as Aldar Properties receded by 4.4 percent for the month of April-17.

The combined entity of NBAD & FGB - First Abu Dhabi Bank which began trading as a single entity in April-17, reported group net profit of AED 2.93 billion for Q1-2017, a 12.4 percent increase y-o-y from AED 2.60 billion for Q1-2016. Group net revenues for Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank in Q1-17 increased by 4.3 percent to AED 1,374.1 million as compared to AED 1,317.3 million in Q1-16. Group net profit for Q1-17 increased by 19.8 percent to AED 577.5 million and

KAMCO GCC MARKETS MONTHLY REPORT



net profits for Q1-17. On the decliners side, the Technology index witnessed the steepest decline during the month recorded at 13.0 percent after all three constituents companies in the index declined. Shares of REAM topped the monthly decliners list recording a fall of 52.5 percent followed by Nafais Holding and NCCI with monthly declines of 34.8 percent and 34.6 percent, respectively. The monthly market breadth was strongly skewed towards decliners that included 96 companies while advanced included 53 companies. Prices of 28 companies remained unchanged.

Saudi Arabia (Tadawul)

The flattish trend in TASI continued for the second consecutive month with the benchmark index closing April-17 with a marginal gain of 0.2 percent to reach 7,013.5 points. The index managed to close slightly above the support level of 7,000 points after trading below this level for a large part of the second half of the month. Index performance was almost equally split between gainers and losers with large-cap Banks and Telecom indices recording marginal declines of 0.9 percent and 0.7 percent that were offset by 10.7 percent gains for the newly established REIT index followed by 4.0 percent gains for Retailing index and 3.4 percent gains for the Energy index. The Pharma index recorded the steepest decline during the month at 4.4 percent followed by the Diversified Financials index at -4.0 percent and Consumer Durable index at -3.8 percent. Banking sector remained the focus during the latter part of the month after talks of a merger between Alawwal Bank and SABB emerged.

The combined company would be the third biggest in the sector with an asset base of almost \$80 billion. This is also said to benefit both the banks by way of operational synergies, as seen in the case of the recently completed merger of FGB and NBAD. In addition, as the Kingdom looks are opening the market and diversifying the economy, smaller banking players would find it difficult to compete with new players. These newer players includes Citigroup which recently obtained a license to conduct capital market activity in Saudi Arabia as well as ENBD's plans to expand its base in the Kingdom over the next year. In addition, other regional banks are also eyeing expanding in Saudi Arabia and would find it easy to do so as the markets open up and foreign investment regulations are relaxed.

Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange

The ADX index bucked broad GCC market cues and moved higher in April-17, after closing lower in the previous month. The index was the best performing index for the current month and moved up by 1.8 percent m-o-m, to close at 4522.56 points. Banks were able to buoy the broader index



AED 482.0 million in Q1-16. Credit provisions and impairments for Q1-17 decreased by 24.0 percent to AED 164.4 million and AED 216.2 million for Q1-16. ADCB reported a net profit of AED 1.105 billion for Q1-17, an increase of 8 percent y-o-y. Healthy volumes drove the increase in net profit along with a strong non-interest income combined with better management of cost base. Telecom operator Etisalat reported Q1-17 revenues of AED 12.5 billion, a 3 percent decrease y-o-y from Q1-16, as the subscriber base declined by 3 percent as well to reach 159 million.

Dubai Financial Market

DFM continued its declining trends from the previous two months into April-17 as well, and was the second worst performing market in the GCC. For April-17, DFM was down by 1.9 percent and closed at 3414.93 points as sectoral trends



Source: GCC Stock Exchanges, KAMCO Research

were mixed. Telecoms declined by 8.4 percent as DU and Hits Telecom fell by 8.4 percent and 6.4 percent respectively for the month of April-17. Financials and Investment Services index was amongst the main laggards as well, as the index plunged by 7.9 percent m-o-m in April-17, as Dubai Investment & DFM stocks fell by 12.7 percent and 8 percent respectively. Indices, which witnessed higher levels, were led by Transportation, which was up 2.8 percent m-o-m, followed by Insurance, which also moved higher by 2.6 percent as compared to the previous month. Banks were also amongst the gainers, although marginally up for the month, driven by Dubai Islamic bank which gained by 3.6 percent for the month of April-17, while most other major banks receded.

In prominent earnings, large cap bank ENBD reported total income for Q1-17 of AED 3,617 million; an increase of 7 percent y-o-y while net interest income receded by 3 percent over the same period. Core gross fee income increased 7 percent y-o-y on the back of higher income from forex and rates. Net profit for the Group was AED 1,873 million in Q1-17, 4 percent above that posted in Q1-16, ascribed to asset growth, a control on expenses and reduced provisions, which helped, offset lower non-interest income.

Qatar Exchange

The QE 20 index continued to decline in April-17 recording the worst performance in the GCC. The index was down 3.1 percent in April-17 and closed at 10,064.35 points. The Qatar All Share index also dropped by 2.0 percent, as most sectoral indices were down as compared to March-17. Indices such as Transportation, Consumer Goods & Services and Industrials were among the main laggards for the month of April-17. Transportation index receded the most as Qatar Navigation receded by 8.5 percent m-o-m followed by Qatar Gas Transport, which went down by 6.5 percent m-o-m. Qatar Fuel and Al-Meera Consumer Goods were most responsible for the Consumer Goods & Services sectoral index decline, as the stocks receded by 8.7 percent and 6.9 percent respectively. The only index that gained during the month was the Telecoms index, reversing trends from March-17, and gained by 6.7 percent m-o-m for the current month buoyed by Ooredoo, which went up by 7.5 percent m-o-m.

In corporate earnings releases, real estate developer Ezzan reported net profit of QAR 945 million for Q1-17 es. QAR 585 million in Q1-16. Mazaya Qatar reported net profit of QAR 5.0 million in Q1-17 compared to QAR 26.7 million for the same period of the previous year, while EPS for Q1-17 came in at QAR 0.046/share compared to QAR 0.242/share in Q1-16. In other sector earnings, releases Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Company (QIMC) reported net profit of QAR 60.4 million compared QAR 54.8 million for the same period

of the previous year. EPS amounted to QAR 1.27/share in Q1-17 compared to QAR 1.16/share in Q1-16. Qatar Fuel reported Q1-17 net profit of QAR 176.5 million as compared to QAR 242.7 million for the same period in 2016, representing a decrease of 27 percent y-o-y. Qatar Fuel is currently working on more than 22 new petrol station projects under construction, tendering, designing and approval stages along with other projects, which include new expansions, FAHES centres, and Bitumen facilities.

Bahrain Bourse

The Bahrain All Share Index, which was one of the best performing markets up until March-17, reversed trends in April-17 to close 1.5 percent lower in April-17. Sectoral performance was mixed, as there were indices which gained and receded. Market breadth for the index was even, as 14 stocks gained ground, while 14 stocks witnessed declines in their share prices. Commercial Banks were down 1.2 percent m-o-m as compared to March-17 as Ahli United Bank declined by 2.1 percent m-o-m. The Investment sector was the worst performing index dropping by 3.8 percent m-o-m, as GFH and Arab Banking Corporation declined by 3.6 percent and 12.5 percent respectively by the end of April-17. Insurance was the other key laggard declining by 3.0 percent m-o-m as the entire Financials pack came under pressure during the month. The Industrials and Services sectors performed better and gained by 2.9 percent and 1.1 percent respectively in April-17. In earnings releases, National Bank of Bahrain reported a net profit of BHD 14.74 in Q1-17, compared to BHD 17.76 million for the corresponding period of the previous year, representing a decrease of 17.0 percent. Operating Profit came in at BHD 19.05 million in Q1-17, an increase of 3.8 percent over BHD 18.36 million achieved during Q1-16. BKB announced a net profit of BHD 15.8 million for Q1-17 com-

pared to BD 14.6 million for the corresponding period of the previous year, reporting an increase of 8.1 percent after reflecting the restatement impact of BHD 0.688 million on last year's comparable period financial results due to IFRS9 applications. The increase in net profit was ascribed to a 12.5 percent growth in operating revenues to reach BHD 35.6 million compared to BHD 31.6 during Q1-16, primarily driven by 10.8 percent increase in net interest income due to active balance sheet management and adequate control over funding cost.

Muscat Securities Market

Oman recorded one of the smallest monthly declines in the GCC during April-17 amid low trading activity. The benchmark MSM30 index declined by 0.7 percent to close at 5,513.52 points after a gain of 2.8 percent for the Financial index was more than offset by declines of 2.2 percent and 4.5 percent recorded in the Services and Industrial indices, respectively. Gains in the Financial index largely represented the positive earnings reported by banks that pushed bank stocks higher. Shares of Bank Muscat, which reported 1.1 percent increase in Q1-17 net profits, surged 4.7 percent during the month featuring fourth in the monthly top performers list. Shares of NBO also surged 2.7 percent despite the bank reporting 1 percent decline in quarterly profits due to a fall in income from lending activities. Sohar Bank, one of the smaller lenders in the Sultanate, reported a 50 percent surge in Q1-17 net profits that reached OMR 6 million, pushing its shares higher by 10.4 percent during the month, the third highest performer in the regular market.

Meanwhile, the decline in the Industrial index was broad-based as except for the shares of Al-Jazeera Steel Products that surged 16.5 percent, all the other stocks in the sector declined. Shares of the steel product manufacturer topped the monthly gainers chart after it reported 66 percent increase in Q1-17 net profits. On the other hand, Raysut Cement, the largest company in the sector by market cap, recorded the biggest monthly decline in the sector and on the exchange at -14.8 percent after the company's quarterly profits plunged 62 percent. Other prominent decliners included Oman Cement (-8.4 percent) and Oman Cable Industry (-2.9 percent) both recording weak earnings for Q1-17. The performance of the Services sector was similar to the industrial sector with Oman Investment and Finance Co. (+2.3 percent) being the lone positive performing stock. Telecom stocks led the decline in the sector with shares of Omantel plunging 7 percent while Ooredoo declined 4.4 percent after both the telecoms reported steep decline in Q1-17 earnings (31.6 percent and 44.6 percent, respectively).

HUAWEI BAHRAIN POWERS NEC PAYMENTS' HYPERSCALE DATACENTER

MANAMA: Huawei Bahrain and NEC Payments have announced the implementation of a new enterprise-class datacenter, designed to support Bahrain's financial services industry and emerging cashless society. A fully-fledged hardware solution by Huawei has scaled the data-

center's capacity and security to meet NEC Payments customers' high volume of data demands as they continue to evolve. Among Huawei's latest technology deployed at NEC Payments' datacenter are two converged servers, which integrate many functions for handling big data in

one single framework. These have been coupled with one of Huawei's hallmark cloud data storage systems designed for fast data growth and on-demand disaster recovery, as well as Huawei's high security data protection system. Huawei Bahrain's CEO, Feng Nan Paul

commented, "It's been an honor to mark yet another step forward in the direction of Bahrain's digital transformation and ICT development. We look forward to this datacenter empowering Bahrain's local payments market and serving Bahrain's growing cashless economy."

"We're glad to leverage our ICT knowledge, comprehensive technical expertise and continuous innovations, aimed at building open, resilient and secure platforms in Bahrain's enterprise market," concluded Feng Nan Paul. The NEC Payments datacenter has been deployed to address the needs of Bahrain's financial services industry and to drive the digital transformation of the payments sector. It provides NEC Payments with network security, processing and storage capacity to manage expanding volumes of digital transactions and data for mission-critical workloads. Beneficiaries include banks, financial companies and businesses requiring payments services, as well as public sector entities.

Built and operated to international standards, and with certifications including compliance with the industry's latest payment security standards, NEC Payments flexible infrastructure suits the requirements of virtually all clients, espe-

cially those requiring high-performance online transaction processing in a highly-secure on-premises environment.

NEC Payments CEO, Andrew Sims commented, "It's been a pleasure collaborating with a global provider such as Huawei which has a clear understanding of Bahrain's digital transition and adheres to the principle of shared success. The implementation of our on-premises data center in Bahrain was a critical stage in the deployment and certification of our highly-innovative multi-channel, multi-wallet, multi-currency transaction processing platform."

Sims added, "It enables us to rapidly deploy and scale new payment products and services on behalf of financial services customers in Bahrain and the GCC which will promote financial inclusion and help to create new and efficient payment flows for governments, businesses and consumers. Huawei made the implementation a smooth process that will truly benefit us, our customers and help drive digital transformation in Bahrain."

Huawei Bahrain's Enterprise Business Group solutions are designed to help enterprises meet the demands of the increasingly connected world and provide businesses a better competitive edge in the local market.



NISSAN SETS UP UNIT TO BOOST NISMO ROAD CAR BUSINESS

MORE HIGH-PERFORMANCE MODELS TO BE ROLLED OUT GLOBALLY



DUBAI: Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. has set up a new unit to expand its NISMO road car business by making a greater range of models available to customers in more markets. The NISMO Cars Business Department is part of Autech Japan, Inc, a Nissan group company that makes converted vehicles. Using talent from Nissan, Autech, Nissan Motorsports International Co., Ltd. and other group companies, it will plan and develop more appealing products in a shorter time.

Nissan plans to expand the range of NISMO road cars to new segments, market them more globally and boost the lineup in existing markets, including Japan, North America, Europe and the Middle East. This will help increase sales of NISMO cars, which are now about 15,000 units a year.

Nissan introduced the NISMO brand to its mainstream model lineup in 2013 to bring customers more innovations and excitement. Featuring performance and styling developed through NISMO's motorsports activities, the cars offer a sporty driving experience combined with Nissan's quality, reliability and durability. NISMO road cars introduced so far include the GT-R, Fairlady Z, Juke, Note, Sentra and Patrol.

"As a Nissan sub-brand, NISMO further builds upon the core values of Nissan cars," said Takao Katagiri, president and CEO of both Autech Japan and Nissan Motorsports International. "With the combined expertise of Nissan group companies, NISMO road cars will make customers enjoy Nissan cars more than ever."

The new business unit will also work with Nissan Motorsports International on marketing. This includes showing NISMO road cars at Nissan dealerships and showrooms and holding events and activities for NISMO car owners.



QATAR AIRWAYS MARKS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR AT ATM 2017

KUWAIT: Qatar Airways brought its participation in the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2017, the region's largest travel show, to a successful conclusion by revealing a host of new destinations, showcasing product innovations and displaying the airline's

new Business Class Qsuite for the first time in the Middle East.

A number of exciting announcements were made by Qatar Airways at ATM, including the launch of the new high-speed broadband partnership with Inmarsat (GX Aviation), as well as plans to introduce a fifth daily non-stop service from Doha to Bangkok, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) signed to boost tourism between both nations, and the launch of the airline's redesigned website set to go live in May.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, Akbar Al-Baker said: "The Arabian Travel Market has always been one of our most anticipated events of the year for the opportunities it brings, and 2017 proved to be no exception. We are delighted with the outcome of our participation at the Arabian Travel Market, where we demonstrated our continued commitment to innovation and growth, and showcased our ground-breaking Business Class Qsuite, reinforcing Qatar Airways' leading position to the global travel, tourism and hospitality industries."

