

Kuwait records
account deficit
of KD 1510m



Racism scars
Europe soccer;
sanctions 'weak'

44



Red Bull GP3
CRAZY FAST
DRIFT

TODAY
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SIRBB CIRCUIT,
SHUWAIKH

FREE

Kuwait Times Friday Times



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NO: 17218 - Friday, May 5, 2017



LONDON: Britain's Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and Britain's Queen Elizabeth II arrive at Chapel Royal in St James's Palace in London, for an Order of Merit service yesterday. — AFP

Britain's Prince Philip to retire

See Page 10

Scribblers' Notebook

ARTICLE 29

By Jamie Etheridge

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This week we saw the launch of a beautiful public service campaign aimed at combatting what has become rampant racism and discrimination. Across Kuwait, on the front pages of newspapers, on billboards and all over social media, were advertisements highlighting one of the most important articles of the Kuwaiti Constitution. I repeat it here for those who missed it:

Kuwait, Article 29: Religion, Equality and Freedom

1. All people are equal in human dignity and in public rights and duties before the law, without distinction to race, origin, language or religion.
2. Personal liberty is guaranteed.

In several versions of the ad, photos of locals standing with expats highlighted our interdependence, a clear message that we need to co-exist peacefully and respectfully. The message is much needed in a time when even lawmakers, political leaders who should be serving as role models for their communities, feel free to denigrate and humiliate expats.

It's easy to understand why people are frustrated. Kuwait does have a lot of challenges and truthfully there are thousands of expats here who do not contribute anything to the society and who take advantage of Kuwait's social services.

But as we've learned with Trumpism, painting an entire group of people by the actions of a few does nothing to better a society and can only harm it. There are 10 times more expats here who love Kuwait, who grew up here or who work here and believe in contributing to the country's long term development.

This piece, though, isn't about defending expats.

It is instead a request for those who believe in Article 29 to do more. We can all do something - however small and personal. We can refuse to think along racist lines, refuse to judge people based on their nationality and instead consider the quality of their character. We can invite our domestic helpers to eat dinner with the family, ask her how her day went. We can teach our children to speak a different language and make friends with kids of different backgrounds.

We can build bridges between different communities. It's easy to claim that locals are the only ones who are racist but I can attest from personal experience that almost every community in Kuwait is silo'd at least partially due to their own choice. There are plenty of expats here who prefer to live in a bubble of people of their own origin rather than take the time and effort to make friends with people from other places.

In short, we can all be role models for compassion, cooperation and positive interaction.

Public service announcements only make a difference when they change people's behavior. Remember the Tarsheed campaign from several years back? I wonder how many people have reduced their personal energy consumption as a consequence.

The government can buy public relations inserts in global newspapers but the truth will out, as they say. If a society is unjust, no one is fooled.

As the Article 29 ads make clear, the spirit of Kuwait - how its perceived by the people who live here and by the rest of the world - is up to each and every one of us.

Photo of the day



KUWAIT: Two youth enjoy the slides at a local water park in this file photo. Higher temperatures mean weekend at the beach, pools and water parks in Kuwait. Dust storms, however, have limited outdoor activities in recent days. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Local Spotlight

THE SPREAD OF DRUGS



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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An alarming statement was published recently by Kuwait's Ministry of Interior (MoI) about the General Directorate for Drug Control regarding the arrests of many suspects for being involved in drugs crimes last month. A total of 52 drugs cases were registered in only the first half of April and 66 accused people were involved.

Think about that for just a minute. In 15 days, 52 drug-related cases. That's nearly 3.5 cases every day. Now think about the amount and types of drugs involved. How widespread the use of drugs - especially deadly ones like heroin, shabu (methamphetamine), pills and cocaine.

The crackdown has come as the General Administration for Drug Control also adopted a new approach in cooperation with the Anti-Narcotics Office and the Center for the Treatment of Addiction in dealing with users who may be victims by receiving complaints of addiction from drug users' families or through voluntary action from the user himself, seeking treatment. Thus 59 cases were referred to the addiction treatment center.

This is a great step by the Interior Ministry since arrests of narcotics smugglers and dealers alone is not enough to stop the flood of drug use among our children. Users

should be considered victims and offered treatment, not imprisonment. The General Directorate for Combating Narcotics has called on the public to report suspected drug pushers as a way to protect children.

I know some parents may think that these issues do not concern them. They may believe their children would never use drugs or that they are immune from bad influences.

But trust me, kids are exposed to drugs in a variety of settings including at school and in their social life with family and friends. Some children may try it as a way to escape family control, others due to peer pressure. I believe parents must warn their kids about the dangers of drugs and explain the consequences and the harm that can arise from drug use and abuse.

Addiction to narcotics is a catastrophe that can damage an entire family and harm the larger society. Drugs are a form of corruption and we need to tackle drug abuse, collectively as a society. We are a small and open country and we can work together to overcome this evil.

The media has a great role in educating and warning people by informing them of the danger of drugs. I also believe that strict control of the airport, land and sea ports are essential to combat this scourge.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

A LIFEGUARD IN KUWAIT: SUPERMAN IN THE WATER

By Ben Garcia

Summer is just around the corner, as always on the top of our bucket list of our summer plans is to spend a day with our family at the beach or in a swimming pool. But how sure are we about our safety at the sea? Sharks, stingrays and even jellyfish lurk just beneath the waves. Even more unpredictable are rip currents, body cramps and the possibility of drowning. Even in a swimming pool, the danger of drowning remains. A lifeguard is the person who helps us get through such situations making his job equally important as any other.

Manjula Wickramasingha, 39, a Sri Lankan national, has worked as a lifeguard at the Crowne Plaza Hotel for the past 12 years. He started working as an assistant lifeguard back home, on getting hired from Colombo, he was in the forefront of the job. He never changed his profession.

"Being a lifeguard is such a huge responsibility. I take this job very seriously because the life of every client using our swimming pool is very precious," he said.

Swimming from childhood

Manjula started training when he was eight years old. "When I was a small boy, I accompanied my father everywhere. In



Manjula

school, I enrolled myself for swimming class. In few weeks I had become great at swimming. I found my love for water and almost every day went to the river to swim," he said.

As child he also used to compete among his peers in terms of swimming. "I competed in a swimming competition, but I never won any prize. So instead of pursuing a career in

swimming, I enrolled in the life saving techniques course which I took for more than a year. This program prepared me to be a life saver which I thought was a good job after school. Indeed I got a good job in a big hotel in Colombo, I become an assistant lifeguard and a fulltime lifeguard later," he said.

After completing three years in Colombo, Manjula tried his luck abroad. "I have a family friend here in Kuwait who helped me with this job. It was fast, after three months of informing him, he sent me the visa from Crowne Plaza, Kuwait. Since 2005 I have been a lifeguard here," he said. Before assuming a job as senior life guard and a coach, Manjula also underwent several training courses sponsored by Crowne Plaza.

"They sent me to a training course with the American Lifeguard Association, at an office in Salmiya. Certification is very important before allowing someone for this job. I also took another short course in 'First Aid.' I also have the license to apply/secure first aid when things happen," he said.

Manjula who is married, with two kids, starts his duty at 6am till 2pm. Since he is on morning duty, he is in-charge of checking the water clarity, temperature and its mineral contents. "In the morning I check everything in the water; I make sure that the temperature is okay, the chlorine content must be perfect and even the cleanliness of the surroundings. I need to make sure that every client we have is in a comfortable area, everything is neat and clean and all the necessary accessories in the swimming pool are present. I sit on one side, alert and ready for any crisis," he said.

The life he saved

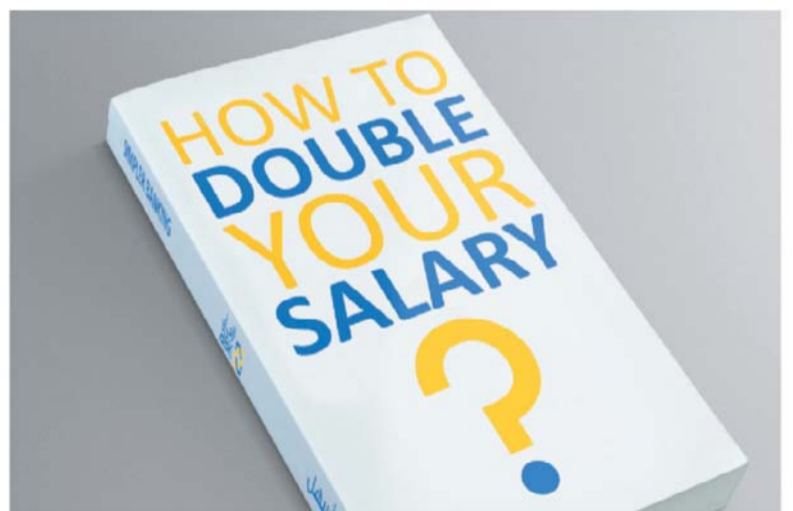
"Some people, although they know how to swim, come across health conditions while in the water. And because of me such accidents can be avoided," said Manjula adding, "I am trained to save people, so I do my job whole heartedly, I am like superman."

Thank God, for the past 12 years of his work being a life-guard to his knowledge he only used his skills and lots of trainings once. "A teenager who do not know how to swim accidentally went into the deep end of the pool and panicked. Thank God at that time, he was with his friend. When his saw the young man struggling, he immediately call for help. Within seconds I was able to rescue him, though swallowed so much water. If I hadn't been there, he would be dead," he recalled.

Besides being a lifeguard, Manjula gives a regular training course for kids. He handles classes for kids aged 6 to 17 years old and onwards. "It is always good to train children because they easily learn; but I also feel gratified when an old person learns to swim because of me. My heart is totally dedicated to this, and that is what makes this job feel like play to me," he said.



ABK Announces Winners of 'Double Your Salary' Weekly Draws



Get KD 300 upon transfer of salary to ABK and be one of the lucky winners to double up!

Kuwait- 5th May, 2017: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its 'Double Your Salary' weekly draw on 18th April, 2017 and 25th April 2017 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, announcing the names of the winners. The promotion includes weekly draws, with two winners per draw. The campaign will run until 27th June, 2017.

The winners were:

• Devi Lal Naryan Ji Banchal, Andalus

Branch

- Nagendra Sreenivasa Murthy, Andalus Branch
- Tareq Anwar Taha Owaidhah, Jabriya Branch
- Batel Abdullah Mohammad AlHarbi, Salwa Branch

New customers who transfer their salary to ABK receive KD 300 and will automatically be entered into the weekly draws to double their salaries. Existing customers who are already transferring their salary to ABK are entered into a separate draw.