Significantly, Al-Baker also revealed a host of new destinations the airline will launch in 2018: San Francisco, US; Cardiff, United Kingdom; Utapao, Thailand; Chittagong, Bangladesh; Mykonos, Greece; M-laga, Spain; Accra, Ghana; Lisbon, Portugal; Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Prague, Czech Republic; Kiev, Ukraine, and Mombasa, Kenya.

On day one of ATM, Al-Baker hosted a packed press conference followed by an unveiling ceremony that revealed the highly-acclaimed new Business Class Qsuite for the first time in the Middle East before international media, travel trade leaders, industry representatives and VIP guests.

Al-Baker welcomed and gave a tour of the Qsuite to industry leaders and dignitaries including Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice President and

Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Ruler of Dubai and Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai.

Thousands of visitors experienced Qatar Airways' renowned hospitality at its impressive two-storey stand, while exploring the potential to travel the world through the airline's network of more than 150 destinations.

Qatar Airways was named 'Airline with the Best Business Class', and the 'Airline with the Best Cabin Crew' on the eve of Arabian Travel Market at the prestigious Business Traveller Middle East Awards 2017. The awards are based on votes submitted by the readers of Business Traveller Middle

East, and add to the international recognition and the growing list of accolades the carrier has received.

The airline currently holds the title of World's Best Business Class as awarded by Skytrax in 2016, and its Doha hub, Hamad International Airport (HIA) was also recently honored with five stars at the Skytrax World Airport Awards and was ranked Sixth Best Airport in the World.

Qatar Airways is the national carrier of the State of Qatar, and is one of the fastest growing airlines operating one of the youngest fleets in the world. Qatar Airways has a modern fleet of 195 aircraft flying to more than 150 key business and leisure destinations across six continents.



IBS BECOMES A TRUSTED PARTNER OF THE LONDON INSTITUTE OF BANKING & FINANCE

KUWAIT: The London Institute of Banking & Finance (LIBF), UK, has signed an agreement to formally recognize the training programs offered by the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS).

IBS has become a "Trusted Partner" of LIBF, following a thorough review of the quality and relevance of its training programs. It is the highest level of recognition offered by the UK-based financial education provider to its international stakeholders.

To become a Trusted Partner, IBS has demonstrated its training programs are of a high quality, its trainers are experienced and its learning facilities support their students in completing their studies in line with LIBF own high standards. The partnership enables LIBF to assist IBS in its objective to promote professional education to those working in the Kuwaiti financial services sector and support their career development.

Along with receiving external recognition, the IBS' training programs will now provide their students a pathway to LIBF's framework of professional qualifications, which will provide Kuwaiti banking staff the opportunity to continue their studies up to Chartered and Masters (MSc) level.

Professor Yaqoub Alrefaei, Director General of the Institute of Banking Studies said: "This partnership is globally the first "Trusted Partner Agreement" to be granted by LIBF to an international organization and as such is recognition of the high quality of training and development provided by IBS. We look forward to working with the LIBF in further enhancing the significant quality of the Kuwait financial services sector."

Alex Fraser, CEO, The London Institute of Banking & Finance, said: "This agreement recognizes the excellent work IBS has done in encouraging professional financial education in Kuwait. We are delighted to assist IBS in broadening the scope of their programs, ensuring they remain relevant and continue to meet the requirements of the banking and finance community."



HOW SECURE IS YOUR CAR CLEANING FIRM?

By Alastair Paterson
CEO and Co-Founder, Digital Shadows



In today's connected world securing your own network is simply not enough. Today your digital risk extends not only to your own servers, PCs and other devices in your offices and other locations; it also extends to your mobile workers and other staff working from home, customer sites and other remote locations. But the third, and often ignored, area of digital risk is your supply chain; companies that have access to your employee and customer information. The risk was under-

lined again last week with two stories I saw - first a well-known Denver based car wash (<http://denver.cbslocal.com/2017/04/16/waterworks-car-wash-data-breach/>) confirmed many of its point of sale terminals had been compromised, revealing customers' personal details. Then in the UK, a parking app (<http://www.examiner.co.uk/news/west-yorkshire-news/you-been-affected-ringo-parking-12900452>) confirmed its network had been compromised, exposing more customers' details bank and credit card numbers.

Taken in isolation these incidents appear to be 'just another case of data breaches' but in reality, they should be a worry for all security teams across governments and companies around the UK and further afield. The trouble is we know that people are lazy and often use the same email addresses and passwords across multiple sites. Research last year (<http://info.digitalsidings.com/CompromisedCredentials-WhitePaperPage.html>) suggested that many people think nothing of using their company email address and the same passwords they have in the

office when accessing a wide range of services and online sites. So, what happens when cybercriminals get hold of their details and passwords via a car parking app or a cleaning service?

Criminal organizations running online scams and hacks know that a large percentage of people using car services will be corporate employees, and that a good way to circumvent the millions of dollars a year spent on cyber-security is to target the suppliers and companies we use outside of work.

Sometime ago I heard about a car chauffeuring business which was similarly targeted and compromised. The actors used executives' personal details to target them via phishing and other targeted attacks.

The trouble is that in this connected world we all have a large digital footprint, a shadow of our activities and interactions across the web. While this footprint can be advantageous, information can be inadvertently exposed and thereby used maliciously. Besides damaging your brand, a digi-

tal shadow can leave you vulnerable to corporate espionage and competitive intelligence, as well as create targets for cyber attackers. So, we cannot wash our hands when we have built the best possible defenses for our own businesses and networks. Today the network is vast and continually growing.

We are not the only people to leave behind traces online, the adversary also casts a shadow like that of private and public corporations. We can use that information to understand attacker patterns, motives, attempted threat vectors, and activities on the dark web, to better assess and design your security postures.

By ensuring we have the necessary visibility to manage our own digital risk and ensure we have warning and knowledge of any threats which might come via this extended connected network of suppliers, employees and other third parties. In that way, we can hope to become more secure and enjoy the huge benefits the digital world brings us.



WALLA WALLA COUNTY, Washington: In this Oct 3, 2014, file photo, a worker picks apples at Flat Top Ranch in Walla Walla County, Washington. —AP

ROBOTIC FRUIT PICKERS MAY HELP ORCHARDS WITH WORKER SHORTAGE

SPOKANE, Washington: Harvesting Washington state's vast fruit orchards each year requires thousands of farmworkers, and many of them work illegally in the United States. That system eventually could change dramatically as at least two companies are rushing to get robotic fruit-picking machines to market. The robotic pickers don't get tired and can work 24 hours a day. "Human pickers are getting scarce," said Gad Kober, a co-founder of Israel-based FFRobotics. "Young people do not want to work in farms, and elderly pickers are slowly retiring."

FFRobotics and Abundant Robotics, of Hayward, California, are racing to get their mechanical pickers to market within the next couple of years. Harvest has been mechanized for large portions of the agriculture industry such as wheat, corn, green beans and tomatoes for some time. But for more fragile commodities like apples, berries, table grapes and lettuce - where the crop's appearance is especially important - harvest is still done by hand.

Members of Washington's \$7.5 billion annual agriculture industry have long grappled with labor shortages, and depend on workers coming up from Mexico each year to harvest many crops. But President Donald Trump's hard line against immigrants in the US illegally has many farmers in the country looking for alternative harvest methods. Some have purchased new equipment to try to reduce the number of workers they'll need, while others have lobbied politicians to get them to deal with immigration in a way that minimizes harm to their livelihoods. "Who knows what this administration will do or not do?" said Jim McFerson, head of the Washington State Tree Fruit Research Center in Wenatchee. For farmers, "it is a question of survival."

Washington leads the nation in production of apples and several other crops. Harvest starts in the spring with asparagus and runs until all the apples are off the trees in late fall. The work is hard and dangerous, and has long drawn Mexican workers to central Washington, where several counties near the Canadian border are now majority-Hispanic. Experienced pickers, who are paid by the bin, can make more than \$200 a day.

Advocates for farmworkers say robot pickers will have a negative effect. The eventual loss of jobs for humans will be huge, said Erik Nicholson of Seattle, an official with the United Farm Workers union. He estimated half of the state's farmworkers are immigrants who are in the country illegally. But many of them have settled in Washington and are productive members of the community, he said. "They are scared of losing their jobs to mechanization," Nicholson said. "A robot is not going

to rent a house, buy clothing for their kids, buy food in a grocery and reinvest that money in the local economy."

While financial details are not available, the builders say the robotic pickers should pay for themselves in two years. That puts the likely cost of the machines in the hundreds of thousands of dollars each. FFRobotics is developing a machine that has three-fingered grips to grab fruit and twist or clip it from a branch. The machine would have between four and 12 robotic arms, and can pick up to 10,000 apples an hour, Kober said. One machine would be able to harvest a variety of crops, taking 85 to 90 percent of the crop off the trees, Kober said. Humans could pick the rest.

Abundant Robotics is working on a picker that uses suction to vacuum apples off trees. Plans for the robotic harvesters - including a goal of getting them to market before 2019 - were discussed in February at an international convention of fruit growers in Wenatchee.

The two robot makers are likely to hit their production goals, said Karen Lewis, a Washington State University cooperative extension agent who has studied the issue. "Both of them will be in the field with prototypes this fall," Lewis said, calling the robotic harvesters a "game changer." But for the machines to work, apples and other crops must be grown in new trellis systems that allow robots to see and harvest the fruit, she said. "We are evolving the tree architecture and apple placement to be compatible with robotics," Lewis said, a process called "robot-ready." Large farming operations likely will be first to adopt the machines, but it might be decades before their use is widespread. "I think for the next 10 to 20 years, they will be used by some growers to supplement regular picking crews and to serve as a backup for picker shortages," said Mike Gempler of the Washington Growers League in Yakima. Reliability and cost will determine if their use expands.

Republican US Rep Dan Newhouse, whose family owns a large farming operation in Washington's Yakima Valley, said the industry is deeply interested in alternatives to human labor. "We are absolutely looking at ways we can increase our efficiency," said Newhouse, adding his family's farm each year employs some 120 farmworkers, many of them picking cherries and nectarines.

The industry has no choice but to embrace mechanization, said Mark Powers, president of the Northwest Horticultural Council, a trade group for farmers in Yakima. "We do not see some miraculous new source of labor appearing on the horizon," Powers said. "We think labor will continue to be a scarce resource." —AP

CANON MIDEAST PARTICIPATES AT WORLD ART DUBAI 2017

'CANON PIXMA CREATIVE PARK' SHOWCASED AT THE FOUR-DAY EVENT

KUWAIT: Canon Middle East, a leader in digital imaging solutions, has participated at this year's 'World Art Dubai 2017', which was held at the Dubai World Trade Centre between April 12th and April 15th 2017, for the second consecutive year.

World Art Dubai, which gathers 150 international galleries and artists from five continents, featured a diverse collection of contemporary art work, paintings, prints, sculptures, photographs and media ranging in price from \$100 to \$20,000.

Being a feature partner, Canon Middle East aims to showcase its imaging solutions designed to meet the current and future needs of its customers, employees and wider society. The way people are using imagery is changing, and Canon is adapting and growing to support its customers' evolving needs.

Anurag Agrawal, Managing Director, Canon Middle East said: "At Canon we always look to promote our campaigns, especially when it comes to encouraging individuals in the creative field. We are delighted to participate in events such as World Art Dubai which always brings together young and emerging artists and buyers who are passionate about art."

"We will continue to work along with our community which aligns with our corporate philosophy of 'Kyosei', meaning 'living and working together for the common good.' Agrawal added. At this year's event Canon provided a number of engaging activities at its stand, including 'Canon's PIXMA Creative

Park' which showcased Canon's Paper Craft and Scrapbook. There was also a competition especially designed for children to express their creativity by producing their own 3D models. The best model for each day won a Canon Printer.

The segment also featured a canvas model for children and

their families to color in to create a beautiful painting of the ocean. By participating in events like World Art Dubai, Canon will continue to capitalize on its strong position through ongoing innovation to enhance its existing solutions and services to better meet customer needs.



CENTRIFY WARNS PASSWORD VAULTS ALONE NOT ENOUGH TO STOP DATA BREACHES

INNOVATIVE NEW CAPABILITIES HELP GREATLY REDUCE RISK OF A BREACH

DUBAI: Centrify, the leader in securing hybrid enterprises through the power of identity services, announced significant enhancements to its best-in-class privileged identity management (PIM) solution to stop breaches that abuse privilege. By minimizing the attack surface and controlling privileged access to the hybrid enterprise, Centrify's new capabilities enable organizations to move from static, long-lived privilege assignments to a just-in-time model



Kamel Heus,
Regional
Manager - Centrify

where advanced monitoring detects and alerts in real-time on the creation of backdoor accounts that make it easy to bypass a password vault.

Securing privileged access in today's hybrid enterprise is mandatory in achieving a mature risk posture. According to the The Forrester Wave: Privileged Identity Management, Q3 2016, 80 percent of breaches leverage privileged credentials to gain access to the organization. The increasingly hybrid nature of infrastructure, driven by the adoption of cloud-based workloads, is driving the need to secure privileged access across on-premises, private-cloud and public cloud infrastructure and apps with a single solution. And while most PIM solutions have traditionally focused on vaulting the credentials for shared accounts on-premises, password vaults alone do not provide the level of privileged access security required to stop the breach. "Data breaches are happening at an

alarming rate and to stop them Centrify is taking a unique approach to controlling privileged access in the hybrid enterprise that simplifies the implementation of PIM best practices and strengthens an organization's risk posture," said Kamel Heus, regional manager - MEA, Centrify.

"By contrast, password vaults alone are not enough, best practices require organizations add and integrate point products to the vault, which leaves gaps in security and increases risk. We've closed those gaps with an integrated solution that combines password vaulting with brokering of identities, MFA enforcement and just-enough privilege, all while securing remote access and monitoring all privileged sessions," he added.

Full PIM solution

A recent Forrester study examined four levels of Identity Access Management (IAM) maturity. It found a direct correlation between the number of PIM best practices an organization has implemented and the number of security incidents it encounters. Centrify's new PIM capabilities enable these best practices, adding to Centrify's already comprehensive set of integrated services that help organizations increase their IAM maturity level and security posture.

• **Establish Identity Assurance:** Centrify ensures accountability by having users log in as themselves and attributing all activity to the individual. Its advanced host-based auditing capabilities now include process-level monitoring in addition to existing shell-based monitoring to attribute all activity to the individual instead of a shared account or alias. This new advanced monitoring adds a layer of security that is virtually impossible to spoof.

• **Limit Lateral Movement:** Centrify enables organizations to reduce the attack

surface by governing privileged access and ensuring users' privileges only apply on the approved server. Now you can require access approvals for role assignment and make them short-lived. Centrify's proven host-based privilege management ensures that the user's approved privileges apply only to the target system, and cannot be used across the network on other computers. And if credentials are compromised, hackers and malware will not have the privileges that would allow them to wreak havoc within your network.

• **Institute Least Privilege:** Centrify now uniquely governs access to both privileged accounts and privilege elevation via roles enabling organizations to implement true cross-platform least privilege access. Centrify lowers the risk of a security breach by granting just-in-time privilege and just-enough-privilege through temporary and time-bound access that leverages request and approval workflows. Audit trails and compliance reporting capabilities now include who has access, who approved that access and how that access was used across privileged accounts and privileged roles.

• **Monitor Privileged Use:** Centrify now monitors for the creation of backdoors whose existence make privileged access to infrastructure convenient instead of secure. Centrify's advanced monitoring capabilities detect the growing threatscape and alert in real time through SIEM integration on rogue creation of SSH keys that enable privileged access that bypasses the password vault.

According to the Forrester study, organizations that reach the highest levels on the maturity scale are 50 percent less likely to have a breach. In addition, these organizations save 40 percent in security costs over their less mature counterparts, and spend \$5 million less in breach costs.

QUALITYNET INTRODUCE CDN CACHE FOR INFORMATION SERVICE SERVERS

KUWAIT: Qualitynet, the leading provider of Internet and information communication services in Kuwait, has announced the introduction of a CDN Cache Service for Information Storage Servers. The service facilitates the storage for servers of Facebook and Instagram, the largest Social Networking sites we have today, on its local network.

Engineer Mustafa Al-Najjar, Chief Technology Officer - Qualitynet said that the company is at the forefront of providing the latest in global ICT solutions to its customer base, from both the Retail and Business sectors. "Our teams of experts strive to further improve communication and customer satisfaction. Many of the global sites have been added on our Local Network, by implementing the CDN Cache service. Most



Engineer Mustafa
Al-Najjar

recently among these were global networking giants Facebook and Instagram" said Najjar.

He added that the CDN Cache Service for electronic storage servers improves the quality of receiving electronic content, both video and audio files. The service hosts global and other sites on the Local Internet Networks, which contributes to the rapid download and exchange of files with visual and audio content. "Local web hosting increases the quality of e-content and saves time to download content, as the global content resides on our local network. The customer can now enjoy a smoother and faster experience browsing Facebook and Instagram, without having to waste any more time while downloading or sharing their favorite content" concluded Najjar.

TECH BILLIONAIRE BUYS SYDNEY MANSION FOR RECORD PRICE

SYDNEY: Tech billionaire Scott Farquhar has bought a Sydney waterfront mansion for an Australian record 75 million Australian dollars (\$56 million), a report said yesterday, after the owners resisted selling the 1863-built home to developers.

The co-founder of Australian software giant Atlassian, which floated in the United States in late 2015, snapped up the iconic 'Elaine' from John Brehmer Fairfax, whose family formerly owned the Sydney Morning Herald.

The estate, which stretches down to a harbor beach in Sydney's prestigious Point Piper, had been in the Fairfax family since 1891 when it was bought for 2,100 pounds. It features horse stables, a tennis court and a ballroom. Fairfax reportedly resisted larger offers from developers to subdivide the land. "We are thrilled with the purchase and honored to take over the Elaine estate in its entirety from the Fairfax family," Farquhar, 37, told Fairfax Media.

"It would have been a great loss to see this rare

property sold to developers and carved up. When we heard of the plans, we just couldn't let this beautiful piece of Australian history be turned into a development site." The price tag set a record for residential property in Australia, the Australian Financial Review said. It topped the previous 70 million Australian dollars in 2015 when mogul James Packer, who runs worldwide gambling empire Crown, sold his Sydney home to Australian-Chinese billionaire businessman Chau Chak Wing. —AP

GOSH EDUCATES CHILDREN ON WORLD ASTHMA DAY



KUWAIT: With asthma the most common chronic disease among children and increasing in prevalence, a pediatric respiratory expert from Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children (GOSH) is calling for parents in Kuwait to educate their children about the condition. The burden of asthma is relatively higher in some countries in Africa, the Middle East and Western Europe when compared to the rest of the world. A local survey conducted on Kuwaiti school children showed that around 17 percent of children had physician diagnosed asthma while 30 percent have chronic wheezing.



Dr Ranjan Suri

According to Pediatric Respiratory Consultant Dr. Ranjan Suri, from the London-based hospital GOSH which treats 1,500 patients from the Middle East every year, parents should educate their children about managing the disease to reduce asthmatic symptoms. A key way to do this, according to Dr. Suri, is ensuring all children with asthma have an action plan. An action plan would ideally tell the child when to take their asthma medicines, what to do when their asthma gets worse, what to do in an emergency as well as what their asthma triggers are.

Asthma can develop at any age but is most commonly seen in primary school children. Children have smaller airways than adults, which makes asthma a particularly serious disease for them. "It's essential for chil-

dren to know how to ask an adult for help and for the people who care for the child to know asthma basics to make it easier for the child to talk about their triggers and warning signs," Dr. Suri says.

"Teaching the child about asthma is an important step in controlling their disease. It is important to teach them about their medication, why they have to take the medicine and how it helps," Dr. Suri adds.

"Then, as children become older, they can take the lead in controlling their own asthma." Asthma, which currently affects 235 million people around the world, is a chronic inflammation of airways in the lungs, causing them to become red, swollen and sensitive.

This inflammation makes the airways vulnerable to episodes of difficulty in breathing, called asthma attacks, when people come in contact with 'triggers'. Symptoms of asthma include wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and trouble breathing, especially early in the morning or at night. It is usually a specific substance that triggers asthmatic symptoms. Asthma triggers usually consist of allergens (mold, pollen, animal fur and/or droppings), irritants (cigarette smoke, air pollution), weather (changes in weather, cold air), exercise and infections (flu, common cold).

"Triggers vary from person to person and, depending on the specific triggers, parents may need to make some changes at home and other in environments to reduce the

child's exposure to triggers," advises Dr. Suri. Dr. Suri further explains that if asthma is left untreated, asthmatic children may have less stamina than others or avoid physical activities to prevent coughing or wheezing. Therefore, it is important to know when to consult a doctor. "If parents notice any wheezing, coughing, chest tightness or repeated episodes of bronchitis they should get their child checked by a doctor. The doctor will test for asthma by checking for the symptoms through a clinical examination."

Discussing the prognosis for children with asthma, Dr. Suri adds that asthma has no cure but some children will experience a reduction or complete disappearance of their symptoms as they grow older. "As children grow so do their airways, hence inflammation can go unnoticed. There is no cure for asthma, so it is managed through treatments that aim to improve symptoms and prevent attacks." Dr. Suri concludes that with the right care and right treatments, children can have a normal life, avoid missing school, enjoy being active and most importantly breathe easily.

Tips for creating an asthma-safe home:

- Keep rooms well aired, especially if they have new furniture
- Clean thoroughly to control dust
- Avoid spray cleaners and use solids or liquids instead
- Avoid scented products
- Use an air filter or purifier
- Make sure the house is well ventilated

ARABIC-LANGUAGE HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING PRODUCTS LAUNCHED BY IOSH

QATAR: Two market-leading health and safety training products have been translated into Arabic to meet Middle East demand for the courses, it was announced at the annual conference in Qatar. The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) is making Managing Safely and Working Safely available in a non-English language after feedback from its network of training providers in the region.

Announcing the move at IOSH's Middle East Conference, in Doha, IOSH Training and Skills executive director Richard Orton said the Arabic-language versions could be applied to any industry sector and were now available to order. It comes after an IOSH survey of 250 business leaders in Gulf Corporation Council found that nine out of 10 agreed investments in health and safety was essential to ensuring their business had a good reputation, was resilient and was productive.

Eighty-five percent of the decision-makers agreed that their employees' health and safety was a top priority at board level, with 88 percent agreeing that all employees had a responsibility for health and safety. Orton said: "We have a network of training providers across the Middle East who tells us there is a demand for Managing



Richard Orton

Safely and Working Safely in both English and Arabic, so we knew it was time to support those businesses employing Arabic speakers.

"We know there's a real desire among leaders in the region to invest in health and safety not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it's good business also. Courses like Managing Safely and Working Safely can help a business embed a culture in which all workers take responsibility for their and their co-workers' health and safety." The Middle East market has the most licensed providers for IOSH training courses outside of the UK.

The translation comes after IOSH produced revised versions of Managing Safely and Working Safely, along with its Leading Safely course, last year. The amended versions are far more adaptable to non-UK audiences than before, making it easier for the Arabic-language courses to be translated without needing changes in content. IOSH first brought Managing Safely and Working Safely to market over 20 years ago. During this time they have developed a strong reputation, not only in the UK but also in the Middle East. Last year 180,000 delegates participated in 15,000 IOSH-accredited training courses in 74 countries.



MOSUL: Iraqis queue up at a mobile clinic in West Mosul. —AFP

IN IRAQ'S MOSUL, MOBILE CLINICS DELIVER PRECIOUS MEDICAL CARE

MOSUL: Men, women and children stand in separate lines in the scorching sun baking west Mosul's Baghdad Square for a turn in one of the two white mobile clinics. For these Iraqis, displaced by fierce fighting as government forces close in on the Old City where Islamic State group jihadists are still entrenched, free medical care is a godsend. Advancing Iraqi forces have retaken several neighborhoods in west Mosul, imposing a ban on driving in the areas they recapture amid fears of possible car bomb attacks by the jihadists.

The ban means many Iraqis, most of whom suffer from malnutrition or chronic illnesses, have to walk miles to reach a hospital and see a doctor. Medics from the Dary Humanitarian Organization, backed by funds from the World Health Organization and the oil-rich Gulf state of Kuwait, have stepped in to help deliver medical care in west Mosul. In the Mosul area, Dary has a clinic at Hammam al-Alil, a half-hour drive south of the frontline and is now providing medical assistance to those who cannot reach the health centre from six mobile clinics.

"One of the mobile clinics is for women only, run by a female doctor and equipped with ultrasound machines for pregnant women," said Ihab Amer, a Dary staff member. Ten Iraqi doctors work out of the mobile clinics and are assisted by 10 nurses, with dedicated drivers to take the converted vans around recently liberated neighborhoods. "We work from 8:00 am until 2:00 pm. The mobile clinics drive to the areas that have been liberated and those that have taken in people displaced by the fighting," said Amer. "The doctors see daily 1,250 patients," in areas such as Mosul al-Jadida, Wadi Hajjar and Al-Mansur, he said.

Malnutrition

"Malnutrition among women and children is the main issue the doctors have to deal with, in addition to patients with chronic illnesses," he added. Inside one of the mobile clinics an elderly woman draped in black sits still on a chair as a doctor uses a stethoscope to listen to her heartbeat. After a few seconds he takes a pen and paper and jots down a few words, handing

over the prescription to his orderly who dispenses medicine to the woman free of charge.

Outside the queue is long and growing. A young woman cradles her newborn baby girl and tries in vain to stop her crying with a pacifier. "I have no milk to give her," said the mother. Iraq's elite Counter-Terrorism Service has been spearheading a massive offensive launched in mid-October 2016 to retake Mosul, the country's second city and last major jihadist bastion.

Not water, no jobs

They recaptured the eastern side of the city in January and a push on west Mosul begun in mid-February has made steady progress despite fierce resistance. According to the United Nations, a total of more than half a million civilians have been forced to flee their homes since the offensive on Mosul was launched. The Iraqi immigration ministry has said more than 400,000 people have been displaced from west Mosul alone.

Authorities have been struggling to ease the hardships of displaced Mosul residents. The lack of water is a major hurdle and Iraqis are complaining that even with supplies provided by the government there is never enough. "We have had no water for two months. Not a drop. The taps are dry and our supplies have run out," said Rai Mohamed Saleh, 21. According to him, many families have to buy jerrycans from private suppliers, with a 17-litre plastic container costing them a steep 2,500 dinars (US\$2).

"I am tiler by trade and Rai repairs air conditioners. But we are both unemployed. We've run out of money," said Rai's friend Omar. The young man said that before the offensive on west Mosul he had worked and earned the equivalent of \$800 a month. On the street nearby, west Mosul residents no longer ruled by the brutal regime of the Islamic State group try to get by as best as they could. With the ban on cars in place, carts now rule the streets and used to transport goods as well as the elderly who cannot walk, while the lucky few ride bicycles or have donkey-drawn carts.—AFP



CAPE CANAVERAL: A Falcon 9 SpaceX rocket carrying a classified satellite for the National Reconnaissance Office lifts off from pad 39A at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, yesterday. —AP

SPACE X MAKES FIRST US MILITARY LAUNCH ROCKET RETURNS TO EARTH, LANDS UPRIGHT

MIAMI: SpaceX yesterday blasted off a secretive US government satellite, known only as NROL-76, marking the first military launch for the California-based aerospace company headed by billionaire tycoon Elon Musk. The payload for the National Reconnaissance Office, which makes and operates spy satellites for the United States, soared into the sky atop a Falcon 9 rocket at 7:15 am (1115 GMT). About 10 minutes after launch, the scorched first stage of the rocket came back to Earth and landed upright at Cape Canaveral, marking the fourth successful solid ground landing for SpaceX.

"And we have touchdown," a SpaceX commentator said on a live webcast as cheers broke out at mission control. "The first stage has landed back at Landing Zone 1. Another good day for us at SpaceX. A beautiful sight to see." Live video of the launch showed the first and second stages of the rocket separating about two and a half minutes into the flight. The larger portion of the rocket,

known as the first stage, made a gentle arc and powered its nitrogen thrusters to guide it back to Earth.

After a fiery entry burn, the rocket set itself down steadily in the center of the 300-foot circular landing zone. Musk is leading an effort in the rocket industry to re-use costly parts rather than jettison them into the ocean after each launch. SpaceX has already made multiple successful landings—some on land and others on floating ocean platforms, known as drone ships.

Secretive payload

The launch was initially planned for Sunday, but was postponed in the last seconds before liftoff due to a sensor issue with the rocket, SpaceX said. The sensor in question was replaced ahead of yesterday's attempt. Little was known about the payload, which a SpaceX commentator described only as a "satellite," due to its classified nature. "As a matter of policy and

because of classification, NRO does not provide information about our contracts," an NRO spokeswoman said.

Until now, the US military has spent billions per year exclusively with United Launch Alliance, a joint operation of aerospace giants Boeing and Lockheed Martin, to launch government satellites. SpaceX in 2014 protested the US Air Force's practice of using only ULA, saying it unfairly awarded billions of dollars to a single company for national security launches. SpaceX was selected to launch NROL-76 "after a competition," said the NRO spokeswoman.