Even in a swimming pool, the danger of drowning remains.

PHOTO FEATURE



Suhaila Al-Najdi - The Chair

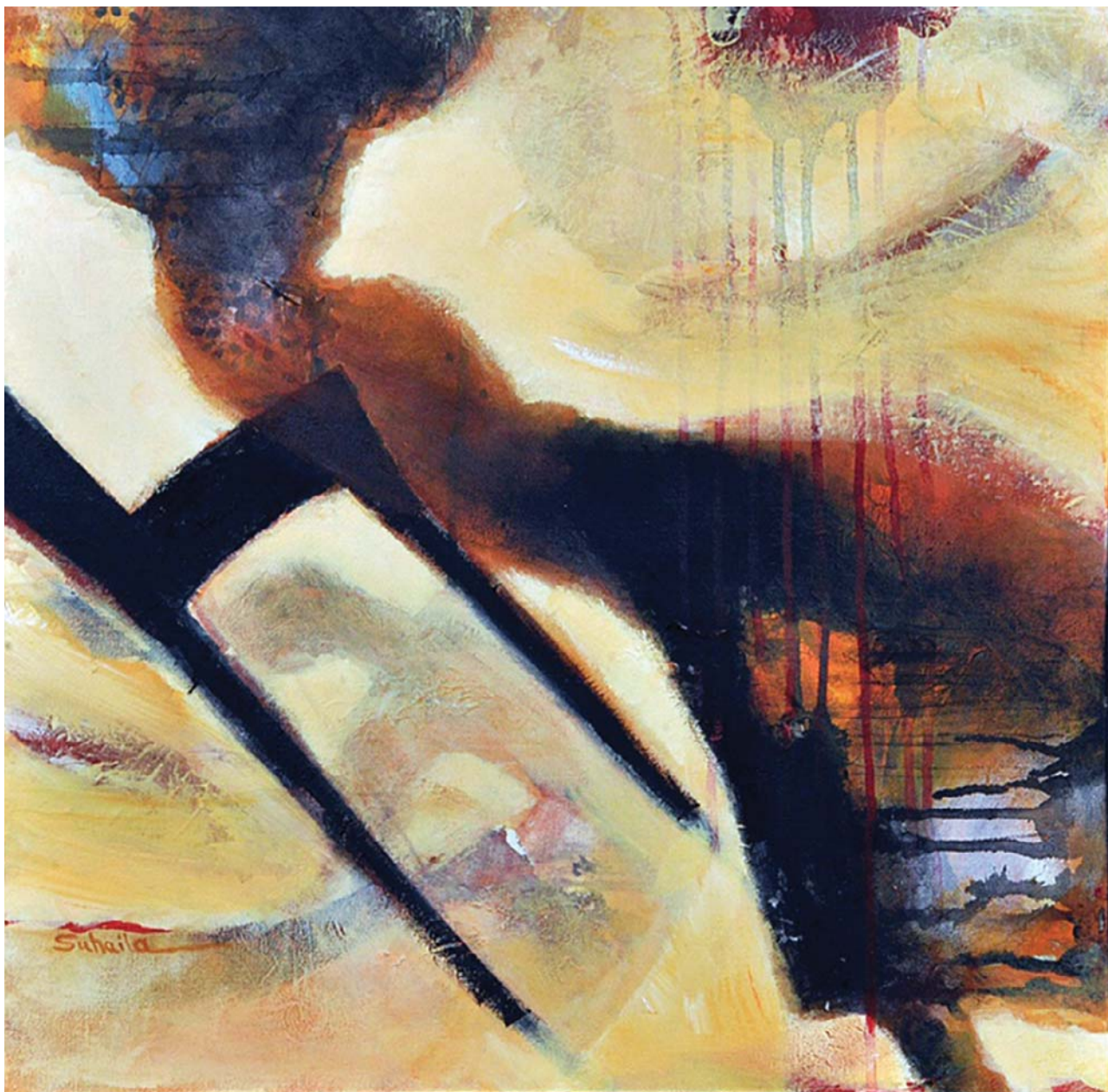
By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

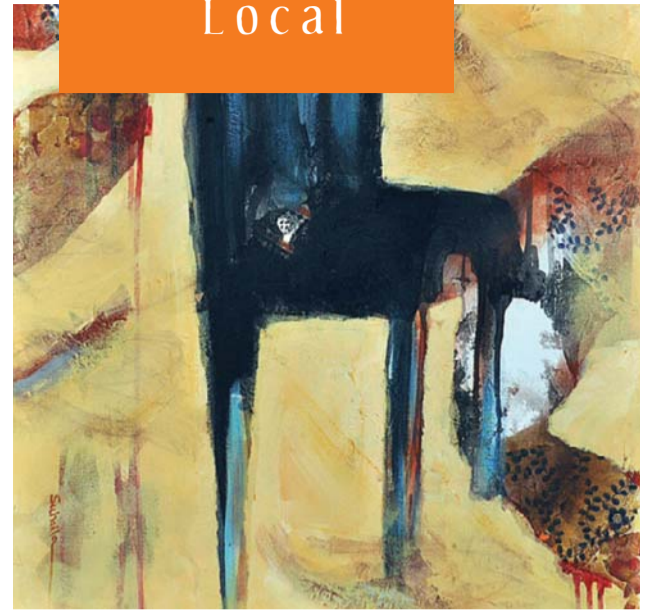
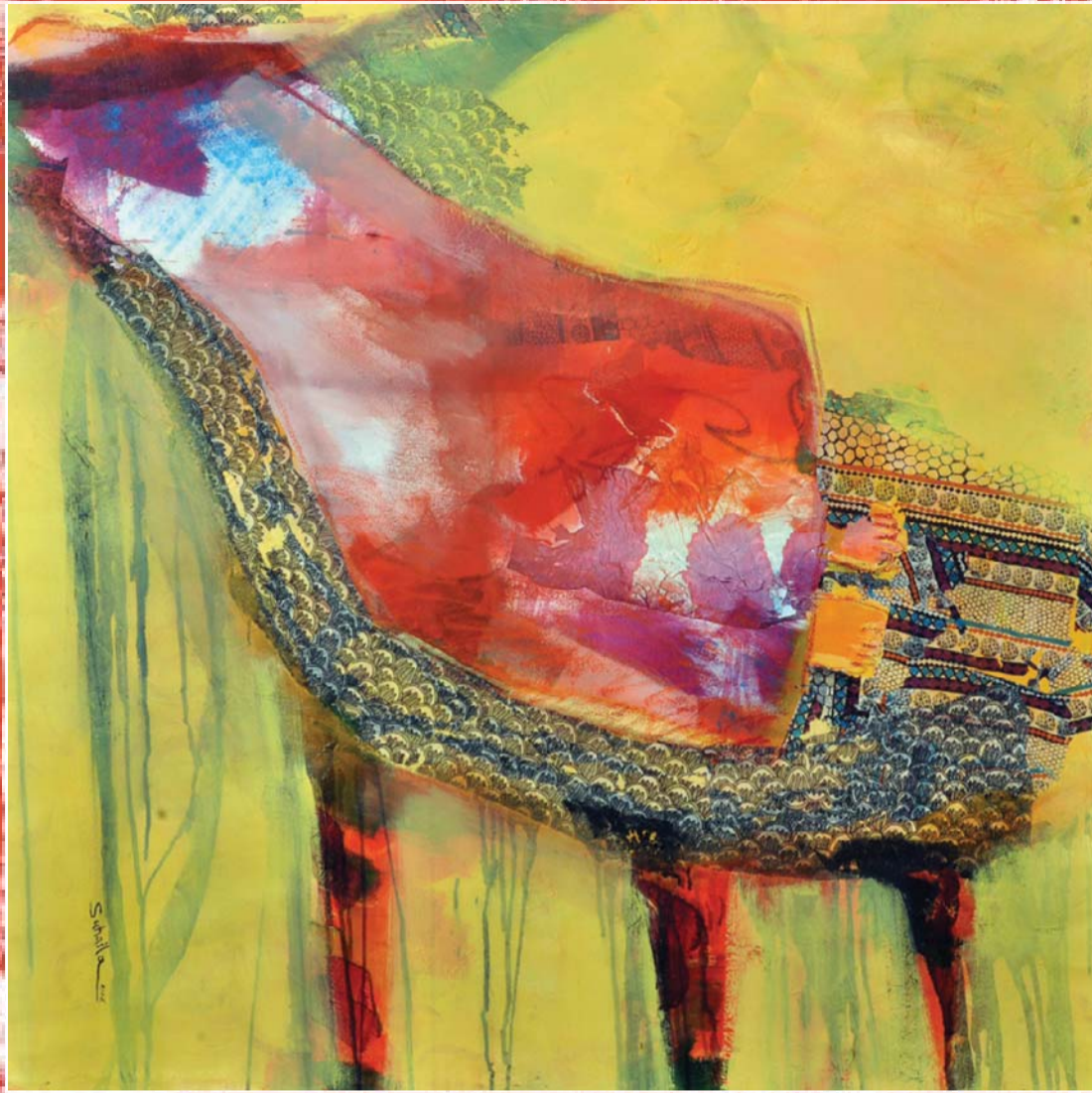
At birthday and school parties, children play a lot of games that have been inherited down through generations. One of the most popular games is musical chairs, where children compete to grab the last chair, whatever it takes. The end justifies the means! As a consequence, losers get upset, especially if the chairs are forcibly taken.

Kuwaiti artist Suhaila Al-Najdi saw in musical chairs the seed of the obsession of power and clinging to a position. She expressed her thoughts at her recent exhibition "Kursi" (Chair) at Boushahri Gallery.

"The game of musical chairs instills a love of ownership and power - and with time, these people who are glued to their positions will be exhausted. However, they will continue to destroy everyone in their path to remain where they are," said Najdi.