She said she did not know when the contract was awarded. The contract was first announced last year. SpaceX also has a pair of launch contracts coming up for the Air Force to send GPS satellites into orbit. SpaceX regularly launches unmanned cargo ships to the International Space Station, and is working on a crew capsule that could carry humans into orbit as early as next year.—AFP



CHENNAI: A peacock displays its feathers on a hot summer day at Anna National Zoological Park in Chennai. —AFP



A prehistoric hand painting on a wall of the 'Paintings Hall.'



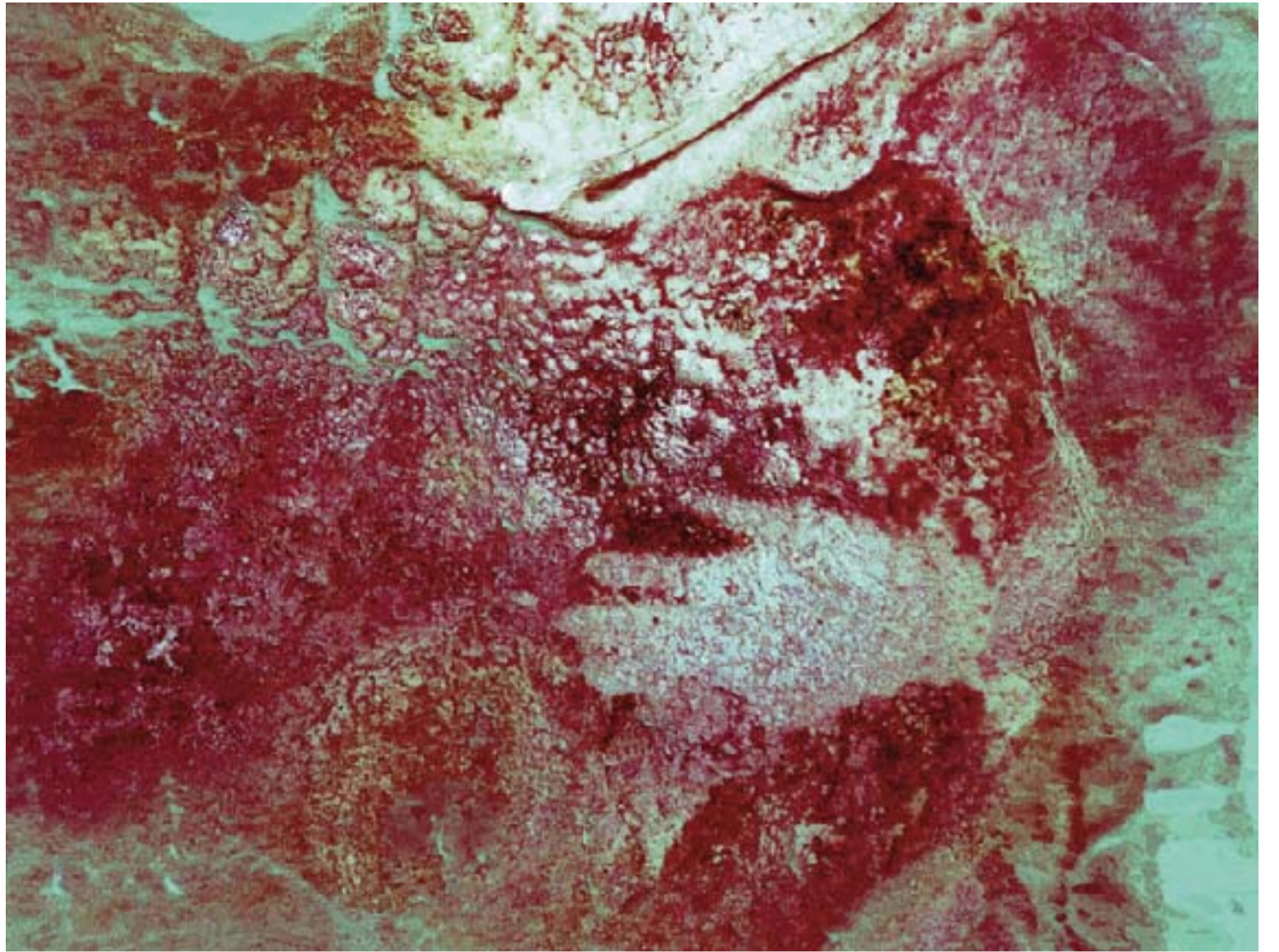
The entrance to the Maltravieso Cave.



Archeologist Hipolito Collado working in the Maltravieso cave.



The grille covering the entrance to the Maltravieso Cave.



CACERES, Spain: This handout photo released by HANDPAS project shows prehistoric hand paintings in the Snake gallery of the Maltravieso cave, in Caceres. —AFP photos

A SPANISH QUEST TO HAND DOWN PREHISTORIC SECRETS

CACERES, Spain: It's dark and surprisingly warm in a cave in western Spain that hides our most intimate connection to the prehistoric past—hand silhouettes painted tens of thousands of years ago. Archaeologist Hipolito Collado and his team had not entered the Maltravieso Cave in the city of Caceres for close to a year to avoid damaging the 57 faded hands that adorn the walls, precious remnants of a far-flung piece of history we know little about.

Why did our ancestors or distant relatives paint hands in caves? Was it merely to make their mark, or part of a ritual to commune with spirits? Do they tell us anything about the role of women during the Paleolithic era that ended some 10,000 years ago? And why are some fingers missing?

'Inaccessible art accessible'

In a bid to unlock some of these mysteries, Collado, head of archaeology for the government of the Extremadura region where Caceres is located, has set out to catalogue all of Europe's prehistoric painted hands. Crouching under low hanging rocks or abseiling down crags, he and other archaeologists have been going from cave to cave, taking scans and high-resolution photos of all the hands they encounter.

They then post them in detailed, 3D format in a free-to-use online database, as part of an EU-funded project called Handpas. The idea is for researchers anywhere in the world to be able to examine them all in one place without having to visit every cave or gain access to those closed for conservation, in the hope of producing a breakthrough. "It's about making inaccessible art accessible," says Collado, as he checks sensors for any change in CO2 levels, temperature or humid-

ity since he last visited the meandering, cramped cave. Surrounded by high rises in what was a poor neighborhood of Caceres, the cave was discovered in 1951 in a quarry but left neglected for decades, squatted by thrill-seekers, junkies and others until authorities put up a wrought-iron gate barring the entrance in the mid-1980s.

I woz ere?

According to Collado, a Spaniard who is also head of the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations, painted hands have been found in 36 caves in Europe—all in France, Spain and Italy. Some also contain animal drawings and fossils but his project focuses only on hands. Further afield, hands have also been discovered in South America, Australia and Indonesia, where recent research revealed that a hand silhouette in a cave on Sulawesi island was 40,000 years old—the world's oldest. That was around the time when Homo sapiens—the first modern humans—arrived in Europe after having emerged in Africa and lived in parts of Asia.

Theories abound about what the hands mean, but with no written records, much of it is conjecture. Researchers have tried to determine whether they were male or female, and why in some cases fingers are missing. Was this a ritual? Did they lose them in freezing cold weather? Or as is more commonly believed—did they simply fold some fingers over when painting in some sort of sign language? What if scientists were able to determine for certain that all hands in one area were done by women?

"It could mean a matriarchal society," says Collado's colleague Jose Ramon Bello Rodrigo. And did Homo sapiens—or possibly Neanderthals before them—merely wander into a cave and

casually leave their hand imprint as a form of ancient "I woz ere"? Paul Pettitt, professor of Paleolithic Archaeology at Britain's Durham University, doesn't think so.

His research focuses on where people placed their hands and he found that in some cases, fingers appeared to be deliberately placed over a bump in the wall like they were "gripping" it. Many hands are also in the deeper recesses of the caves. "It must have been very frightening, it must have been quite a degree of exertion, a lot of climbing in the darkness," says Pettitt. "You don't do that for fun."

Awaiting French go-ahead

Why then would people go to such lengths to paint hands onto the walls—be it via stencils, created by spraying pigment around an open hand, or actual handprints applied to the rock face? French prehistorian Jean Clottes believes it may have been a form of shamanism. "It's likely that putting paint—what we could call sacred paint—on the rock face introduces a link between the person who does it and the rock face, and therefore with the forces in the rock face," he says.

Collado also interprets some of the hands he has seen as warnings. "In the La Garma Cave (in northern Spain) there is a panel with hands that is next to a big well that would be deadly," he says. "These were definitely done to say 'stop.'"

Work on documenting painted hands in two Italian caves has also begun. But the project has come up against a major stumbling block as Collado's team has yet to get the green light to access the French caves — 18 months after sending their first letter to the culture ministry. "We're on standby," he concludes impatiently. —AFP

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PAAET HONORS STUDENTS FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE

Under auspices and with the attendance of Sabah Al-Salem Charity's board chairman, Dr. Sheikh, Mohammed Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, PAAET recently held its 19 ceremony to honor 175

students from various colleges and institutes for their outstanding performance in the academic year 2015-2016. The ceremony was held at PAAET headquarters in Shuwaikh. In this regard, Al-Sabah stressed

that the charity's keenness on honoring students for outstanding performance dates decades back to the reign of the late sheikh, Salem Sabah Al-Salem who strongly believed in the significance of science in

building nations and in supporting teachers and educators | the great role they play in teaching those students.

On his part, PAAET director, Dr. Ahmed Al-Athari stressed PAAET's hard work to provide

local labor market with promising well-qualified youth. He also stressed that authority's keenness on communicating with regional, Arab and international peer educational facilities to probe the latest in applied education.



HOPE SCHOOL CELEBRATES 4TH 'CARNIVAL OF HOPE'

HOPE School held its fourth "Carnival of HOPE" on April 6, 2017. Students, parents, staff, family and friends were all invited to enjoy an evening filled with games, activities, face painting, cartoon characters and much more. Al-Sanafir Group participated in this event with various shows on stage as well as conducting the many competitions and raffle draws that were held throughout the evening.

The "Carnival of HOPE" provided an opportunity for HOPE School to show its gratitude to all the families, staff, and

community organizations that support special needs students in Kuwait. This event could not have been a success without the help and contributions provided by your sponsors Commercial Financial Company and Party Land. Sponsors were presented with plaques of appreciation during the event. HOPE School was once again able to fulfill the dream of creating an evening of fun and excitement for all students with and without disabilities and their families.



PAAET ORGANIZES FIRST YOUTH FORUM

Under auspices of Minister of Commerce and Industry and acting minister of state for Youth affairs, Khaled Al-Roudhan and with the attendance of Abdullah Al-Jou'an, PAAET's Sabah Al-Salem Industrial Institute recently organized its first youth forum under the title of 'Performance Empowerment', which was attended by PAAET's deputy director for training, Tareq Al-Ameeri, MPs Hamdan Al-Azmi and Abdullah Al-Roumi and the insti-

tute director, Nasser Al-Mohannadi.

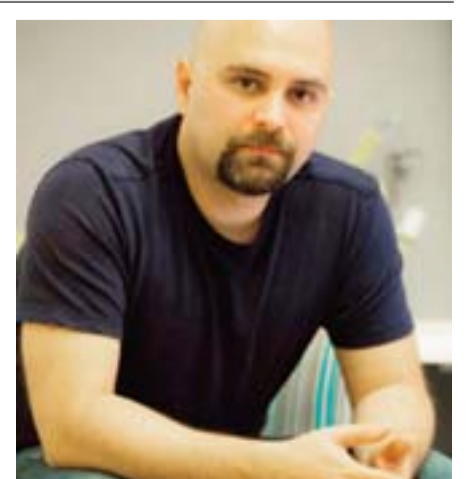
Speaking on the occasion, PAAET's spokesperson and PR and media manager, Fatima Al-Azmi said that the forum aims at displaying the institute's students' achievements and creativity and pointed out an example of such achievements represented an automobile vehicle the students compiled and built and had displayed on the forum.



Malabar Gold & Diamonds announces its 1st Raffle draw winner of 'Win up to 30 kilos gold in 18 days' campaign in Kuwait. The draw held at Watya showroom on April 26, in the presence of Mr Abdul Azeez Ashkanani, Ministry of Kuwait and Mr Afsal Khan, Regional Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

LAPA TO LAUNCH ANIMATION WORKSHOP

LOYAC's Academy for Performance Arts (LAPA) is currently preparing for an animation workshop design to be launched on May 8 and last for six days at LOYAC's headquarters. The workshop will be presented by animation artist, Amein Alameddine. The workshop targets helping youth acquire animation skills and the ability to produce high quality cartoon and animation movies. Notably, Alameddine is the founder and CEO of the Caustik Animation Studio in Beirut. He has considerable experience in animation industry, design, programming and HD digital operation.





PREMIER SPORT ACADEMY HOLDS FESTIVAL OF FOOTBALL AND CARNIVAL

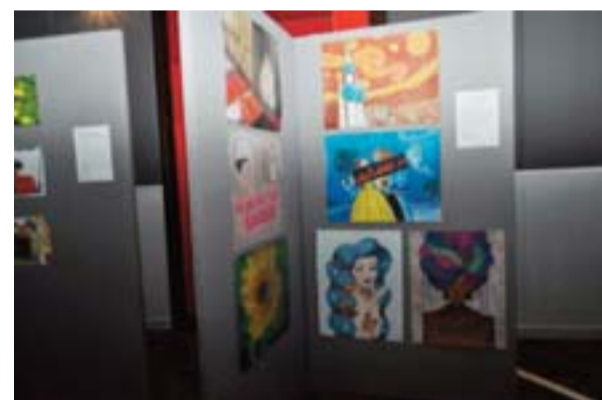
The Premier Sport Academy in association with Everton FC, under the sponsorship of Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company, held their 2017 Spring Festival of Football and Carnival event at Bayan Park on April 8. In total, over 600 players aged 3 to 17 participated in the Porsche Centre Kuwait sponsored event, including teams from the PSA/Everton Coaching Courses and Everton Centre of Excellence, as well as a number of private schools and academies from across Kuwait.

A huge turnout of enthusiastic parents and spectators cheered on and encouraged the players, who were superbly organized and guided by their coaches throughout a series of exciting matches. The players demonstrated great skills, sportsmanship and an abundance of effort and commitment. There was also a youth Basketball tournament taking place alongside the football with six teams of boys and girls competing in the battle of the hoops.

There were also lots of attractions enjoyed by all, including the Porsche Kids Driving School, where the children took time out from the football to drive the Porsche pedal

cars around the specially designed road circuit to promote road and traffic safety. Move one provided the inflatable with Kids Land and Fitness First organizing the games to ensure everyone was kept busy and having fun in between the football and basketball matches. Colonel Finlay McLean, the Defense Attache of the British Embassy, attended as Guest of Honor, along with several other VIP guests.

Medals were presented to all participants, as well as certificates of appreciation to event sponsors and supporters. Colonel McLean expressed his appreciation and recognition for the collective effort behind such an important community event, and congratulated all the players and coaches who took part. Presentations were made to the event sponsors Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company and Sports Direct. The final six week PSA coaching course of the season in football and basketball will commence April 14, 2017 at Bayan and everyone aged 3 to 18 years is welcome to participate.



AUK HOLDS ITS 12TH ANNUAL ACADEMIC SHOWCASE

The American University of Kuwait (AUK) held its 12th Annual Academic Showcase on April 26, 2017. This event highlights the achievements of AUK students across varying disciplines through presentations, performances and displays. The ultimate goal of the showcase is to provide an opportunity for students to further their education and careers, and to expose the public and the entire student body to the various disciplines at AUK.

The showcase covered a variety of presentations, ranging from educational presentations, visual artwork, and academic field trips, in addition to different music and drama performances, including a faculty duet performance. The all-day Art and Graphic Design Student Exhibition were displayed under the supervision of Professors William Andersen, Claire Giddings, Maryam Hosseinnia, Joo Won Lee, Clark Stoeckley, and Jasmine Singh.

Under the Academic Project Displays, students Batoul Al-Salman and Laila Al-Haddad displayed their Computer Engineering project, Solving Ordinary Differential Equations Using Digital Hardware under the supervision of Professor Issam Damaj. Students Rawan Al-Fouzan and Loulwah Al-Qattan displayed their Computer Engineering project, Bellman-Ford Algorithm in Hardware under the supervision of Professor Issam Damaj.

Students Ali Kelkawi and Rouaa Diab displayed their Computer Engineering project, A Color-Based Sorting Machine under the supervision of Professor Mohammed El-Abd. Students Bader Al-Kandari, Mohammed Hayat, Nasser Al-Hammadi, Waleed Madi, Ghazi Al-Sharaf and Hend Al-Sulaili displayed their Intensive English Program project, Reading Strategies under the supervision of Professor Sherrie Smith.

The Academic Showcase Program included presentations from English students Laila Al-Arabi, Dina Al-Hajased, Abdulateef Al-Amir, Jassim Al-Gharaballi for their work, volunteering with LOYAC under the supervision of Professor Inas Mahfouz. English students Danah Al-Alawi, Mariam Kotb, Yassin Al-Torgoman and Lulwa Al-Sharrah presented their project, Borrowed Culinary Words in Arabic under the supervision of Professor Inas Mahfouz.

Social and Behavioral Sciences student Sarah Sadeq presented her project, The Link Between Obesity and Cancer under the supervision of Professor Pellegrino Luciano. The Music Department also contributed to the showcase with performances from students including, Ahmed Fahs singing



"Sixteen Going on Seventeen" with staff member, Monica Matta playing the cello. Students Shaima Ali and Mishari Al-Khalifa played the violin and piano respectively, while students Areeg Ahmed, Mofeeda Al-Arabi and Salwa Al-Abdulsalam sang while Professor Masternak played the piano.

Student Abdulrahman Al-Ben Ali sang the piece "Amarilli" while Professor Masternak played the piano. Students Mai Hamouda and Rawan Bnayan performed "Stars" on the piano and cello respectively. Student Yasser Zaroo sang while Professor Masternak played the piano. "Castle on the Cloud" was performed by student Tasneem Krar on the piano, and Hadeel Al-Hubail, Fajer Al-Fadallah, and Noura Bounassef on guitars. Students Sherifa Al-Khulaifi, RayaneBouhali, Salwa Al-Abdulsalam sang while Professor Masternak played the piano. "Memory" was sung by student Catherine El-Neaman while Professor Masternak played the piano.

Student Nada Shehada sang "I Don't Know How to Love Him" while Professor Masternak played the piano. Student Noura Al-Mutawah performed a piece on the drums, and Professor Agnieska Fajga's xylophone class concluded the music showcase with a group performance. A project entitled, The Mask Project was displayed by Professor Jasmine Singh for an art class. Communication students Jassim Gharaballi, Nada Al-Kharafi, Zaid Al-Orafian, PearlaHaidar, Shaikha Tamimi and Alaa Al-Dosari presented their project, Still Ads and Video under the supervision of Professor Mohammed Akbar.

Translation students Nada Abdou, Dina Zabin, Shoug Haidar, Noora Bin Shmilan and Georges Massoud presented their project, Media Translation-Dubbing under the supervision of Professor Mohammed Akbar. Communications students Nadeen Al-Ebrahim, Bibi Al-Ghanim, Farah Al-Khalidi



and Sumayia Al-Rumaidhi presented their project, Documentary Production under the supervision of Professor Mohammed Akbar.

Finance student Masswo Issi presented his project, US Housing Bubbles under the supervision of Professor Wafaa Sbeiti. Graphic Design students Zara Aslam and Sara Tayeh presented their project, Islamic Influence in Contemporary Typographic Patterns under the supervision of Professor Claire Giddings. Art students Maryam Al-Kandari, Nour Al-Ramy, Hala Al-Ghadban and NastaranMohammadi presented their project, Academic Field Trip to Italy under the supervision of Professors Antonia Stamos and William Andersen.

The Intensive English Program concluded the event with a dramatic rendition of "Scenes from Frankenstein and Dr. Jekyll", which is part of the "Act the Novel" project that encourages IEP students to read a novel and personally reenact the story using their own costume designs, props and stage layout. Students AbdelazizRedha, PouriyaPaidar, Mohammed Dakik, Mohammed Atash, Alia Elshanaey, Fatma Al-Aqash, Fatma Al-Mariiri, JomanahSaif, AlHanouf Al-Mutairi, Fawaz Al-Mouli, Amal Redwan, GhezlanAlazmi were among the performers.

"Our student's educational journey is one of collaboration: the academic showcase celebrates the individual and collective efforts of our students and faculty, fostering critical thinking, creating, and in turn making the world a better place. It has been our tradition over the past 12 years and will continue to be one that provides an opportunity for students to share their accomplishments, and allows the campus community to experience learning, teaching, and scholarly activity at its best," said AUK Provost, Dr. Rawda Awwad.

FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP AT THE KNOWLEDGE CLUB 2017

The Knowledge Club 2017 brings to Kuwait an illuminating 2-day workshop: Facilitative Leadership Skills - which will provide attendees with the key strategies of performance and process tools that they can embed into their day-to-day service and operations ensuring high performing, high functioning and efficiency within their teams & organizations. During the workshop, attendees will understand the difference between leadership, management and facilitative leadership.

Leaders will learn to facilitate staff work through the analysis and improvement of day-to-day work processes using LEAN process analysis as well as build one's own plan for facilitative leadership. The highly informative workshop will be conducted by Kathrina Loeffler, founder and executive director of Facilitated Improvement for Corporate Success (FICS) and Christian Vulpe, certified professional facilitator and general manager at FICS and has been design for top level management and leaders who are responsible to lead people in organizations of any kind.

Kathrina Loeffler has been the Director of Learning and Development at Accreditation Canada where she turned an "at-risk" department into the highest functioning and most satisfied department in the organization using facili-

tative leadership strategies. For over 30 years she has been working with leaders to develop practical, action-oriented operational plans for their organizations. She is also a Certified LEAN Practitioner, Licensed LEADS Facilitator & Certified John Maxwell affiliate member.

Christian Vulpe is a certified professional facilitator who graduated from McGill University with a Master of Education in Educational Psychology. He is a gifted presenter and natural facilitator who leads the work of Facilitated Improvement for Corporate Success (FICS) with finesse. His areas of focus at McGill University was studying happiness at work and he has been nominated as one of "30 under 30" representatives at the Learning 2016 Masie Conference in Orlando, Florida.

The Facilitative Leadership skills workshop will be held on May 16 and 17, 2017 at Hilton Resort, Mangaf - Burgan Meeting room from 9am to 3pm and is organized by Vigor Events & Co-Organized by ALGAS Events Company. Members of the Knowledge Club this year includes Hadi Clinic as Gold Member, Warba Bank as Silver Member, Kuwait Oil Company and Platinum Gym as Corporate members and media support from the International Advertising Association (Kuwait Chapter).

KUWAIT ELITE SWIMMING TEAM WINS FIRST PLACE IN H2O INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

For the fourth consecutive time, Kuwait Elite Swimming Team recently won the first place in the H2O International Championship recently held and concluded in Qatar with participation of over 30 worldwide clubs. In this regard, Kuwait Elite Company's CEO, Meshari Al-Rezouqi said that the team was generally ranked first amongst clubs with a total number of points of 2090, which was 252 point more than the second winner. He added that the team also won over 60 various medals and that six of the team members won special cups as best swimmers in various phases.





01:00 As Above, So Below
03:00 Attila
04:45 Big Game
06:30 Blown Away
08:45 Harlock: Space Pirate
10:45 Ladder 49
12:45 Forbidden Empire
14:45 Blown Away
17:00 Last Action Hero
19:15 Kingsblade: Final Fantasy XV
21:15 Hitman: Agent 47
23:00 Judge Dredd



00:50 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
01:45 Bondi Vet
02:40 Animal Cops Houston
03:35 Tanked
04:25 Queens Of The Savannah
05:15 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
06:02 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
06:49 Animal Cops Houston
07:36 Swamp Brothers
08:00 Swamp Brothers
08:25 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
09:15 Animal Cops Houston
10:10 Queens Of The Savannah
11:05 Tanked
12:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
12:55 Bondi Vet
13:50 Animal Cops Houston
14:45 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
15:40 Queens Of The Savannah
16:35 Tanked
17:30 Big Fish Man
18:25 Meet The Penguins
18:50 Meet The Penguins
19:20 Pit Bulls & Parolees
20:15 Tanked
21:10 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
22:05 Meet The Penguins
22:30 Meet The Penguins
23:00 Pit Bulls & Parolees
23:55 Queens Of The Savannah



00:50 Casualty
01:45 The Collection
02:40 SS-SB
03:45 Silent Witness
04:40 Silent Witness



00:00 Campus Nightmares
01:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
02:00 When Life Means Life
03:00 Homicide Hunter
04:00 Campus Nightmares
05:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
06:00 When Life Means Life
07:00 I Love You...But I Lied
08:00 I Love You...But I Lied
09:00 Evil Up Close
10:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
11:00 Homicide Hunter
12:00 The First 48
13:00 The First 48
14:00 I Love You...But I Lied
15:00 Evil Up Close
16:00 Homicide Hunter
17:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
18:00 The First 48
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Evil Up Close
21:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
22:00 Homicide Hunter
23:00 Crime Stories



00:15 Tosh.0
00:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
01:05 The Half Hour
01:30 South Park
01:55 South Park
02:20 Tosh.0
02:45 Tosh.0
03:10 Ugly Americans
03:35 This Is Not Happening
04:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
04:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
05:15 Lip Sync Battle
05:40 Ridiculousness
06:05 Disaster Date
06:30 Tattoo Disasters
06:55 Tattoo Disasters
07:20 Catch A Contractor
08:10 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
09:00 Disaster Date
09:25 Disaster Date
09:50 Ridiculousness
10:15 Key And Peele
10:40 Disaster Date
11:05 Ridiculousness
11:30 Impractical Jokers UK
12:00 Gym Rescue
12:45 I Live With Models



00:15 Destroyed In Seconds
00:40 Don't Drive Here
01:30 Redesign My Brain
02:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
02:45 Kids Do The Craziest Things
03:10 Dirty Jobs
04:00 Destroyed In Seconds
04:25 Destroyed In Seconds
04:50 Don't Drive Here
05:40 How It's Made
06:05 How It's Made
06:30 Strangest Weather On Earth
07:20 Mythbusters
08:00 Doki
08:25 Kids vs Film
08:50 Bad Dog
09:40 How It's Made
10:05 How It's Made
10:30 Redesign My Brain
11:20 Mythbusters
12:10 Bad Dog
13:00 Don't Drive Here
13:50 How It's Made
14:15 How It's Made
14:40 Strangest Weather On Earth
15:30 Doki
15:55 Kids vs Film
16:20 Bad Dog
17:10 Science Of The Movies
18:00 React To That
18:25 React To That
18:50 Now That's Funny
19:40 Destroyed In Seconds
20:05 Destroyed In Seconds
20:30 How It's Made
20:55 How It's Made
21:20 Mythbusters
22:10 React To That
22:35 React To That
23:00 Now That's Funny
23:50 Destroyed In Seconds



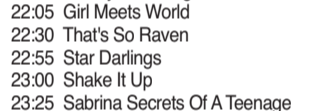
00:40 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil
01:30 Blood Relatives
02:20 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
03:10 The Darkest Of Nights: People Magazine...
04:00 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil
04:48 I Almost Got Away With It
05:36 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
06:01 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
06:24 Swamp Murders
07:12 I'd Kill For You



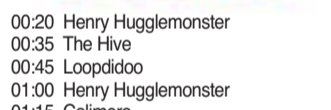
00:10 Hank Zipzer
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Binny And The Ghost
01:25 Hank Zipzer
01:45 The Hive
01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:40 Hank Zipzer
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:30 Binny And The Ghost
03:55 Hank Zipzer
04:15 The Hive
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04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:10 Hank Zipzer
05:35 Binny And The Ghost
06:00 Binny And The Ghost
06:25 Hank Zipzer
06:45 The Hive
06:50 The 7D
07:00 Jessie
07:25 Jessie
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
07:55 The Zhuzhus
08:20 Elena Of Avalor
08:45 Bunk'd
09:10 Stuck In The Middle
09:35 Bizaardvark
10:00 Austin & Ally
10:25 Austin & Ally
10:50 Good Luck Charlie
11:15 Good Luck Charlie
11:40 Dog With A Blog
12:05 Dog With A Blog
12:30 Gravity Falls
12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
13:00 Welcome To The Tonks
13:15 The Zhuzhus
13:40 Hank Zipzer
14:05 Star Darlings
14:10 Good Luck Charlie
14:35 Austin & Ally
15:00 Jessie
15:25 Binny And The Ghost
15:50 Sunny Bunnies
15:55 The Zhuzhus
16:45 Elena Of Avalor
17:10 Liv And Maddie
17:35 Descendants Wicked World
17:40 Girl Meets World
18:05 Stuck In The Middle
18:30 Bunk'd
18:55 Bizaardvark
19:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:25 Alex & Co.
19:50 Best Friends Whenever
20:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
20:20 Binny And The Ghost
20:45 Austin & Ally
21:10 Jessie
21:35 Crackle
21:40 Disney The Lodge
22:05 Girl Meets World
22:30 That's So Raven
22:55 Star Darlings
23:00 Shake It Up
23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