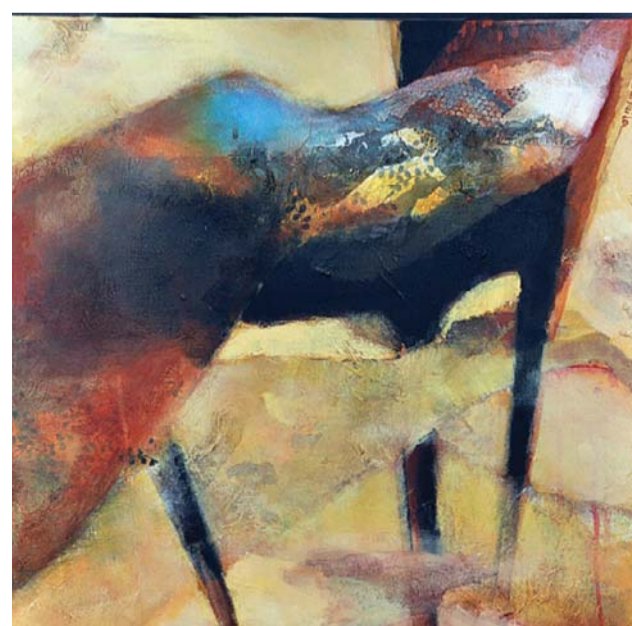
Commonly, artists attempt to creatively present a social or political scene as it is, which is different from Najdi's approach, who allowed herself to dive with her work into an existing and peaceful idea, but imposed a different analysis of its significance, giving it a new meaning. She turned a children's game into a cause for concern in terms of human behavior. "The vivid and bright colors reflect the innocence of the idea at the start. Then the paintings have bleaker colors to reflect the state of those in power and those who are oppressed by them," she explained.





The artist mentioned that when she began to draw the chair, she was thinking about the situation of the Middle Eastern woman, who is bound to sit or stand in a certain position, and if she doesn't comply, she has committed a serious mistake. "After deep thought about the concept of the chair, I found that as the chair has many functions other than sitting, it can have more than a symbolic significance. After a lot of thinking, the idea developed to become even more sophisticated," Najdi said.

At the end of the journey through Najdi's paintings, she told Kuwait Times it is more beneficial to teach our children how to play Japanese musical chairs. In contrast to our popular game that's based on an individual winning it, in Japan, every group has to sit on a chair. The more children sit on a single chair, the better chance they have to win. "Japanese musical chairs promotes teamwork and cooperation for a purpose, and not the chair," she reasoned.





بدون ألوان اصطناعية

بدون إضافة غلوتومات
أصادي الصوديوم

بدون مواد
حافضة اصطناعية

IT'S HERE

The SOUP you've always wanted



Find some great valuable recipes on our social media accounts at [QUAKER.KW](https://www.instagram.com/QUAKER.KW)



Sabah Al-Ahmad housing project



'NEWKUWAIT' SEEKS BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS

KUWAIT: Kuwait has embarked on a huge and ambitious multi-billion Kuwaiti Dinars development plan that would ensure Kuwait enjoys, in amongst other key fields, a living accommodation through environmentally sound resources and practices. That will be achieved through building housing projects in different locations of the country as part of the government's housing care, in addition to maintaining air quality and environment safety coupled with improving waste efficiency and management, the latter's aim is generating electricity out of garbage.

The plan, dubbed "NewKuwait" and launched by the government in January 2017 and would transform Kuwait into a financial, cultural and institutional leader in the region by 2035, honors a vision uttered by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who wanted to attract investors, create a competitive economy led by private sector and promoting production efficiency. Safeguarding social identity, achieving human resources development, providing adequate infrastructure, advanced legislation and inspiring business environment will also help achieve the vision.

Massive housing projects

The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), the government's housing arm, has been undergoing three massive housing projects, the last of which expected to be completed by late 2019. The housing projects aim at reducing wait time for applicants thus accelerate delivery of housing units, which would help rationalize state expenditure on rental allowances paid for citizens. The West Abdullah Al-Mubarak Suburb project, costing around KD 46 million (\$151 million), is due for delivery at end of 2017.

The project, encompassing 5,201 housing units, will include schools, clinics, mosques and central markets, and would help create job opportunities. Around 41 percent of the project is completed. Another housing project is Jaber Al-Ahmad City. It has a different approach by offering apartments instead of full houses. The project, with a cost of some KD 59 million (\$193 million) and is due for delivery in 2018, targets youth, craftsmen, citizens of

different ages, labor force, small Kuwaiti families as well as applicants wishing to stay in apartments rather than full houses.

The PAHW will be building five-story buildings in Jaber Al-Ahmad City, each floor features a full apartment of 385 square meters. PAHW aims to build 710 apartments in a residential district that includes mosques, fire station, government complex, a health center, ambulance center, and police stations. The apartment city will reduce wait time for housing applicants, better use of land allocation via vertical housing thus change the housing welfare philosophy.

Seventy apartments were already handed to applicants in the 2015-16 fiscal year. The third project, the South Al-Mutlaa suburb is the largest of the previous two housing facilities, and will positively reflect urban development planning thus stimulate activities in areas surrounding the project in view of commercial, investment, industrial and craft spaces. South Al-Mutlaa, costing around KD 312 million (\$1.032 billion) and is due for delivery in 2019, includes 28,315 housing units. It will enhance non-oil Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by involving private sector in execution, create healthy residential environment, saving energy and build an advanced city run by modern systems.

New Kuwait vision

Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul, in a statement after signing a contract with a Chinese company for constructing the infrastructure for 18,519 lots of land in South Al-Mutlaa project, said owners of lots would be handed over construction licenses beginning of 2019. Abul, during the launch of the New Kuwait vision in January, said the government would be delivering 12,000 housing units every year. He added that the private sector would be involved in the implementation of housing projects to ease burden on government. With the government in full gear towards providing housing welfare for citizens, the state is also launching environmental-friendly projects.

Abul said these projects would boost recycling of wastes to generate power, including the improving of air quality and municipal solid waste treatment. The government is joining

hand with the private sector to build Municipal Solid Waste Treatment facility, which is scheduled to be completed by 2018. The Kabd-based KD 230 million (\$753 million) facility, 35 kilometers away from Kuwait City, will treat 50 percent of total solid wastes produced every year in Kuwait and turning them into electric power by using incinerators and dumping residual ash in healthy wastes dumps.

The project aims at protecting environment and land resources. "This is an ambitious project and will cut size of dumps that are harmful to environment as well as providing electricity," Ahmad Al-Manfouhi, Director General of Kuwait Municipality, said at the opening of a workshop over solid waste management, held last February. He said the project, to be built over 500,000 square meters, would be the first and biggest solid waste treatment facility in the Middle East.

Healthy environment

The government of Kuwait, part of its quest to create healthy environment at different levels, would also embark on a project that would improve air quality. The KD 712,000 (\$2.3 million) project includes the increase of stations to monitor air quality and amounts of pollutants to know the most polluted areas. The project, due for delivery in 2020, is expected to improve Kuwait's ranking on air quality index from 96 percent in 2016 to 93 percent by end of development plan. The project will also reduce pro-rata share of HO2 emissions to safe limits and improve general health of society.

The well-being of the society is the main target of the government of Kuwait, and to achieve that the state is determined to improve services and living condition standards. Twenty key global indicators, and additional sub-indicators, will track and measure Kuwait's progress with the plan and its performance compared to other countries. Global indicator rank is out of a percentile of 100, one being at top of the rankings and 100 being at the bottom. Kuwait is aiming, in all indicators, for a position within the top 35 percent of countries by 2035, the target year of its vision. — KUNA



Jaber Al-Ahmad City



Al-Mutlaa housing project



Urology specialist Faisal Al-Hajeri conducting surgeries in Turkey. — KUNA

KUWAITI UROLOGIST PERFORMS SURGERIES ON SYRIAN REFUGEES

ANKARA: A Kuwaiti physician yesterday performed six surgical procedures in a hospital located in the Turkish province of Hatay. Speaking to KUNA, urology specialist Faisal Al-Hajeri said that the surgeries were carried out in "Hospital Emel" to treat an array of urinary tract injuries sustained by Syrian refugees. On the surgeries, he said the intricate and lengthy procedures lasted between three to five hours, all of which were performed under the watchful eye of Syrian doctors. Kuwait has generously provided pecuniary and medical aid to the hospital, which suffers from a dearth of medical supplies and equipment. The Kuwaiti urologist has conducted around 50 similar procedures on Syrian refugees.

Food aid in Mosul

In another development, Kuwait yesterday delivered 75 tons of food aid to the eastern district of the war-battered northern Iraqi city of Mosul. Speaking to KUNA, Ismail Abdulaziz, an official at Iraq's Al-Barazani Charity, said that 75 tons of essential food items provided by Kuwait's Red Crescent Society (KRCS) had arrived in Mosul. On the food aid, he said it comprised 2,500 food baskets containing staple items such as rice, flour and oil, adding that the baskets are two weeks' worth of supply. Moreover, Abdulaziz thanked Kuwait for "lending a helping hand to all Iraqis." According to the Iraqi Observatory for Human Rights, nearly a quarter of a million people face severe malnutrition in the war-torn Iraqi city, as "mass starvation is threatening the lives of around 10,000 people." Since the operation to liberate Mosul began last October, an incessant flow of Kuwaiti food aid has poured into the city. — Agencies

EPA EXAMINES KUWAIT BAY

KUWAIT: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) is examining Kuwait's waters in a follow-up of the fish mortality in Kuwait Bay, an EPA official said yesterday. A survey mission conducted from the Sabah Al-Ahmad Base, All-Fintas, to the bay found little amounts of dead fish near the Shuwaikh Port, EPA's Deputy Director General for Technical Monitoring Affairs Eng Mohammed Al-Enezi said. The mission also collected some samples of seawater and plankton and sent them to labs. Al-Enezi, who is also deputy head and spokesman of the national committee for fish mortality, added that they held a meeting - chaired by the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAFR). Two teams were formed, one for monitoring and control, and the other for collecting and analyzing data, he said.

In addition, the meeting approved the activation of the national plan on fish mortality, as well as defining role of each of the member authorities in the team. The EPA is strictly enforcing the environment law and is dealing with the issue with full transparency, Al-Enezi stressed. He said that there are some 50 sewers still pouring their waste water in the Bay. According to Al-Enezi, some official and private bodies have been referred to the Prosecution pertaining to the issue. More will follow over the coming few days. Unluckily, this contamination problem dates back to about 30 years, he said, adding that up to 100,000 square meters of untreated water is poured into the Bay. The EPA has lifted up to 60 tons of catfish dead over that period. — KUNA

KUWAIT RENEWS CALL TO CLEAR MIDEAST OF WMDs

VIENNA: Kuwait yesterday renewed its call to clear weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East "as soon as possible." The official Kuwaiti stance was expressed by Ambassador Sadeq Mohammad Maarefi, Kuwait Permanent Delegate at the United Nations in Vienna, during a preparatory meeting for the conference on reviewing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), due in New York in 2020. Ambassador Maarefi lamented "failure" of the latest NPT review convention, held in 2015, due to lack of seriousness on part of nations armed with nuclear weapons toward honoring their NPT commitments.

Noting Israel's failure to ink the NPT, Ambassador Maarefi said the treaty should include more members so it could be rendered a global accord. The first conference for WMDs proliferation in the Middle East was held in 2010. An executive plan was adopted. The UN chief and three states, Britain, the US and Russia, had vowed to hold a conference for clearing the region of such arms. However, lack of political will from the relevant parties and Israel obstructed efforts to hold a follow-up conference and the one held in 2015 could not work out a final and conclusive document as a result of Israel's intransigence, he said. Ambassador Maarefi said clear-



Ambassador Sadeq Mohammad Maarefi is seen during the meeting. — KUNA

ing the Middle East of nuclear arms and other WMDs and subjecting nuclear installations and programs to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) "is an uncompromising target for realizing security and stability in the region." He warned that possession and development of nuclear arms foil efforts for realizing regional and international

peace and security. Ambassador Maarefi called for subjecting all nuclear installations in the Middle East, namely those built by Israel, to the CTBT of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Failure to place the Israeli nuclear facilities to the CTBT system constitutes a security danger to all humanity, he stressed. — KUNA



GCC Committee for Financial and Economic Cooperation members pose for a group photo. — KUNA

GCC MINISTERS DISCUSS ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND UNITY IN BAHRAIN

MANAMA: The GCC Committee for Financial and Economic Cooperation yesterday discussed a host of issues for enhancing economic integration and unity among the member states. At the meeting which in Bahrain, the ministers approved several topics on the agenda, including the recommendations submitted by the Committee of the GCC Governors of Central Banks on monitoring and supervising the banking sector and payment systems, and combating money laundering and financing terror, Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh said. Participants have okayed reports offered by the GCC Customs Union on stream-

lining movement of trucks among the member states, besides settling the issue of customs fees, Al-Saleh added.

In addition, the ministers discussed a file on converging the incentives and advantages offered to the private sector in the GCC countries. Al-Saleh noted that they called for continuing the exemption on industrial input in a bid to boost national industry and enhancing competitiveness. In the meantime, the meeting discussed the issues on which the GCC wants the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to prepare worksheets. The items chosen were; economic prospects and political challenges; liquidity at the banking sector amid the

decline in oil prices, and financial reforms in the GCC countries.

The worksheets are to be discussed during a meeting for the bloc's ministers of finance with the IUMF director in October. The meeting addressed completion the GCC Common Market and the Customs Union, as tasked by the GCC Supreme Council, GCC Common Market, GCC Secretary General Abdullatif Al Zayani. He added that the meeting had also followed up the resolutions made by the GCC leaders and the Economic and Development Affairs Authority. The outcome of today's meeting will be referred to the bloc's leaders. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A man jogs along the Arabian sea. Jogging is one of the easiest and most enjoyable ways to keep fit and maintain a healthy lifestyle. It burns calories and fat as well as boosting circulation, aiding the excretion of toxins and other waste substances from the body through perspiration, and it increases oxygen intake.— KUNA

KUWAIT RECORDS ACCOUNT DEFICIT OF KD 1510 MILLION

KUWAIT: Kuwait recorded a current account deficit of KD 1510 million during 2016 (4.5% of total estimated 2016 GDP at current prices) against a surplus of KD 1208 million during 2015 (3.5% of 2015 GDP at current prices). The current account sums up transactions between the domestic economy and other economies encompassing good, services and income. Statistical figures were included in a report released by the Central Bank of Kuwait yesterday. It encompassed preliminary data of the balance of payments (BOP) of Kuwait for 2016 and the revised data of 2015.

The mentioned deficit in the current account reflects mainly the decrease in the value of oil exports on the one hand, and relative stability in the value of merchandise imports on the other causing a drop in the surplus of the Balance on Goods (merchandise exports minus merchandise imports on

FOB basis) to reach KD 6075 million during 2016 compared to KD 8396 million during the previous year.

Furthermore, deficit in the Services Account ((Net) reflects the value of services transactions between residents and non-residents, the most important of which are transportation, travel, communications, construction, other services and government goods and services) increased to reach KD 6353 million during 2016 compared to a deficit of KD 6011 million during the previous year.

In respect of the developments in the Financial Account (the Financial Account records transactions involving financial assets and liabilities between residents and non-residents. It includes job categories, sectors, instruments, and maturities used in net international finance transactions) of the State of Kuwait's BOP during 2016, growth in

the net value of residents' external assets included in the Financial Account recorded a decrease to reach KD 1068 million during 2016 against an increase of KD 2360 million during the previous year.

As a result of the developments in the main BOP items, the overall position of Kuwait's BOP realized a surplus of KD 960 million during 2016 against a deficit of KD 886 million during the previous year. When the overall position of the BOP of the State of Kuwait is considered from a broader perspective to encompass the change in the net value of external assets of some institutions listed under the "General Government" item, the overall position of the Balance of Payments in a broad definition shows an estimated deficit of KD 2531 million during 2016 against a surplus of KD 1619 million during the previous year.— KUNA

NEW TRAFFIC CAMERAS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun, agencies

KUWAIT: The Traffic Department is installing additional 60 cameras (Traffic Tower 2) to monitor over-speeding and to raise the level of safety. A statement by Relations and Security Information Department said the cameras can take pictures on both directions at the same time.

Jordan security delegation

Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Hashim Al-Rifai met yesterday with visiting Jordanian Director General of the Gendarmeries Department, Major General Hussein Mohammad

Hawatmeh, and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, they discussed ways to enhance the ongoing military cooperation after a cooperation protocol agreement was signed in April between the KNG and the Jordanian Military to conduct combined training and to exchange expertise, a press statement by the KNG said. The statement added, that the Jordanian delegation listened to an explanation about KNG and its duties in keeping the country protected and supporting the state, in addition to the goals of the National Guard's strategic document 2020 to ensure keeping pace with technological advancement. General Al-Rifai conveyed greeting

from KNG Chief, His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and KNG Deputy Chief Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, recognizing the importance of these visits in enhancing the mutual military relation.

Security interception course

Officers who joined the training course for security interception at airports for 2017 graduated during a ceremony attended by Director General of Airport Security Major Gen Waleed Al-Saleh and Director General of Drugs Control General Department Brig Bader Al-Ghadoury and Assistant Liaison Officer of American Drug Fighting Bureau in Dubai Brian Taylor.

Crime

Report

POLICE HUNT CON WOMAN

KUWAIT: Detectives are working towards establishing the identity of a woman who used to con people and steal their properties using improvised methods. The first victim reportedly put his "Casco bird" up for sale on an online application. In response, a woman called him and asked him to place the bird in front of a house in Taima and go to Naeem area to collect the price. The man did as told and went to Naeem to get his money. But no one was there and when he went back to the house, the bird had disappeared. He lodged a complaint with police. Another man told police that a woman agreed to buy his costly watch. She reportedly told him to go to Taima and hand over the watch to her son. Then he must go to a co-op to meet her and collect the money. But on reaching the spot, he could not be found.

False prison alerts

A Central Prison inmate caused prison authorities to go on alert as he told them that two prisoners had escaped only to discover that it was a false alarm. Policemen accounted for all prisoners and no one was missing. Then they searched prison cells and found drugs, banned materials and smartphones there.

Couple questioned

A couple is being interrogated as they brought a dead infant to Jahra Hospital. The baby was reportedly only six-month-old. A security source said that the couple took the baby for a medical check-up but doctors found him dead. The body was sent to the coroner to find out the cause of death.

Maids accused

A Gulf diplomat accused two of her Filipina maids of stealing her clothes and highly expensive purses. She told Zahraa police that the two had disappeared while she was away. Detectives are investigating.

Maid assaulted

Two thieves entered a house in Fahad Al-Ahmad area, beat up the housemaid and escaped with gas cylinders. The crime took place in the absence of the house owner. The citizen upon his return, found his maid in a very bad shape. She told him that two men broke into the house and beat her up. They ransacked the entire house and when they did not find anything valuable, they took the gas cylinders and her phone. The citizen lodged a complaint with Fahad Al-Ahmad police station.

Robbers steal KD5,800

Robbers broke into a citizen's car and stole KD5,800. The car was parked in a hospital parking lot. The lady had kept her money in an envelope under the driver's seat and was about to deposit it in a bank. She lodged a complaint at Fintas police station. —Al-Rai

THE 'EMBASSY OF PALESTINE' WARNS AGAINST FRAUDSTERS

KUWAIT: The Embassy of 'State of Palestine' issued a statement about some people collecting donations in the name of Jerusalem governor. The Embassy said it received many calls from establishments and Kuwaiti dignitaries enquiring about a group claiming to be from Jerusalem governorate. The group is using the name of the governor to ask for financial donations for the injured people in Palestine. The statement added that the Embassy enquired about the callers and their numbers, and confirmed those people are suspicious and have no connection with any official government body in Palestine and their action is fraudulent. The Embassy called upon all establishments and individuals in Kuwait not to respond to any calls - asking for aid until they enquire from the embassy.

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LONDON: In this file photo, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II sits next to Prince Philip in the House of Lords as she waits to read the Queen's Speech to lawmakers in London. — AP

BRITAIN'S PRINCE PHILIP, 95, TO RETIRE FROM PUBLIC DUTIES

LONDON: Britain's Prince Philip, the 95-year-old husband of Queen Elizabeth II, will retire from public engagements later this year, Buckingham Palace said yesterday. The Duke of Edinburgh, who turns 96 on June 10, is the longest-serving consort in British history, and is still in good health. But he has been reducing his workload in recent years, and said in 2011 that "I reckon I've done my bit, so I want to enjoy myself a bit now". Philip conducted 219 royal engagements last year, and was in good form when he opened a new stand at Lord's cricket ground in London on Wednesday.

"You're about to see the world's most experienced plaque-unveiler," he quipped just before pulling the cord to part a small curtain. The former naval officer's no-nonsense approach combined with his infamous and often politically incorrect off-the-cuff remarks has not made it easy for people to warm to his style. But his unwavering, forthright style and devotion to duty and the queen has endeared him to the nation. Prime Minister Theresa May offered him the whole country's "deepest gratitude and good wishes".

"His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh has decided that he will no longer carry out public engagements from the autumn of this year," the palace said in a statement. "In taking this decision, the duke has the full support of the queen." It

said he would attend previously scheduled engagements until August, and would not accept any new invitations thereafter. However, "he may still choose to attend certain public events from time to time", it said.

No fuss, no nonsense

Philip has been ever-present at his wife's side since she took the throne in 1952. They married in 1947 and will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on November 20. It is likely that the monarch will be accompanied by younger members of the royal family on future engagements. Prince William, second in line to the throne, has already announced that he is leaving his job as an air ambulance pilot this year in order to undertake more royal duties.