00:30 Fast N' Loud
01:20 Street Outlaws
02:10 Gold Rush: Parker's Trail
03:00 Idris Elba: No Limits
03:50 Outback Truckers
04:40 Fast N' Loud
05:30 Storage Hunters UK
06:00 How Do They Do It?
06:30 How Do They Do It?
07:00 Gold Divers
07:50 Street Outlaws
08:40 Fast N' Loud
09:30 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
10:20 Storage Hunters UK
10:45 How Do They Do It?
11:10 How Do They Do It?
11:35 Gold Rush: Parker's Trail
12:25 Idris Elba: No Limits
13:15 Alaska: The Last Frontier
14:05 How Do They Do It?
14:30 Storage Hunters UK
14:55 Storage Hunters UK
15:20 Gold Rush
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17:00 Gold Divers
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18:40 Street Outlaws
19:30 How Do They Do It?
19:55 How Do They Do It?
20:20 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
21:10 Storage Hunters UK
21:35 Storage Hunters UK
22:00 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
22:50 Rise Of The Warrior Apes



00:20 Henry Hugglemonster
00:35 The Hive
00:45 Loopydoo
01:00 Henry Hugglemonster
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Zou
02:05 Loopydoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Zou
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopydoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopydoo
04:50 Calimero
05:05 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Zou
06:00 Art Attack
06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
06:45 Loopydoo
07:00 Zou
07:15 Calimero
07:30 Henry Hugglemonster
07:45 Henry Hugglemonster
08:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
08:25 Sofia The First
08:50 The Lion Guard
09:15 PJ Masks



00:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA
07:00 Gravity Falls
07:25 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:50 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
08:15 Milo Murphy's Law
08:25 Danger Mouse
08:40 Supa Strikas
09:05 Two More Eggs
09:10 K.C. Undercover
09:35 Counterfeit Cat
10:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
10:25 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
10:50 Future-Worm!
11:20 Pair Of Kings
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Danger Mouse
12:35 Supa Strikas
13:00 Supa Strikas
13:30 Gravity Falls
13:55 AnneRockets
14:20 Atomic Puppet
14:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Mighty Med
15:40 Disney Cookbook
16:05 Lab Rats
16:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
16:55 Right Now Kapow
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 Walk The Prank
18:15 Mech-X4
18:40 Milo Murphy's Law
19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:10 Gravity Falls
19:35 Mighty Med
20:00 Atomic Puppet
20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:55 K.C. Undercover
21:20 Mech-X4



09:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:05 Goldie & Bear
10:35 The Lion Guard
11:00 Sofia The First
11:30 Doc McStuffins
11:55 Miles From Tomorrow
12:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
12:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
13:15 Gummi Bears
13:40 Miles From Tomorrow
14:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
14:35 PJ Masks
15:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
15:30 The Lion Guard
16:00 Sofia The First
16:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:55 Sofia The First
17:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
17:50 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
18:15 Sofia The First
18:40 Doc McStuffins
19:05 PJ Masks
19:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
20:05 Goldie & Bear
20:35 Goldie & Bear
21:05 Goldie & Bear
21:35 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
22:00 Gummi Bears
22:25 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
22:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
23:00 PJ Masks
23:30 PJ Masks
23:55 PJ Masks



00:00 E! News
00:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
03:15 E! News
03:30 Live From The Red Carpet
05:00 Botched
06:00 Celebrity Style Story
06:30 Celebrity Style Story
07:00 La Clippers Dance Squad
07:55 E! News
08:10 La Clippers Dance Squad
09:10 E! News: Daily Pop
10:10 Rob & Chyna
13:00 E! News
13:15 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
14:10 Live From The Red Carpet
15:30 Celebrity Style Story
16:00 E! News
16:15 Celebrity Style Story
16:45 Botched
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22:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
23:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian



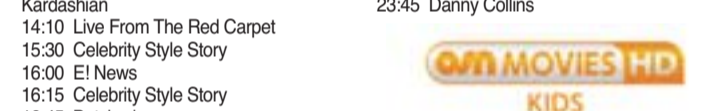
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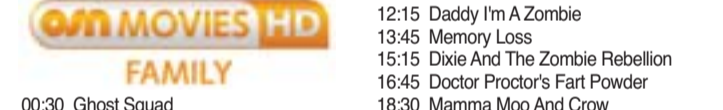
AMELIA ON OSN MOVIES HD
21:45 Mighty Med
22:10 Walk The Prank
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
22:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
23:10 Ultimate Spider-Man
23:35 Booster



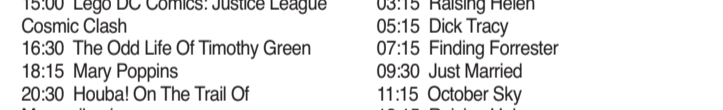
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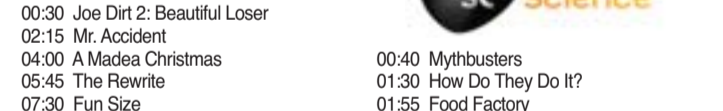
00:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie
01:30 Memory Loss
03:00 Hey Arnold! The Movie
04:30 Marco Macaco
06:00 Izzie's Way Home
07:30 Pooh's Heffalump Movie
08:45 Pirates Who Don't Do Anything
10:45 Doctor Proctor's Fart Powder
12:15 Daddy I'm A Zombie
13:45 Memory Loss
15:15 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
16:45 Doctor Proctor's Fart Powder
18:30 Mamma Moo And Crow
20:30 Ploddy Police Car On The Case
22:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
23:30 Pirates Who Don't Do Anything



00:30 Ghost Squad
02:00 Up
03:45 Santa Claws
05:15 Ice Princess
07:00 Ghost Squad
08:30 Santa Claws
10:00 Tinker Bell And The Lost Treasure
11:30 Up
13:15 Snow Dogs
15:00 Lego DC Comics: Justice League Cosmic Clash
16:30 The Odd Life Of Timothy Green
18:15 Mary Poppins
20:30 Houbal On The Trail Of Marsupilami
22:15 Lego DC Comics: Justice League Cosmic Clash
23:45 Mary Poppins



00:30 Joe Dirt 2: Beautiful Loser
02:15 Mr. Accident
04:00 A Madea Christmas
05:45 The Rewrite
07:30 Fun Size



00:40 Mythbusters
01:30 How Do They Do It?
01:55 Food Factory



BIG GAME ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

05:35 Casualty
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Casualty
07:50 Casualty
08:45 Father Brown
09:40 Stella
10:30 Death In Paradise
11:25 Casualty
12:15 Father Brown
13:10 Stella
14:05 Death In Paradise
15:00 Casualty
15:50 Father Brown
16:45 Stella
17:40 Death In Paradise
18:30 Doctors
19:05 Doctors
19:35 Doctors
20:05 Dickensian
21:00 Spies Of Warsaw
22:00 Forgotten
22:50 Silent Witness
23:45 Silent Witness

13:10 Lip Sync Battle
13:35 Impractical Jokers UK
14:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
14:55 Ridiculousness
15:20 Bondi Ink
16:15 I Live With Models
16:40 Disaster Date
17:05 Disaster Date
17:30 Ridiculousness
17:55 Lip Sync Battle
18:20 Key And Peele
18:45 Life Or Debt
19:35 Impractical Jokers UK
20:05 Disaster Date
20:27 Key And Peele
20:48 Key And Peele
21:10 IdiotSitter
21:35 Inside Amy Schumer
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
22:30 Workaholics
23:00 Another Period
23:25 Key And Peele
23:50 Tosh.0

08:00 I'd Kill For You
08:50 I Almost Got Away With It
09:40 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
10:05 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
10:30 Swamp Murders
11:20 Evil Online
12:10 Nightmare Next Door
13:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
13:25 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
15:05 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
15:30 Swamp Murders
16:20 I'd Kill For You
17:10 Vanity Fair Confidential
18:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
18:25 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
18:50 I Almost Got Away With It
19:40 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
20:05 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
20:30 Swamp Murders
21:20 I'd Kill For You
22:10 Killer Instinct With Chris Hansen
23:00 The Accused, Jeffrey Macdonald:

EMERGING MARKETS STREAMING LEADER - IFLIX LAUNCHES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

IFLIX'S WORLD-CLASS SERVICE IS NOW AVAILABLE TO OVER 1BN CONSUMERS IN 18 COUNTRIES ACROSS ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

iflix, the world's leading Subscription Video on Demand (SVoD) service for emerging markets, yesterday announced the launch of its revolutionary service in eight territories across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Consumers in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Lebanon, Egypt and Sudan can now sign up for a 30-day free trial, giving them unlimited access to thousands of the world's best TV shows, movies and more on every device they own, with no credit card required.

The announcement follows just one month after the Company's launch in Myanmar, its tenth market in Asia, solidifying iflix's dominance over the region with over 6 billion minutes streamed across ten countries since first launching in Malaysia and the Philippines in mid-2015. With its MENA launch, iflix has established itself as the only international SVoD service with full-scale localized operations in each of its territories and a total global headcount of 700 staff across 24 offices worldwide, including new regional headquarters for MENA based in Dubai, UAE.

- Each iflix subscription includes:**
- Unlimited access to iflix's vast library of original productions, thousands of first-run exclusive shows, award-winning TV series, blockbuster movies, popular local and regional Arabic and Asian content, children's programs and much more;
 - Access to iflix on up to 5 devices at once, including phones, tablets, laptops, desktops, TVs and other connected devices;
 - The ability to download TV shows and movies to any



IFLIX NOW AVAILABLE TO 1 BILLION PEOPLE ACROSS ASIA AND MENA

phone, tablet or mobile device to binge-watch offline, when not connected to the Internet; The ability to share the iflix subscription with family or friends and watch shows on two different devices at the same time.

iflix Group Co-founder and CEO, Mark Britt commented: "Our launch in the Middle East and North Africa represents the incredible vision, hard work and sacrifice by everyone in the iflix team. To have grown from a small, but ambitious 20-person operation without a live service to launching a glob-

al business, in now our second region with eight new markets and 80 staff in MENA alone in less than two years, is a testament to that commitment. MENA is one of the fastest growing and most exciting online markets in the world with data savvy consumers who share a passion for entertainment. We are thrilled to make iflix's world class service, premier digital experience and the most comprehensive selection of content available to them, as part of our mission to redefine entertainment in emerging markets."

Now available in 18 markets across Asia and MENA, iflix offers consumers, a vast library of top Hollywood, Asian regional, and local TV shows and movies including original productions, first run exclusives and award-winning programs, each subscription allows users to access the service on up to five devices, including phones, laptops, tablets, and television sets, for viewing wherever, whenever.

For new subscribers, iflix offers a complimentary one-month trial with full access to its service, features and content. Go to www.iflix.com, or download the app from the Google Play or Apple App Store to register.

ABOUT IFLIX
iflix is the world's leading Subscription Video on Demand (SVoD) service, offering users unlimited access to thousands of TV shows and movies from all over the world. With a huge selection of your favorite comedies, drama, K-drama, cartoons plus movies from Hollywood, The UK, Asia and more, iflix places the entertainment you want at your fingertips. For one low monthly fee, iflix subscribers can watch on their mobile phone, laptop, tablet, TV... wherever, whenever.

CROSSWORD 1595



ACROSS

1. A flexible container with a single opening.
4. German theologian and mystic (1260-1327).
11. Any of a group of Indic languages spoken in Kashmir and eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan.
15. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
16. Evergreen shrubs and small trees of North and Central America and Asia.
17. Any of the forms of Chinese spoken in Fukien province.
18. A short high tone produced as a signal or warning.
20. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
21. Correspond in vowel sounds.
23. The sixth month of the civil year.
24. A Kwa language spoken by the Yoruba people in southwestern Nigeria.
26. Broken into sharp pieces.
27. The principal evil jinni in Islamic mythology.
29. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
30. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
33. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
35. Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
39. Tall feather palm of northern Brazil with hard-shelled nuts yielding valuable oil and a kind of vegetable ivory.
41. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
44. Something (often something deceptively attractive) that catches you unawares.
45. An island northwest of Wales.
47. A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
48. An upright tripod for displaying something (usually an artist's canvas).
49. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
50. The immature free-living form of most invertebrates and amphibians and fish which at hatching from the egg is fundamentally unlike its parent and must metamorphose.
52. Poor enough to need help from others.
53. Informal terms for a meal.
55. Partially carbonized vegetable matter saturated with water.
56. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
59. Stick of wax with a wick in the middle.
66. Sour or bitter in taste.
69. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
73. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
75. A drama set to music.
77. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
78. A strong emotion.
79. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
81. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
82. A doctor's degree in dental surgery.
83. A large estate in Spanish-speaking countries.
84. A young woman making her debut into society.

DOWN

1. A small cake leavened with yeast.
2. Advanced in years.
3. (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
4. The square of a body of any size of type.
5. A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
6. Of a yellowish brown color similar to olive drab.
7. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
8. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
9. A genus of Laridae.
10. Dutch navigator who was the first European to discover Tasmania and New Zealand (1603-1659).
11. A male ballet dancer who is the partner of a ballerina.
12. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
13. Memorization by repetition.
14. Colored or impregnated with dye.
19. Made ready or fit or suitable beforehand.
22. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
25. North American republic containing 50 states - 48 conterminous states in North America plus Alaska in northwest North America and the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific Ocean.
28. In a despicable, ignoble manner.
31. Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
32. Lower in esteem.
34. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
36. Equipped with or connected by gears or having gears engaged.
37. Immature of its kind.
38. Form a mental image of something that is not present or that is not the case.
40. A benevolent aspect of Devi.
42. A member of the British order of honor.
43. Any of various units of capacity.
46. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
51. Transient cessation of respiration.
54. Minute blackish gregarious flies destructive to mushrooms and seedlings.
57. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
58. A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
60. An associate degree in nursing.
61. United States tennis player (born in Yugoslavia in 1973).
62. Alsatian artist and poet who was cofounder of Dadaism in Zurich.
63. Cause to be embarrassed.
64. A native American tent.
65. Of a stem or strict bearing or demeanor.
67. One of a set of small pieces of stiff paper marked in various ways and used for playing games or for telling fortunes.
68. A sandal attached to the foot by a thong over the toes.
70. Set down according to a plan.
71. (of a young animal) Abandoned by its mother and raised by hand.
72. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
74. An accountant certified by the state.
76. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
80. A radioactive element of the actinide series.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a time when you will find a personal relationship is on solid ground. Expressing affections or appreciation should be simple. These good vibrations can do much for your disposition. Activity in projects or groups can have positive results. Unexpected expenses turn up again and again. Do not pay for everything yourself today. It may be time for someone else to help take on that responsibility. You are able to tap into a wellspring of inspiration at this time. Your dreams seem set to become reality and success with your goals is near. You have a great deal of energy that can make you attractive to the opposite sex. Sexual needs are among the life issues emphasized at this time. Music can help to put you to sleep tonight.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Now is an excellent time to advertise your skills or talents. Find ways to promote and bring attention to the advancements you have made to the company for which you work. One way to do this is to volunteer to teach or conduct an orientation program for new employees. You might seek a recommendation for taking on the position of job interviewer when there is a job fair. These are just a few of the ways to gain a more prestigious job identity or if you like your position, perhaps a raise in pay. Teaching, learning, communicating, and social contact have a way of outlining new directions in your life now. Tonight you spend time with people that love and respect you and whom you love and respect.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Someone could challenge your ideas and perhaps find them unconventional. It may not be easy to find new and suitable solutions to problems now. It will not be the first time you have been challenged, and you may even do it to someone else tomorrow. Now is a good time to think through some of your own methods in dealing with the young or inexperienced. Give yourself time to think about this and adjust some of the ways in which you criticize or correct others. Some choices, the obvious path that is opening up for you, may grate against your own sense of freedom and independence. Success and security at the expense of originality may be too great a price to pay. Look for a middle road. Relax and enjoy communication with loved ones tonight.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You work with real imagination and understanding in areas of the mind that are the most personal or private: in-depth psychology. You are like a midwife of the spirit, assisting at the birth of each individual going through a spiritual or rebirth process. You could work with a person that needs to have someone interview and match requirements for employment, acting talent, technical abilities, etc. You know people and this is where your talent shines. Whether you are in a job this day, on call, or just around people that know you are a caring person, you will find many opportunities opening up to be of help to others. You could help a person find a job or help an employer find the right employee. You can be of service to many in this way; it is good.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