The announcement followed a meeting of royal staff from around Britain—a rare gathering which prompted global speculation about the health of the monarch and her husband. "Her Majesty will continue to carry out a full program of official engagements with the support of members of the royal family," the palace stressed. Like her husband, Queen Elizabeth has gradually cut back her workload in recent years as they go into their nineties.

But she made a sacred vow before God and her people at

her 1953 coronation to serve for life, which experts say she considers unbreakable. She also witnessed how the monarchy was placed in peril by her uncle King Edward VIII's abdication in 1936.

Inspirational

Philip is patron, president or a member of more than 780 organizations, and while he will maintain his association with them, he will "no longer play an active role by attending engagements", it said. The duke carried out royal duties on 110 days last year—more than his grandchildren Princes William and Harry. His 219 engagements last year were made up of 101 official visits, 91 receptions and 21 other engagements. They were all carried out in Britain as Queen Elizabeth and the duke have cut down their overseas travel.

They made state visits to Germany and Malta in 2015 but have not left Europe since their visit to Australia in 2011. In her statement, May paid tribute to Philip's contribution to public life. "From his steadfast support for Her Majesty the Queen to his inspirational Duke of Edinburgh Awards and his patronage of hundreds of charities and good causes, his contribution to our United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and the wider world will be of huge benefit to us all for years to come," she said. —AFP

UKRAINE LETS DEPOSED PRESIDENT TESTIFY BY VIDEO IN TREASON TRIAL

KIEV: A Kiev court yesterday adjourned the treason trial of deposed president Viktor Yanukovich in order to let him testify by video link from his hideout in Russia. The court said the next hearing will be held on May 18 after an appeal from the defense for the Kremlin-backed former leader, who is being tried in absentia. Yanukovich fled Ukraine in February 2014 after three months of pro-EU street protests in Kiev culminated in a bloody standoff with anti-riot police in which nearly 100 mostly-armed people were shot dead.

Defense attorney Vitaly Serdabs requested Wednesday that Yanukovich be given a chance to testify from Russia so that "objective conclusions" could be drawn. Prosecutors have charged him with treason,

"violating the territorial integrity" of Ukraine and "waging war and aggressive military activities". The charges refer to Russia's March 2014 annexation of Crimea in the wake of Yanukovich's ouster and his alleged support for the separatist insurgency in the industrial east that has led to more than 10,000 deaths.

Russia is highly unlikely to ever return Yanukovich to its ex-Soviet neighbor. President Vladimir Putin revealed in October 2014 that he had ordered a special operation to smuggle Yanukovich out of Ukraine via Crimea. But Kiev hopes a guilty verdict will pile more diplomatic pressure on Moscow as it continues backing the three-year insurgency in eastern Ukraine.

The street revolt began when Yanukovich in

November 2013 pulled out of a trade and political association agreement with the European Union and instead accepted a \$3-billion (2.7 billion euro) loan from Russia to help Ukraine's sluggish economy. His pro-Western critics called the payment a bribe provided by Putin to persuade Yanukovich not to build stronger ties with the EU and remain in Russia's geopolitical orbit. Russia's late UN ambassador Vitaly Churkin held up a letter during a March 2014 Security Council meeting that he said Moscow had received from Yanukovich in which the Ukrainian leader asked for the Kremlin's military help. But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in March that neither Putin nor his presidential administration had ever seen such an appeal. —AFP

SAUDI PRINCE WHO HEADED RULING FAMILY SUCCESSION BODY DIES

DUBAI: Saudi King Salman's older brother, who headed a body that helps determine the royal succession, has died and will be buried yesterday, the royal court has said. Prince Mishal bin Abdulaziz al-Saud was 90 years old. He headed the Allegiance Council, a 28-member body comprising senior members of the ruling al-Saud family set up by the then King Abdullah in 2006 to supervise succession decisions after his death.

Critics say the body was sidelined when Salman removed his younger brother Prince Muqrin from the line of succession after he ascended to the throne of the world's top oil exporting country in 2015. Instead, Salman appointed his nephew, Mohammed bin Nayef, as crown prince and his son Mohammed bin Salman, as deputy crown prince. The king said at the time that the decisions were approved by a majority of the Allegiance Council. The royal court said Mishal, who had briefly held the post of defence minister in the past, will be buried later on Thursday after prayers at the Grand Mosque in the Muslim holy city of Mecca. —Reuters

PALESTINIAN ATTEMPTS STABBING POLICE, SHOT BY ISRAELI FORCES

JERUSALEM: A Palestinian attempted to stab Israeli police near a flashpoint holy site in Hebron in the occupied West Bank yesterday and was shot and wounded, Israeli authorities said. The incident occurred near the site known to Muslims as the Ibrahimi Mosque and to Jews as the Cave of the Patriarchs in the tense city, where several hundred Israeli settlers live under heavy guard among some 200,000 Palestinians.

"Officers responded when the suspect approached them armed with a knife," Israeli police said in a statement. "The terrorist was shot and the area closed off." The Palestinian is from the Hebron area, police said. An Israeli hospital treating him described the Palestinian as a 25-year-old man in light to moderate condition. A wave of unrest which erupted in October 2015 has claimed the lives of 261 Palestinians, 41 Israelis, two Americans, one Jordanian, an Eritrean, a Sudanese and a Briton, according to an AFP count. —AFP



HEBRON: Israeli security forces gather at the site where a Palestinian attempted to stab Israeli police near the site known to Muslims as the Ibrahimi Mosque and to Jews as the Tomb of the Patriarchs in the West Bank town of Hebron yesterday. — AFP



ASTANA: Participants attend the fourth round of Syria peace talks in Astana yesterday. —AFP

RUSSIA, TURKEY, IRAN INK DEAL ON SAFE ZONES IN SYRIA

SAFE ZONES AIM TO PUT IMMEDIATE END TO VIOLENCE

ASTANA: Syrian regime allies Russia and Iran and rebel supporter Turkey yesterday signed a memorandum on a Moscow-backed plan to create safe zones in Syria to bolster a fragile truce. An AFP reporter at peace talks in the Kazakh capital Astana saw the heads of the delegations, representing the three countries sponsoring the negotiations, sign the document. However a member of the rebel delegation left the room, shouting against regime ally Iran, the AFP reporter saw.

The Syrian government and rebel delegations are not signatories. The Kremlin has been touting a plan to create safe zones in Syria that is aimed to "further pacification and cessation of hostilities." "Over the past two days, the participants in the Astana talks reviewed the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the cessation of hostilities," Kazakhstan's foreign minister Kairat Abdrakhmanov said of a frail truce brokered by Moscow and Ankara in December.

"As a result the guarantor countries agreed to sign a memorandum on the creation of de-escalation zones in Syria." An Arabic-language version of the Russian draft proposal seen by AFP calls for the creation of "de-escalation zones" in rebel-held territory in the northwestern province of Idlib, in parts of Homs province in the centre, in the south, and in the opposition enclave of Eastern Ghouta near Damascus.

The aim is to "put an immediate end to the violence" and "provide the conditions for the safe, voluntary return of

refugees" as well as the immediate delivery of relief supplies and medical aid, the document said. But issues including which countries could police any safe zones remain unclear. Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that ways to monitor the zones would be an issue for separate talks.

Boosting ceasefire

Syrian rebels said earlier yesterday that they had resumed participation in the talks after having suspended their involvement a day earlier over air strikes against civilians. After talks with Turkey counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said the safe zones were meant to lead to "further pacification and cessation of hostilities." He also said the proposed zones would also be no-fly areas if fighting on the ground there stopped entirely.

The Kremlin's plan echoes calls by US leader Donald Trump to establish safe zones in Syria. Putin said Wednesday that "as far I could tell" the US leader broadly supported the idea in a phone call they held on Tuesday. Erdogan said in comments published yesterday that Moscow's plan to set up these zones in Syria would "50 percent" solve the six-year conflict. Damascus supports the Russian plan, Syrian state news agency SANA reported. More than 320,000 people have been killed in Syria since the country's war began with anti-government protests in March 2011. —AFP

BANKI: A NIGERIAN BORDER TOWN CHOKED BY BOKO HARAM HOMELESS

BANKI, Nigeria: The Nigerian army calls it “New Banki City”, an optimistic name conjuring up visions of modern housing. The reality is an overcrowded camp for 32,000 desperate people made homeless by Boko Haram. In this ravaged corner of northeast Nigeria, the Islamists frequently launch attacks on military convoys, unleash suicide bombers and litter the surrounding roads and arid bush with mines. Even the most mundane tasks are treacherous. Desperate for firewood to cook food, 25-year-old Bulama Zarami didn’t make it far out of the camp before he triggered a mine.

Shifting from side to side in pain, Zarami says he still feels shrapnel from the explosive in his wounded left leg, which is swollen at the knee and wrapped with blood-stained gauze. “With Boko Haram we face danger,” Zarami said. The Nigerian military recaptured Banki in September 2015 after fierce battles with the Islamist militants, whose insurgency has killed at least 20,000 in Nigeria alone since 2009. Along with other towns in Borno state including Monguno, Dikwa and Rann, Banki is an example of the enormous challenge facing Nigeria as it tries to resuscitate civilian life.

“We can’t say peace has returned,” warned Commander Kenechukwu Otubo, from the 152 battalion stationed in Banki. “They (Boko Haram) have a lot of hideouts we can’t get to.” In Banki, the army’s urgent priority isn’t to build schools or construct homes, it’s digging a trench around the ever-expanding perimeter swollen by internally displaced people (IDPs). “The unit (battalion) is still faced with the challenge of protecting IDPs, it becomes inevitable to keep expanding and barricading all entry and exit points,” said Captain Aminu Abdulmalik. “If the town is not excavated in the nearest future, we will be exposed to suicide bomb attacks and supporters of Boko Haram terrorists.”