This could be a difficult time to relax. You should experience a successful day with opportunities to give your input and bring attention to your skills. There could be surprises when it comes to money. Keep an eagle eye on spur-of-the-moment spending. You may be so busy or have your mind so cluttered you make quick decisions when other situations come to your attention. This is definitely a positive time for new beginnings in connection with budgeting situations and managing your financial affairs. You may even want a financial counselor in this case. There could be some difficulties surrounding a loved one this evening. If you cannot remain objective, keep notes and detach your emotions for now.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are able to feel the trends and make the right moves. Use this time to help you and your company to expand and grow successfully. This is a time to get ahead by taking action. You may be surprised at the support and recognition you receive as you seek to find ways to make new business happen. Any dealings with clients should go well today. Encourage your wise co-workers to make suggestions and provide a suggestion box for them so that no person has to be identified with a particular comment unless they want. You are in a creative as well as a competitive phase and you are pleased with the results of everyone's efforts. You could have deep insights at this time. Some sudden inspiration may resolve a long-standing worry.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your intense analytical approach to life may cut through to the heart of things and afford you some intelligent and useful information. You have real vision with moments of insight and clear-seeing that allows you to work to the best of your abilities. You work effectively in a group situation this day. Others accept your guidance as you evaluate and help to implement specific plans that eventually solve many problems. You dream of a world where unity and harmony are a reality. It would not be unusual for you to join in some political or community work. Your imagination will drive you to make your dreams a reality. Get outside this evening and be a witness to the wonders of nature. Enjoy a bit of stargazing this evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

There is much contemplative thinking about the way you fill your days. Questions of attitude, approaches to problem solving and the methods for handling problems are in high focus. Perhaps you will have many jobs or be forever going through changes and adjustments. These highs and lows you have been experiencing lately will finally become balanced. You have a particular expertise that will come in handy when you are ready to settle down: the ability to prosper. You are warm and friendly to everyone. As you settle down in your life choices, you will begin to notice that you will become a good mentor to people. You enjoy the process of elimination when it comes to life experiences these days-easy does it. Ask before jumping.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You feel a love of order and an appreciation for responsibilities and duty. Problems are valued for the lessons they represent, rather than perceived as obstacles. A drive to probe and penetrate may find you examining and working through some strong internal changes. Push too hard and you could be too dominating and even oppressive to yourself and others. Now may be the time you are thinking of changing jobs, asking for a raise or wanting to make a move. There is no better time than the present to get things rolling-start first by discussing it with your loved one. Work together and create a plan. Although change is something of a natural occurrence, planning for some changes in your life helps lessen the unknown. Enjoy your loved ones tonight.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may feel like talking with your co-workers and neighbors a bit more than usual today. Perhaps there is some outdoor activity about which a plan is evolving and taking shape: one of competition. You will often become happily lost in fun conversations. You can also demonstrate a great understanding of the needs of others. If you fancy taking a small gamble, then today is the day to act. Don't get too crazy and bet your hat-a small bet could be fun and fruitful. You always seem to maintain a good, positive mental attitude. This is a time to help find or teach positive ways to help others in learning to rise above the stresses and to become more creative about solving any problems. Enjoy a quiet dinner this evening.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You seem less critical of others and more accepting of interruptions and delays at this time. Part of your day may normally consist of hurry-up-and-wait sort of situations. Today seems more packed than usual. You continue to amaze others with the productive things you pull out of your pocket or purse to keep you occupied while you do the waiting game. You appear perhaps more charming and refined than usual this afternoon as a party begins. Now is the best time to enjoy someone new. Perhaps you are attending a family barbecue, a neighborhood block party or some kind of circus show. There is a fair chance you could win something by entering a competition or some sort of sideshow game. Someone wants to pamper you tonight.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a good day to get things done. Good eye-hand coordination and a sustained effort make almost any task run well. You may feel like exercising or getting out and around town this afternoon. There may be items to purchase and a group meeting to attend before you head back home. You look for fresh challenges to light your fires now. You have lots of energy, a powerful urge to be first. A very active day is forecasted for you. You move around doing many things for others, as well as for yourself. Working with the handicapped or with children can be expected. Those of you who are involved in creative activities-teaching or otherwise-will be particularly inspired. Relax this evening! Your luck is good.

WORD SEARCH

90's Songs 1

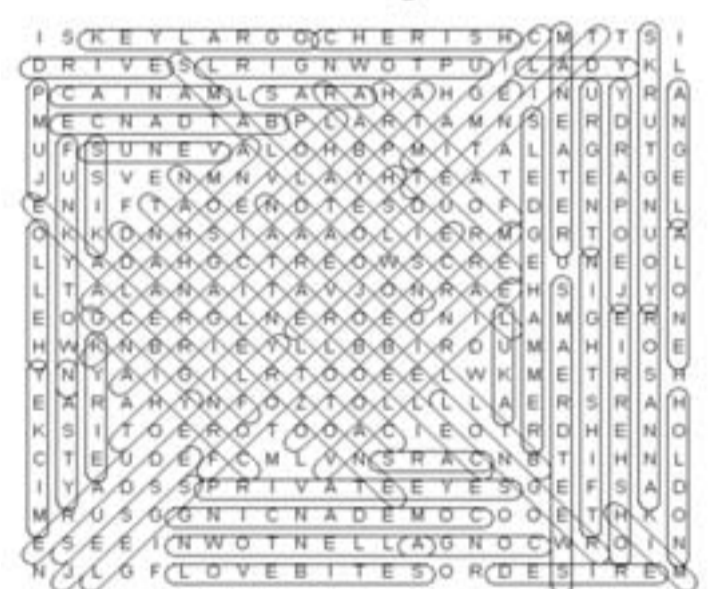
Find and circle all of the 1990's songs that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional song.



- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| ALL STAR | HOLE HEARTED | MY ALL | SOMEDAY |
| ALWAYS | I WISH | NEVER EVER | LONGER |
| BLACK VELVET | JESHA | ONLY YOU | LOVE BITES |
| CARNIVAL | INVISIBLE MAN | PUSH | FOOTLOOSE |
| COME UNDONE | JOYRIDE | RHYTHM NATION | FUNKY TOWN |
| DO ANYTHING | JUMP | ROAM | HEARTLIGHT |
| EVERY HEARTBEAT | LITHIUM | ROMANTIC | HELLO |
| FREAK ME | MACARENA | RUN AWAY | HIH |
| GLYCERINE | MMMBOP | RUSH RUSH | HOLD ON |
| HAZARD | MOVE THIS | SCAR TISSUE | JEOPARDY |
| HEARTBREAKER | MR. WENDAL | SENSITIVITY | JESSE |
| HEY LOVER | | SHOOP | CONGA |
| | | | KEY LARGO |
| | | | KISS |
| | | | KYRIE |
| | | | LADY |
| | | | LEGS |
| | | | LOVE SHACK |
| | | | LUKA |
| | | | MAGIC |
| | | | MANEATER |
| | | | MANIAC |
| | | | MIKEY |
| | | | MR. ROBOT |
| | | | NASTY |
| | | | NIGHTSHIFT |
| | | | OH SHERAZADE |
| | | | PHYSICAL |
| | | | PRIVATE EYES |
| | | | RAPTURE |
| | | | ROSAANNA |
| | | | SARA |
| | | | SLEDGEHAMMER |
| | | | SMALL TOWN |
| | | | SUDDENLY |
| | | | SWEET DREAMS |
| | | | TAINTED LOVE |
| | | | TIME |
| | | | UPTOWN GIRL |
| | | | URGENT |
| | | | VALERIE |
| | | | VENUS |
| | | | YOU ARE |
| | | | YOUNG TURKS |

Yesterday's Solution

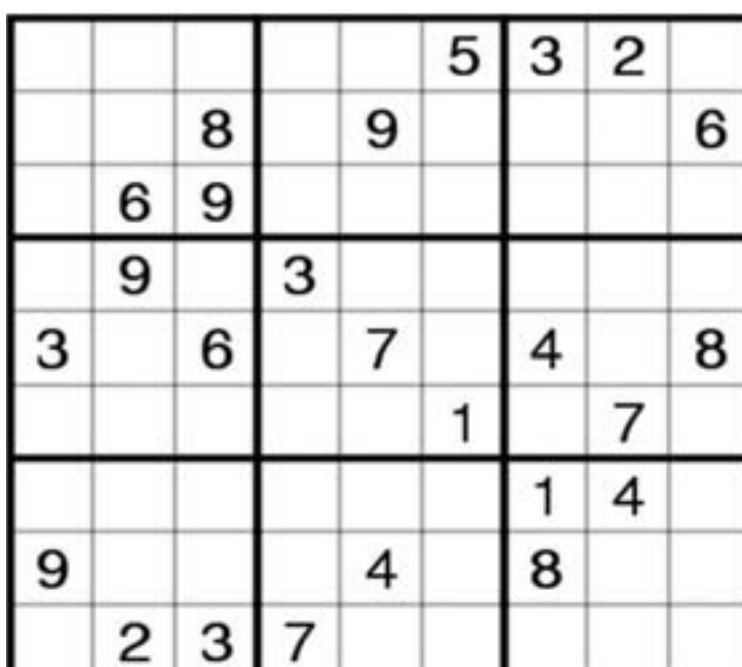
80's Songs



- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| AMBACADABRA | DRIVE | LEGS | RAPTURE |
| ALLEN TOWN | FAITH | LONGER | ROSAANNA |
| ALONE | FIRE LAKE | LOVE BITES | SARA |
| AMANDA | FOOTLOOSE | LOVE SHACK | SLEDGEHAMMER |
| ANGEL | FUNKY TOWN | LUKA | SMALL TOWN |
| BATDANCE | HEARTLIGHT | MAGIC | SUDDENLY |
| BILLIE JEAN | HELLO | MANEATER | SWEET DREAMS |
| CARS | HIH | MANIAC | TAINTED LOVE |
| CELEBRATION | HOLD ON | MIKEY | TIME |
| CHEERISH | JEOPARDY | MR. ROBOT | UPTOWN GIRL |
| COME DANCING | JESSE | NASTY | URGENT |
| CONGA | JUMP | NIGHTSHIFT | VALERIE |
| COOL NIGHT | KEY LARGO | OH SHERAZADE | VENUS |
| CRYING | KISS | PHYSICAL | YOU ARE |
| DANGER ZONE | KYRIE | PRIVATE EYES | YOUNG TURKS |
| DESIRE | LADY | | |

The hidden song is: I STILL HAVEN'T FOUND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadisiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



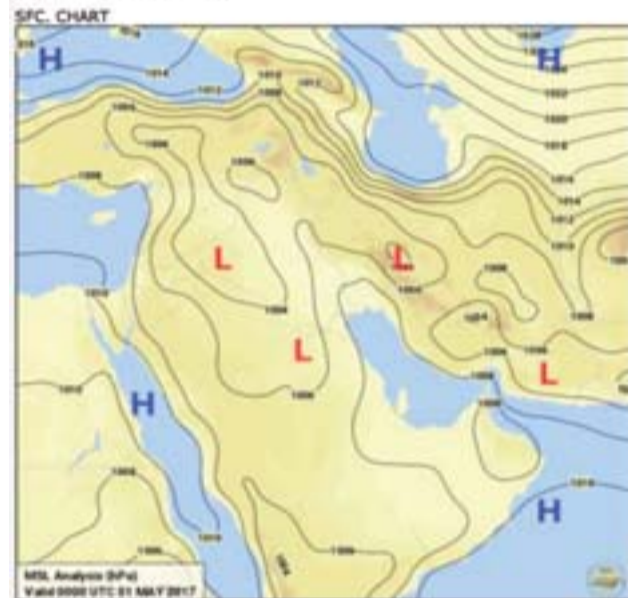
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 01/05/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 39 °C

By Day : Cloudy to partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with suspended dust over some areas and a chance for scattered light rain
By Night : Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h



Four-Day Forecast

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy + raising dust over open areas	partly cloudy + scattered rain	partly cloudy + scattered rain	partly cloudy + scattered rain
Min Temp °C	27	25	26	25
Max Temp °C	39	37	35	34
Wind Direction	south easterly	north easterly becoming south easterly	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	north easterly becoming south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	20 - 45	12 - 32	08 - 30	15 - 40

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	REC	Max °C	EXP
KUWAIT CITY	31		38	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	27		39	
ABDOLY	28		40	
BUBYAN	25		33	
JAHRA	28		39	
FAILAKA ISLAND	26		35	
SALMIYAH	26		31	
AHMADI	27		37	
JAL ALYAH	26		37	
QAROH ISLAND	25		30	
UMM AL-MARADEM	25		34	
NUWAISIB	27		38	
WAFRA	27		39	
SALMY	28		37	
MUTRIBA	26		40	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	38
Min Temp (°C)	28
Max Rel Hum (%)	44
Min Rel Hum (%)	14
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	43 S
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:07
Sunset	18:24

Prayer Times

Fajr	03:41
Sunrise	05:07
Zuhr	11:45
Asr	15:21
Sunset	18:24
Isha	19:47

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
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Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
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Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		



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Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
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This picture taken on March 30, 2017 shows a Jin opera performer preparing backstage at an outdoor theatre in a village in Yuxian, China's Hebei province. — AFP photos



People watching a Jin opera performer (right) on stage at an outdoor theatre in Yu county.



A Jin opera performer using her mobile phone to take a selfie backstage at an outdoor theatre in Yu county.

Opera troupe tours rural China defending a dying art



A group of Jin opera performers taking pictures on stage before a show at an outdoor theatre in Yu county.



A group of Jin opera performers chatting backstage at an outdoor theatre in Yu county.