Presumed guilty

Banki, located on the southeastern rim of Borno state, used to be a bustling trading town but today is one of the last vestiges of Boko Haram’s dominance in the region. It’s part of a crescent of off-limits territory that arches past Lake Chad where the battle against Boko Haram is still raging, despite contrary claims from the military and government. With the enemy so close, everyone is presumed guilty in Banki camp, a mix of bombed-out concrete buildings and white tents protected by a four-meter-high barricade of corrugated metal sheets. No-one is allowed to leave the patrolled perimeter without permission or keep cell phones out of fear of contacting Boko Haram. There are few men of fighting age because most have been taken to army-run detention centers. What remains are the elderly, women and children, who draw eerie pictures of war on the walls with charcoal, depicting swarms of helicopters and men

firing lines of bullets into the sky. Children are estimated to represent a third of the population in Banki. They wear tattered clothes and roam the sandy streets of the camp in packs. Without school, they have nothing else to do. The older generation worries that the inertia of camp life will provide more recruits for the jihadists, who want to create a hardline Islamic state in northeast Nigeria. “The issue of Boko Haram happened as a result of staying idle without any education,” said 56-year-old teacher Alhaji Bulama. “A lack of orientation will make the children join them.” —AFP



BANKI: A Nigerian army vehicle patrols in the town of Banki in northeastern Nigeria.—AFP



MOSUL: In this photo, a humvee of the Iraqi Federal Police drives through an abandoned street in western Mosul, Iraq.—AP

IRAQ FORCES LAUNCH NEW PUSH ON IS IN WEST MOSUL

MOSUL: Iraqi forces thrust into west Mosul from the north yesterday, opening a new front in the more than six-month-old offensive to dislodge the Islamic State group from the country’s second city. The assault is aimed at sealing the siege of the Old City, where die-hard jihadists holding huge numbers of civilians hostage are preparing for a bloody last stand. Forces from the army, the interior ministry and the police “began breaching the western side from the north,” the Joint Operations Command (JOC) coordinating the war against IS said in a statement.

“Now your sons are fighting and striking the enemy’s defenses... They rejoice in victory or martyrdom for the sake of liberating the rest of the city of Mosul from Daesh (IS) terrorists,” it said. The JOC said the targets of the latest push were northwestern neighborhoods on the edges of Mosul called Musharifah, Kanisah and Al-Haramat. The federal police issued a statement confirming the new operation, which comes after a relative lull in fighting around the Old City where most remaining jihadists are believed to be holed up.

It said Iraqi forces had already captured a small outlying village called Hsunah and a nearby gas factory. Yesterday’s operation opens a new front in the effort to wrest back west Mosul from IS which started in mid-February and saw thousands of Iraqi forces retake most southern and western neighborhoods. An advance from the north will eventually leave the jihadists completely trapped in the narrow streets of the Old City, albeit with a large civilian population they have been using as human shields.

Civilian displacement

The United Nations said up to 400,000 people might be trapped in

the densely populated Old City, which lies just west of the Tigris River that divides Mosul. The Iraqi immigration ministry said this week that the number of people who were displaced since the start of the offensive on Mosul on October 17 had topped 600,000. The vast majority of them fled homes on the west side of the Tigris, where the fighting has been more intense than in east Mosul, which was declared retaken by the government in January.

Of the more than 120,000 people displaced from east Mosul, the ministry said only 42,000 were still in camps. The recapture of Mosul by the Iraqi security forces would deal a death blow to the “caliphate” IS proclaimed over large parts of Syria and Iraq nearly three years ago. It would represent a major symbolic setback for the group whose unprecedented experiment in jihadist statehood was heralded by the conquest of Mosul in

June 2014.

The northern city is where Iraq-born IS supremo Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi—who has urged his men to defend Mosul to the death—made his only public appearance in July that year. According to the authorities, IS now controls less than seven percent of Iraq, down from more than a third of the national territory in 2014. The jihadists have in recent days carried out diversionary attacks against security forces from their desert hideouts in the western province of Anbar.

At least 26 members of the army, police, tribal forces and border guard died in the attacks but the jihadists’ “state” has looked doomed for months. Observers have warned that, with other anti-IS forces also pressing a major offensive on their last major Syrian bastion of Raqa, the jihadists could increasingly revert to guerrilla tactics and bombings of civilian targets.—AFP

30 INJURED AT CHEMICAL RECYCLING PLANT EXPLOSION IN SPAIN

MADRID: At least 30 people were injured yesterday, three of them seriously, in an explosion at recycling site for hazardous chemical waste near Madrid, forcing the evacuation of nearby schools, authorities said. The blast in Arganda del Rey sent up a huge column of black smoke, but emergency services said several air quality measuring stations in the area showed normal readings, easing concerns about toxic pollution.

Madrid’s emergency services centre said on Twitter there had been “several explosions” at the site which seriously injured three people, “two with burns and one with a broken pelvis”. A spokesman for the firefighters told AFP that another 27 were hurt

to a lesser degree. It was unclear whether the injured were all workers at the warehouse. The spokesman said authorities were investigating the cause of the explosion, about 30 kilometers southeast of the Spanish capital. The emergency services centre added that several schools near the blaze—which firefighters were still working to extinguish—had been evacuated. “Neighbors have been asked not to leave their homes and to keep windows closed,” a spokesman for Arganda del Rey’s city hall told AFP, emphasizing however that air quality was “normal”. Requimsa, the company that owns the site, “manages and collects all types of hazardous waste”, according to its website.—AFP

EU PARLIAMENT HEAD REJECTS BRITISH PM'S VOTE-MEDDLING CLAIM

BRUSSELS: European Parliament President Antonio Tajani yesterday dismissed a claim by British Prime Minister Theresa May that the EU was trying to influence the outcome of the June election in Britain. "No one is trying to

influence the outcome of the election campaign in the United Kingdom," Tajani told journalists at the opening of a European history museum in Brussels. "It is neither an attack nor a bad word to say being a member of the

European Union is not the same as being outside the EU," Tajani said. May accused Brussels on Wednesday of trying to influence next month's election with "threats against Britain" over Brexit talks, as the two sides traded blows

over terms of the country's divorce. May fired off her broadside after the bloc's Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier warned that the negotiations on Britain's divorce from the EU would not be quick or painless. —AFP



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BULGARIA NATIONALISTS SOFTEN TONE TO ENTER GOVERNMENT

SOFIA: Bulgaria's nationalist scene has long been a byword for racism, anti-Semitism and homophobia. But now with their entry into government, they appear to have softened their tone and are even pro-EU. In elections in March, the United Patriots (UP) alliance—made up of three parties, the VMRO, NFSB and Ataka—emerged as the third-biggest force with 27 lawmakers in Bulgaria's 240-seat parliament. Now these nationalists have formed a coalition under Boyko Borisov with the centre-right GERB party that was due to take office yesterday. This could ruffle some feathers in Europe, particularly within the European People's Party (EPP), the biggest group in the European Parliament and which counts GERB among its members, said BBSS Gallup analyst Parvan Simeonov. "Most probably this will sound alarm bells ringing," Simeonov told AFP. In the first half of 2018, Bulgaria holds the rotating presidency of the European Union.

Holocaust a 'lie'

The most extreme party within the UP alliance is Ataka ("Attack"), created in 2005 by Volen Siderov, a firebrand who has called the Holocaust a "lie" and has been convicted multiple times of inciting racial hatred and hooliganism. "Homosexuality is a disease... There is a fine line between homosexuality and pedophilia and it is easily crossed," Siderov said in 2006, the same year he made it into the second round of the presidential election.

He has railed against Bulgaria's leaning towards western Europe and away from Russia. In 2014, he burned the EU flag and in 2015 visited Russian-annexed Crimea. The other party within the UP, the National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria (NFSB), has focused its vitriol more on Bulgaria's impoverished and marginalized Roma minority, who number around 700,000.

Party leader Valery Simeonov told parliament last year that the Roma were scrounging "ferocious humanoids" whose children "play with pigs in the street" and whose women "have the instincts of street dogs". The Bulgarian National Movement (VMRO) meanwhile is led by Krasimir Karakachanov. Last year, running for president, he called for migrants to be stopped at the borders with "batons, tear gas and water cannons". The VMRO also sees Macedonians as Bulgarians. All three parties have their own television channels, broadcasting a mix of Kremlin propaganda, reportages about thieving Roma and folk music and traditions. Before the elections, members of the NFSB and the VMRO blockaded Bulgaria's border with Turkey to stop "agents" sent by Ankara coming to vote. More than 200,000 ethnic Turks with Bulgarian passports reside in Turkey.

Compromise is necessary

But now the nationalists have ratcheted down their rhetoric, focusing more instead on issues like poverty and voicing support for staying in NATO and in the EU—in contrast to some nationalists elsewhere in the bloc. "Compromise is necessary if you want to drive the train and not just ride on it," Ataka's Siderov said. Simeonov and Karakachanov are deputy premiers in the new administration. Siderov however is not in the cabinet.—AFP



SOFIA: Bulgaria's new Prime Minister and leader of the centre-right Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria party (GERB) Boiko Borisov (bottom, 6-R) looks on during an official swearing-in ceremony for his cabinet yesterday at the parliament in Sofia.—AFP



PARIS: French presidential election candidate for the far-right Front National (FN) party, Marine Le Pen, left, and French presidential election candidate for the En Marche! movement, Emmanuel Macron pose prior to the start of a live broadcast face-to-face televised debate in television studios of French public national television channel France 2, and French private channel TF1 in La Plaine-Saint-Denis, north of Paris.—AFP

MACRON 'CONVINCES' MAJORITY OF FRENCH VIEWERS IN TV DEBATE

CANDIDATES CLASH OVER TERRORISM, ECONOMY, EUROPE

PARIS: French centrist Emmanuel Macron impressed more viewers than his far-right rival Marine Le Pen in a fiery TV debate, a poll found yesterday, underlining his status as the favorite for this weekend's presidential runoff. The candidates clashed repeatedly over terrorism, the economy and Europe in Wednesday's hot-tempered debate that was watched by 16.5 million people. A poll by French broadcaster BFMTV found that 63 percent of viewers thought Macron was the "most convincing" of the two, broadly mirroring the forecast result for the decisive election on Sunday.

The duel was billed as a confrontation between Macron's call for openness and pro-market reforms and Le Pen's France-first nationalism. Le Pen branded the former economy minister and investment banker "the candidate of the elite" and the "darling of the system". Macron responded by describing the 48-year-old scion of the National Front (FN) as "the heir of a system which has prospered from the fury of the French people for decades". "The high priestess of fear is sitting before me," he said.

The 39-year-old frequently branded Le Pen a liar and even a "parasite of the system", who he said lived off the frustrations of France's stalled political system. On Europe, Le Pen accused Macron of being "submissive" towards German Chancellor Angela Merkel, saying: "France will be led by a woman, either me or Mrs Merkel." She also accused Macron of an "indulgent attitude" towards Islamic fundamentalism and constantly sought to remind viewers of

his role as a minister in unpopular President Francois Hollande's Socialist government.

But Macron was in combative form throughout, repeatedly portraying Le Pen's stance as simplistic, defeatist or dangerous and targeting her proposals to withdraw France from the euro in particular. The euro policy "was the big nonsense of Marine Le Pen's program," he said midway through the 140-minute debate. Le Pen called the euro, shared by 19 countries in the European Union and blamed by some in France for a rise in prices, as "the currency of bankers, it's not the people's currency".

Like much of the French press, Le Monde said the debate had been "brutal" and "violent from start to finish". Former Socialist prime minister Manuel Valls said Le Pen "showed her true face" in the debate and "it's worrying".

No Le Pen progression

Trailing in the polls, the debate was probably Le Pen's last chance to change the dynamics of the race ahead of the final weekend of a long and unpredictable campaign. But the poll by Elabe for BFMTV showing that Macron had convinced 63 percent of viewers compared to 34 percent for Le Pen suggests she did little to win over new support. Macron would win around 60 percent to 40 percent if the vote were held now, surveys suggest. Yesterday, Macron was holding a campaign event in the southwest town of Albi while Le Pen was heading to Ennemain in the north.

The TV duel marked a new step into the mainstream for Le Pen, whose party was once considered by France's politi-

cal establishment to be an extremist fringe that should be boycotted. When her father Jean-Marie Le Pen made it into the final round of the presidential election in 2002, his conservative opponent Jacques Chirac refused to debate with him out of fear of "normalizing hate and intolerance".

In the first round of the election on April 23, Marine Le Pen finished second scoring 21.3 percent after softening the FN's image over the past six years—but without fully removing doubt about the party's core beliefs. She sees her rise as the consequence of growing right-wing nationalism and a backlash against globalization seen in the election of Donald Trump in the United States and Britain's shock vote to leave the European Union. "I am the candidate of the people of France such as we love it, of the nation that protects jobs, security, our borders," she said in her opening comments.

Abstention factor

The debate was unlikely to have swayed any committed supporters of either candidate, but it could influence the roughly 18 percent of undecided voters and others who were planning to abstain. Many supporters of Communist-backed candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon, who came fourth in the first round, have said they will not vote on Sunday, comparing the final round as a choice between "the plague and cholera". Macron quit Hollande's government last August to concentrate on his new centrist political movement En Marche, which has drawn 250,000 members in 12 months.—AFP

CZECH PM DELAYS TENDERING RESIGNATION UNTIL MID-MAY

PRAGUE: Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka will delay handing over his resignation until later this month after President Milos Zeman returns from a visit to China, government officials said yesterday. Sobotka was scheduled to tender his resignation to Zeman yesterday afternoon. The leftist Sobotka said Tuesday he was standing down amid a high stakes row with his billionaire Finance Minister Andrej Babis, a popular centrist rival tipped to win elections later this year.

Government spokesman Martin Ayer said in a statement that Sobotka would meet with Zeman later Thursday to "fix a date" to submit his resignation. The move was likely to come after Zeman returns from a May 11-18 visit to China, said Interior Minister Milan Chovanec, a member of Sobotka's CSSD Social Democratic party, due to

travel to Beijing with the head of state.

"The prime minister will present the president with an analysis summing up the serious doubts and questions that have been left unanswered about the taxes and business dealings of Finance Minister Andrej Babis," Ayer added. The head of the centrist ANO party and the second wealthiest Czech national, Babis has found himself under fire over his purchase of tax-free bonds issued by his mammoth Agrofert farming conglomerate.

Sobotka has cast doubt on the way Babis had raised money to buy the bonds and insisted that a finance minister fighting tax evasion should not benefit from tax loopholes. Babis has flatly denied any wrong-doing. Babis is also the Czech Republic's most popular politician with a 56 percent approval rating, according to an April CVVM poll,



PRAGUE: Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka, left, and his Belgian counterpart Charles Michel shake hands prior to talks yesterday in Prague. — AFP

compared to 39 percent for Sobotka in sixth place. The Czech political scene has been gripped by debate for weeks over the fate of the three-party govern-

ing coalition comprising Sobotka's left-wing CSSD party, Babis's ANO and the small centrist Christian Democrats, which took office in 2014. —AP

TRUMP TO MEET AUSTRALIAN PM ON 1ST PRESIDENTIAL TRIP TO NYC

TURNBULL AIMS TO MOVE PAST THE ROCKY START

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump and Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull will aim to move past the rocky start to their working relationship when they meet for the first time and commemorate the 75th anniversary of an important World War II naval battle. Trump and Turnbull were meeting yesterday in New York City, a trip that will also mark Trump's first visit home since he left in January to be sworn in as president.

Trump's homecoming was expected to be unfriendly, however, with multiple protests planned against the Republican president in the heavily Democratic metropolis. North Korea's aggressive testing of ballistic missiles, security and economic issues are expected to be on the agenda for the leaders' talks, as well as an agreement Turnbull struck with then President Barack Obama to take up to 1,250 mostly Muslim refugees off of Australia's hands and resettle them in the United States.

The agreement was a source of friction when Trump and Turnbull spoke by telephone shortly after Trump took office. The conversation made headlines around the world and Trump later tweeted about the "dumb deal." But Vice President Mike Pence assured Turnbull during a visit to Australia last month that the Trump administration will reluctantly honor the agreement. "President Trump has made it clear that we'll honor the agreement - that doesn't mean we admire the agreement," Pence said when he appeared with Turnbull in Sydney.

White House spokesman Sean Spicer said Trump was looking forward to the meeting and "showcasing the enduring bonds, deep friendship and close alliance the United States has with Australia." The bonds of friendship between the US and Australia were reinforced during the Battle of the Coral Sea, when both countries' warships and fighter planes battled the Japanese from May 4-8, 1942, forcing the Japanese navy to retreat for the first time in World War II.



SYDNEY: In this file photo, US Vice President Mike Pence, left, shakes hands with Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull at Admiralty House in Sydney. —AP

Trump's homecoming

Trump and Turnbull were commemorating the 75th anniversary of that battle with speeches at a gala dinner aboard the USS Intrepid, a decommissioned aircraft carrier that fought in World War II and is a floating museum on the Hudson River on the west side of Manhattan. The event is hosted by the American Australian Association. Manhattan is where Trump made a name by transforming himself from a local real-estate developer into a celebrity businessman and now president. He hasn't set foot in the city since leaving on Jan 19 to head to Washington to be inaugurated into office the following day.

But Trump's homecoming is expected to be less than welcoming. He received 18 percent of the vote in the liberal city, and protests are planned near the USS Intrepid and Trump Tower, the president's longtime Fifth Avenue home. During the campaign, Trump would fly thousands of miles back to New York City to sleep in his own bed, leaving the

impression that he would make frequent trips home after he became president.

But Trump said in an interview last week that he so far has avoided returning to the city of his birth because the trips are expensive for the government and would inconvenience New Yorkers. "I hate to see the New Yorkers with streets closed," Trump told Fox News. He has received some criticism for spending about half of his weekends as president at his waterfront estate in Palm Beach, Florida.

Hundreds of New York City police officers will secure Trump's appearance aboard the Intrepid, with more standing guard on surrounding streets. A show of force is already a fixture at Trump Tower, where the Secret Service and heavily armed NYPD officers use barricades, checkpoints and street closings to secure the skyscraper where the president has a penthouse apartment. Trump's wife, Melania, and son Barron, live at the Tower most of the time while the 11-year-old finishes the school year. —AP

TILLERSON CALLS FOR BALANCING US SECURITY INTERESTS, VALUES

WASHINGTON: Translating "America First" into diplomatic policy, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has proclaimed that the United States can't always afford to condition its foreign relationships and national security imperatives on countries adopting American values like human rights. Appearing before State Department employees anxious about changing priorities, Tillerson on Wednesday steered clear of giving details about the 2,300 jobs he plans to eliminate or how his proposed cut of roughly a quarter of the department's budget will affect agency operations and programs.

But he acknowledged widespread unease about the forthcoming changes and pledged that diplomats would emerge from the department's changes with "a much more satisfying, fulfilling career." Yet even as he left key administrative questions unanswered, Tillerson offered the most extensive elaboration to date of the meaning of President Donald Trump's "America First" mantra, adopted during the presidential campaign and taken to the White House. Over the last two decades, he said, Washington had "lost track" of whether post-Cold War alliances were still serving US interests.

The former Exxon Mobil CEO distinguished between US "values," which he described as enduring, and "policies," which Tillerson said must adapt to the times. "In some circumstances, if you condition our national security efforts on someone adopting our values, we probably can't achieve our national security goals," Tillerson said. "It really creates obstacles to our ability to advance our national security interests, our economic interests." Still, he insisted the US won't abandon core values. In some instances, Tillerson said, the US should and will require other nations to adopt "certain actions as to how they treat people" if they want to cooperate with the US.

In other instances, he said the US would continue advocating for its values without using them as leverage. "It doesn't mean that we leave those values on the sidelines," Tillerson said. "It doesn't mean that we don't advocate for and aspire to freedom, human dignity, and the treatment of people the world over." —AP



WASHINGTON: Secretary of State Rex Tillerson gestures while speaking to State Department employees, at the State Department in Washington. — AP

RESCUED BANGLADESHI SEX SLAVE TWEETS MODI OVER BANNED NOTE

MUMBAI: For a year and a half, Aruna secretly saved the rupees customers tipped her with at the Indian brothel she was sold into, assuming she could one day exchange the banknotes when she returned home to Bangladesh. But after being rescued from a brothel in the west Indian city of Pune, she learned that her stash of 500- and 1,000-rupee banknotes - totaling 10,000 rupees (\$155) - were worthless because Prime Minister Narendra Modi had banned those banknotes last November in an effort to crack down on corruption.

So with help from the organization that freed her, Aruna filed a grievance to Modi himself, via Twitter. "I used to hide this money from the brothel keeper in my pants pocket as I wanted to take it home," Aruna wrote in a letter tweeted to Modi late on Tuesday from the Twitter handle of the Mumbai-based Rescue

Foundation. "I earned this money through much suffering. This money is precious. Please help me exchange it," she wrote.

India's shock currency move to withdraw its two highest banknotes aimed to bring billions of dollars of unaccounted wealth that people are hoarding, or "black money", into the mainstream economy and curb corruption. But the demonetization policy has left unintended victims like Aruna with nothing. A former garment factory worker in Bangladesh, Aruna was trafficked to India by a coworker who promised her a well-paying job, but sold her soon after she crossed the border.

She worked at a brothel in Bangalore for a year and a half before being sold to another in Pune, where she was rescued a day after arriving, in December 2015. In March this year, Bangladesh

issued her a travel permit to return home. Aruna is one of 19 trafficking survivors who on May 15 will board a train in Pune and travel about 1,800 km to eastern India, where a police bus will take them across the border to Bangladesh. But unless her money is exchanged, she will go home penniless.