For the 50-year-old Chinese opera performer, every aspect of the dimly-lit backstage room was a reminder that things had changed. The elaborate costumes carelessly thrown aside, the young troupe members playing with their smartphones, the half-eaten noodles abandoned in the corner all were tokens of disorder that made Li Zhiguo grimace in his blue and gold cap. "I get angry sometimes watching my students perform, because their heart isn't in it," Li said. "But when they ask me if rehearsing diligently will guarantee them a good living, I have nothing to say."

When Li joined the Yu County Jin Opera Troupe in northern Hebei province 35 years ago, he and his fellow teenage recruits believed that they had secured stable futures as the public guardians of a traditional art. But policy reforms in 2005 turned their government-sponsored project into a private venture without a concrete business strategy, gutting the performers' salaries and threatening the future of an early Qing Dynasty opera form.

Jin opera, which is characterized by upbeat songs and wooden clapper instruments, originated in the northern Shanxi province bordering Yu county. From the Spring Festival to the end of March, the troupe travels from village to village in Hebei, performing on ramshackle rural stages to mostly elderly crowds. Despite their new business designation, they still rarely charge for performances—most attendees wouldn't pay—and rely heavily on support from local governments.

Backstage at one of their last shows of the season, Li sighed as he recounted all the departures in recent years. Many of his students had left the troupe after struggling to support their families. "If it's about the art, I'll tell them to stay," said Li. "If it's about survival, I'll tell them: go."

An 'iron rice bowl' no more

The group of 90 has been active since 1985, drawing its members from auditions held across Yu county. The performers join when they are between 13 and 15 years old; those who stay have known each other their entire adult lives. Liu Donghai, a former actor who now helps manage the troupe, recalled that being chosen from among more than a thousand kids had felt like winning the lottery. His parents were thrilled because, being a state institution at the



A general view of a Jin opera performance at an outdoor theatre in Yu county.

time, the troupe offered him an "iron rice bowl"—the Chinese parlance for a secure job.

Since they were stripped of their public status, however, some performers have started driving pedicabs between shows for supplementary income. Even the most senior members of the troupe make less than 2,500 yuan (\$363) a month, while the average actor makes closer to 1,500 yuan (\$217) in a district where the minimum monthly wage is 1,590 yuan (\$231). Over the 23 years that Liu, 36, has been with the group, he has seen his cohort shrink. But a sense of loyalty has kept him from leaving.

"This is my family," he said. "Our troupe leader is like a father to me. Whatever he says, I'll do." Sometimes that means singing in negative degree Celsius weather, or dancing while snow settles on his elaborate costumes. But as Geng Liping, a 30-year-old actress, said, "When you're on stage you never feel cold."

'Sword dangling over their heads'

Jin opera recounts ancient Shanxi history, with storylines soaked in nostalgia for the province's imperial past. Modern audiences have different tastes, said Wang Jia, founder of the China Jin Opera Network. "Even our notion of beauty has changed, so everything—from the costumes to the dialogue—is being adapted for contemporary viewing," Wang

said. The greatest problem they face now is attracting young recruits willing to endure the nomadic life of an actor, a life without financial guarantees. "Most of them don't have health insurance," Wang said.

"The question of whether their basic needs will be met is like a sword dangling over their heads." At a March performance in Yu county's Baocao village, there were no chairs in the viewing area, but some attendees had brought their own. Others watched from inside their cars, or found perches along a crumbling brick fence as a harsh wind blew around them. More people used to come, the performers said, before the county's coal plants closed and the migrants left.

Now there were about 50 mostly elderly locals, some with babies in their arms. They heard about the show through word of mouth. One of the few young people, 20-year-old Zhang Zehui, had attended several performances with her grandmother. "It's lively and interesting, but I don't really understand it," Zhang said. Garbed in a colorful robe, Li stood backstage, awaiting his cue. "Has it been worth it?" he asked as he looked out at the crowd. "That's a big question mark in my heart." — AFP



THE RENOWNED ITALIAN K STARS COSMETICS INAUGURATES ITS FIRST BRANCH IN KUWAIT

The celebrated Italian cosmetics brand, K Stars Cosmetics, opened its first beauty branch in Kuwait, which is located at The Cube Mall in Salmiya. The launch ceremony was attended by a number of social media influencers, bloggers, beauty specialists, fashionistas, as well as media delegates.

The internationally recognized Italian brand offers a full line of cosmetics and makeup prod-

ucts that suits all tastes and demands. During the event, guests expressed their delight to introduce the K Stars line of products in town, which is known for its excellence, finest quality, affordable price and wide variety that suit all skin types, which in turn enable it to compete with international brands in the local market.

The launch of the first K Stars branch in The Cube Mall is just the beginning for further

expansion in Kuwait and abroad. In addition to broadening their horizons even more, the management team of K Stars is committed to provide the best professional service for clients, both individuals and retailers, as well as to conduct professional training opportunities and workshops for beauticians and sellers in the near future.



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PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



First Place winner
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Second Place winner Jacek Wozniak



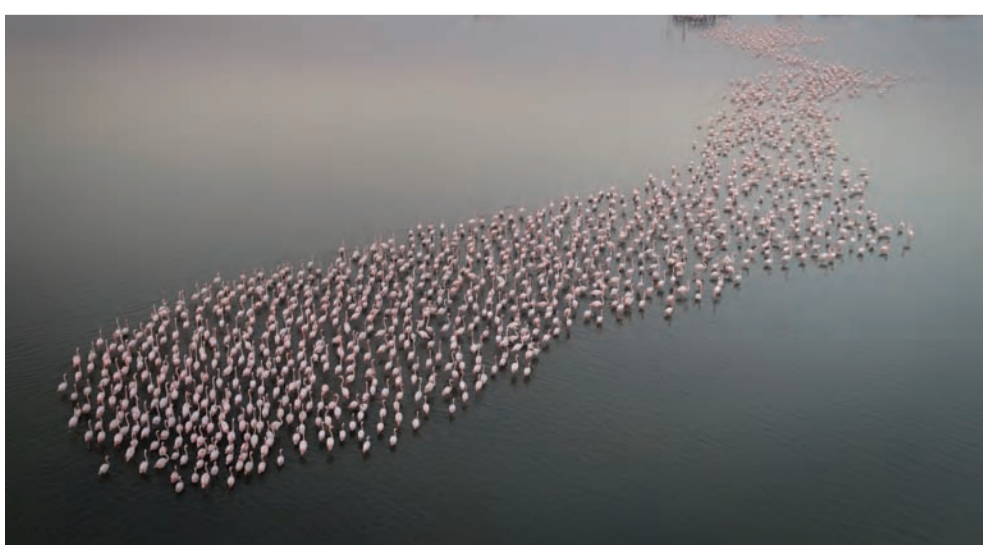
Third Place winner Rehab Dahab



Fourth Place winner Alexander Galicino



Fifth Place winner Abdulla Al-Shatti



Sixth Place winner Mohammed Al-Saleh



Seventh Place winner Anwar Ahamed

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KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE
 PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

KUWAIT TIMES AWARDS WINNERS OF 'KUWAIT SCENERY AND NATURE' PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



Hamad Al-Matar, External & Internal Relations Manager Zain

(From left to right) Monjed Salha, General Manager of Holiday Inn Salmiya, Ahmad Abul, CEO Office Zain, Hamad Al-Matar, External & Internal Relations Manager Zain, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Editor-in-Chief Kuwait Times, Nabil Iskandarani, General Manager Canon, H.E. Warren Hauck, Australian Ambassador, Mohamed Amira, Managing Director Albumi and Adnan Saad, Deputy General Manager Kuwait Times. — Photos by Joseph Shagra and Yasser Al-Zayyat

Adnan Saad, Deputy General Manager Kuwait Times

By Faten Omar

Kuwait Times awarded the winners of the annual KT photography competition recently at the Holiday Inn Hotel - Salmiya. The Kuwait Times 'Kuwait Scenery and Nature' photography competition was sponsored by Zain (strategic partner), Al-Jazeera Airways, Canon, Naser Al-Sayer company and Albumii.

"Kuwait Times wants to encourage everyone in Kuwait to see the country through the lens of its natural beauty," said Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Editor-in-Chief for the Kuwait Times. "We hope in this way people will continue to preserve and protect the natural environment."

The Kuwait Times photography competition provides an opportunity for Kuwait's many

world-class photographers as well as amateurs to document Kuwait's natural environment. More than 500 participants submitted more than 1,600 pictures, capturing the full range of Kuwait's environment and scenery.

"The photography competition aims to develop the art of photography in Kuwait by stimulating and attracting the largest number of participants," said Adnan Saad, Kuwait Times Deputy General Manager and competition organizer.

The competition is one of the most popular and winners will receive prizes and have their work published in the Kuwait Times newspaper. The jury included Kuwaiti photographer Mohammed Sultan and British photographer Samantha Gribble.

Saad thanked each participant and

congratulated the winners. He also thanked Zain for its continuous support and strategic partnership as well as sponsors Al-Jazeera Airways and Canon. Saad also thanked Al-Anbaa newspaper for its support of the competition, Naser Al-Sayer company, Albumii and the management of the Holiday Inn Hotel to host the ceremony for the fourth year.

"Zain is proud to sponsor this event, which highlights the creative people of Kuwait in the field of photography, especially that this hobby has spread a lot among young people in Kuwait," said Hamad Al-Matar, Director of External and Interior Relations at Zain.

He pointed out "We are pleased today to be the strategic partner of this competition, which we have always been its main supporters over

the past years. Zain believe that we have a great responsibility to support innovation that serves all age groups, the most important of which are young people."

Al-Matar thanked the organizers of the competition, which will contribute to the advancement of photography in Kuwait, stressing that Zain will continue to support all the innovative ideas that further develop young talents where the company is supporting and fostering initiatives that offer the next generations an opportunity to unleash their creativity. The ceremony included the distribution of certificates to all participants and gifts for the winners and at the end of the ceremony an entertainment Folklore dance show was performed by the Swords of Damascus band.



Second winner Jacek Wozniak



Sixth winner Mohammed Al-Saleh



Fourth winner Alexander Galicino



Seventh winner Anwar Ahamed



Fifth winner Abdulla Al-Shatti



Mobile Photo first winner Unnimaya Unnikrishnan



Mobile Photo Second winner Ruli Amirullah



Mobile Photo Third winner Talal Ismail

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PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Mobile Phone winners



First Place winner Unnimaya Unnikrishnan



Second Place winner Ruli Amirullah



Third Place winner Talal Ismail



Ahmad Abul, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan and Hamad Al-Matar honored the jury Samantha Gribble.



Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan and Zain representative and Adnan Saad honored the jury Waleed Al-Hassanieh.



Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan and Zain representative honored the jury Mohammed Al-Sultan.



Honoring Mohamed Amira, Managing Director Albumi.



Honoring Canon as Sponsor represented by Nabil Iskandarani General Manager and Mr. Madhu Dokka, Middle East Regional Sales Manager.



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Lifestyle

TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2017

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Opera troupe tours rural China defending a dying art



Two girls wearing traditional Sevillian dresses talk during the 'Feria de Abril' (April Fair) in Sevilla on April 30, 2017. The fair dates back to 1847 when it was originally organized as a livestock fair but has turned into a week of flamenco dancing, music and bullfighting. — AFP



The above photos show cast of the Musical comedy Baghdaddy perform the scenes during dress rehearsal at the St. Luke's Theater in New York.

'Baghdaddy': New York turns Iraq war into musical

The Iraq war may not sound like musical comedy, but an Off-Broadway revival is spinning intelligence failures and tragedy into a farce that offers potent messages for Donald Trump's America. "Baghdaddy" officially opens on Monday, telling the true story of an Iraqi defector, code named Curveball, whose claims about weapons of mass destruction became justification for the US-led invasion in 2003. "If you put 'Hamilton' and 'The Office' in a blender you would have this show," says producer Charlie Fink of the Broadway smash hit about American founding father Alexander and the US television sitcom. The plot opens in the present day with disgraced CIA spies gathering at a support group-think Spooks Anonymous-as they seek understanding and redemption for mistakes that haunt them years later.

The action then switches back in time to Frankfurt airport, where the informant offers to trade apparent secrets about Saddam Hussein's presumed bio-weapons program for political asylum. German intelligence consults the CIA, where analysts driven by ambition, office crushes and intransigent bosses see Curveball as a ticket out of everyday routine and a fast-track to promotion. But the growing farce quickly gives way to the 9/11 attacks, swapping comedy for tragedy and the onset of a war still being fought today, 14 years after an invasion found no weapons of mass destruction.

It's a fast-paced script woven into a tight score that blends traditional musical theater and camp dancing with hip-hop tracks that carry a stark warning that history should not repeat itself. Fink says it is more relevant than ever in today's climate of "fake news" and "alternative facts" as some fear that Trump could drag the country into another conflict, if not in Syria then over North Korea. "It has an immediacy that it didn't have in 2015 and a sense that we're doing this all again," says Fink, referring to a short run two years ago.

'Scary'

"It feels like a time when rules are being rewritten and authority is listening to its instincts, rather than listening

to facts and analysis. And that's scary," says Fink. The first preview on April 6 coincided with the day that the president ordered a cruise missile attack on a Syrian airbase, the first direct US action against the Syrian regime. Low budget and in the works for 10 years, there are just eight actors playing six main roles. "Baghdaddy" returns at the height of the Broadway season, competing with more than a dozen other new shows.

lyrics and co-wrote the book, admits it was daunting to turn the subject into a musical that both entertains and sends people away with a clear message. "We want them to be entertained and moved," he said. "But we want them to take away... that even though you feel like you don't matter, you really do, and there's ramifications for your actions."

The show is scheduled to run until June 18 at St



Castmembers (from left) Claire Neumann, Jason Collins, Brennan Caldwell, Bob D'Haene, Ethan Slater, Brandon Espinoza and Larisa Oleynik of the Musical comedy Baghdaddy perform a scene during a dress rehearsal.

It also spreads responsibility for the 2003 invasion far and wide, not just at the door of then president George W. Bush or the US government but the country as a whole and its Western allies in general. "We all messed up," says Marshall Paillet, director, co-writer and composer. Far from seeing comedy as inappropriate, he says it's a great vehicle to get New York theater-goers thinking.

"Because we open up their minds and their hearts with comedy, we're able to slip in substance, story, character and a lesson." AD Penedo, who wrote the

Luke's Theatre, a basement venue just steps from Times Square. But never does the show laugh at war itself. More than 4,500 US troops have died in Iraq since 2003. Some estimates for the number of civilians to have perished range from 173,916 to nearly half a million. "We all own it," says Fink. "A wound in the world that is not going to be healed with tears or laughter." — AFP



Castmembers (from left) Brandon Espinoza, Claire Neumann and Joe Joseph of the Musical comedy Baghdaddy perform a scene during a dress rehearsal at the St Luke's Theater in New York.