"The money would lend some legitimacy to her absence from home. She will be able to tell her family that she was working in India," said Tanuja Pawar, assistant superintendent of the Rescue Foundation shelter in Pune where Aruna stays. Pawar told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that following the note ban announcement last year, the rescued women's cash savings were exchanged into new banknotes. But Aruna told Pawar about the money in her trunk that was still at the brothel after she got her travel permit. —Reuters



KABUL: (from left to right) Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, Afghan warlord and ex-prime minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Afghan former Mujahideen leader and hard-line Islamist, Abdul Rasul Sayaf and Afghanistan Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah walk to attend a special ceremony at The Presidential Palace in Kabul yesterday. —AFP

FORMER WARLORD HEKMATYAR RETURNS TO KABUL AFTER 20 YEARS

BUTCHER OF KABUL COULD HELP IMPROVE SECURITY

KABUL: A former warlord branded the "Butcher of Kabul" returned to the Afghan capital yesterday, met by uneasy residents two decades after leaving the city where he stands accused of killing thousands of people. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former prime minister, has returned to mainstream political life after his dormant Hezb-i-Islami militant group signed a peace deal with the government last September which sparked revulsion from human rights groups and residents of the capital.

His convoy of several hundred vehicles to Kabul yesterday, mainly pickup trucks equipped with machine guns, was greeted by hundreds of onlookers, including supporters bearing the green party flag and flowers. As it progressed through the capital's main thoroughfares he was joined by hundreds of cars ferrying people waving flags, singing the national anthem or chanting "Welcome to Kabul, Honourable Hekmatyar" in Pashto.

Hekmatyar earned his bloody nickname for laying siege to Kabul while during the 1992-1996 civil war, bombarding it with rockets that inflicted some of the worst damage in nearly 40 years of conflict, destroying one-third of the city and killing tens of thousands of civilians. The peace agreement inked in September marked a symbolic victory for the government, which has struggled to revive peace talks with the more powerful Taliban, but has also fuelled fears of more political division.

Some of the city's residents greeted Hekmatyar's return with hope, such as 35-year-old Jamshed, who goes by one name and who said the "rare happy news" meant the warlord's influence could help improve security. For others, memories of death and destruction in the capital came rushing back. "He will be surprised to see Kabul rebuilt again," said one wry onlooker who did not wish to give his name.

Others like 20-year-old metal worker Edress Arabzada, could

not forget the past but were pragmatic about the future. Hekmatyar was the "chief destroyer" of Kabul, Arabzada said, adding the warlord should apologize for the spilling the blood of innocent people. But, he added, "we welcome his arrival to Afghanistan if it leads to peace and stability".

'We are tired of war'

Cucumber seller Sayed Mohammad, 52, agreed. "All the warlords are corrupt and have blood on their hands," he said. "But, we welcome (Hekmatyar) to Kabul because we are tired of war and conflict." Afghanistan has suffered near-continuous fighting since the Soviet invasion of 1979, and beleaguered security forces are currently struggling to beat back the resurgent Taliban, with more than one third of the country outside government control. Hekmatyar is the latest in a series of controversial figures that Kabul has sought to reintegrate by granting judicial immunity for past crimes, and many residents who spoke to AFP called for him to apologize and be prosecuted. Some were more accepting of the rehabilitation of the warlords, including figures such as Abdul Rashid Dostum, currently the country's first vice president. "I do not think Hekmatyar's arrival to Kabul will not make a difference... We want him to continue a normal life like other warlords in Afghanistan," said drinks seller Mohammad Nasim.

Hekmatyar first returned to public life on Saturday at a gathering in Laghman province, two hours east of Kabul. After his return to the capital yesterday he travelled to the presidential palace to meet and shake hands with President Ashraf Ghani. In the week ahead of his return, huge billboards sprang up around the city but were quickly covered in paint or mud, testament to the polarizing nature of the peace deal. —AFP

VATICAN, MYANMAR ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

VATICAN CITY: The Vatican and Myanmar established full diplomatic relations yesterday in the latest step in the former pariah Asian state's rehabilitation by the international community. The Vatican said it would appoint a papal nuncio to Yangon and that the country would open an embassy at the Vatican, formally wrapping up an accord approved by Myanmar in March.

The move came as Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi met Pope Francis on the latest leg of a European tour overshadowed by her country's treatment of the Rohingya, a persecuted minority Muslim group in the 90-percent Buddhist country. Pope Francis has spoken out in the past on behalf of the Rohingya while Nobel peace prize winner Suu Kyi has come under fire for not condemning repression of them by her country's security forces.

Kuu Syi and a small group of officials spent around 20 minutes in yesterday's audience with the leader of the world's 1.3 billion Catholics. Francis presented the former dissident with a bronze medallion with an image of a blooming desert. Suu Kyi had talks on Wednesday with Italian foreign minister Angelino Alfano and with EU and Belgian officials in Brussels on Tuesday. She is also due to visit Britain. In Brussels she reiterated her opposition to a decision by the UN human rights body to send a fact-finding mission to Myanmar to investigate allegations of murder, rape and torture against the Rohingya in Rakhine state. Alfano said in a statement he had discussed the process of national reconciliation in the country formerly known as Burma, without elaborating. Francis denounced the treatment of the Rohingya in February, describing them as "brothers and sisters" who were being tortured and killed for their faith.

Education issue

He described the Rohingya as "good and peaceful people who have suffered for years," and urged Catholics to pray for them. Estimates of the number of Roman Catholics in Myanmar vary between 500,000 and 800,000. According to the CIA, Christians of all sorts make up around 6 percent of the population of 57 million with groups of Baptists and other Protestants concentrated among ethnic minorities. Christians say they are subject to some of the same persecution and discrimination faced by the Rohingya. —AFP



VATICAN CITY: Myanmar's State Counselor and Foreign Minister Aung San Suu Kyi meets Pope Francis during a private audience yesterday at the Vatican. —AFP

INDIA CONVICTS POLICE AND DOCTORS IN GANG RAPE CASE

MUMBAI: An Indian court yesterday convicted five police officers and two doctors of tampering with evidence in the gang rape of a pregnant woman and the murder of her family during one of the worst incidents of religious unrest since independence. Bilkis Bano was gang raped and seven of her relatives were killed during religious riots that broke out in the western state of Gujarat in 2002.

At least 2,000 Muslims were hacked, beaten, shot or burnt to death in the violence, which erupted after a group of Hindu pilgrims died in a train fire wrongly blamed on a Muslim mob. Yesterday a court in the western city of Mumbai overturned an earlier acquittal of the seven accused following an

appeal by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). It also upheld the convictions of 11 Hindu men convicted of rape and murder in the case.

In a statement to the media, Bilkis expressed satisfaction that officials who had "emboldened, encouraged, and protected" her attackers had finally been convicted. "My rights, as a human being, as a citizen, woman, and mother were violated in the most brutal manner, but I had trust in the democratic institutions of our country," she said. "Now, my family and I feel we can begin to lead our lives again, free of fear."

Bano and two of her children were the only survivors in a group of 17 Muslims who were attacked

in 2002. Her three-year-old daughter was among the victims. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was the state's chief minister at the time, was accused of turning a blind eye to the violence but was cleared of any wrongdoing in 2012. The state government has been accused of dragging its heels in prosecuting those accused in the riots.

"As per my knowledge, this is the first time that police officials have been convicted in any case pertaining to the Gujarat riots," special counsel for the CBI Hiten Venegavkar said. "No fresh trials will be carried out and the seven convicted (today) can appeal to the Supreme Court of India," Venegavkar added. —AFP

OVER HALF OF ROHINGYA GIRLS WHO FLED VIOLENCE BECAME CHILD BRIDES

KUALA LUMPUR: More than half of Rohingya Muslim girls who fled violence in western Myanmar ended up becoming child brides, according to a United Nations survey that also showed widespread domestic abuse. Since 2012, violence and communal clashes in Myanmar's Rakhine state have forced more than 168,000 of the ethnic Muslim Rohingya minorities to flee, including a rising number of women and girls, according to the UN refugee agency UNHCR.

In a survey of 85 Rohingya women and girls who have fled to India, Malaysia and Indonesia, UNHCR found about 60 percent married before the age of 18. The average age that they gave birth to their first child was 18. One in every three women and girls also said they were victims of domestic violence, according to UNHCR's 2016 Report on Mixed Movements in Southeast Asia.

"We generally counsel them about their options and, if they agree, refer them to a partner or shelter that cares for vulnerable women," UNHCR Asia spokeswoman Vivian Tan said. The growing number of Rohingya women and girls fleeing persecution in Buddhist-majority Myanmar has raised concern that they may be vulnerable to human trafficking, sexual exploitation and child marriage, activists say.

UNHCR said the interviews with the 85 women in its latest report were to assess "continuing vulnerabilities" they face. There are about 8,000 Rohingya women and girls aged between 14 and 34 in India, Indonesia and Malaysia - the countries where the study was carried out late last year. The findings showed while the majority of the Rohingya girls in India said they chose their husbands, 76 percent in Malaysia said their marriage was arranged by families or brokers, giving rise to fears of human trafficking. Rights groups said they have seen an increase in the number of child brides among Rohingya refugees as violence in Rakhine worsened, with human traffickers selling girls to Rohingya men as brides. —Reuters

EGYPTIAN WOMAN LEAVES INDIAN HOSPITAL MORE THAN 300 KG LIGHTER

MUMBAI: An Egyptian woman widely believed to have been the world's heaviest woman left an Indian hospital yesterday more than 300 kg lighter for further treatment in Abu Dhabi. Eman Ahmed, who weighed more than half a metric ton when she was operated on in March, has not walked for 25 years. She is in her mid-30s.

A series of operations in Mumbai brought her weight down to below 200 kg, her doctor, Muffazal Lakdawala, wrote in a blog post. But she would need further surgery to walk again, he said. Lakdawala wrote on Wednesday that he had promised Ahmed "a healthier life and weight loss" which he had achieved. "Her bone structure is poor," Lakdawala wrote. "So many years of disuse have compounded the problem. She will need multiple surgeries to straighten her hips and knees." Indian media outlets have said Ahmed's family was not satisfied with her treatment in Mumbai and that differences had arisen with the staff. Ahmed's family could not be immediately reached for comment. —Reuters



SRINAGAR: Indian policemen run for cover to avoid stones and bricks thrown at them by Kashmiri students during a protest in Srinagar, Indian controlled Kashmir yesterday. — AP

INDIAN TROOPS BLOCK KASHMIR VILLAGES AMID MASSIVE REBEL HUNT

SRINAGAR: Thousands of Indian government forces cordoned off at least two dozen villages in southern Kashmir yesterday while they hunted for separatist militants believed to be hiding in the area, but called off the operation after about 10 hours without finding any, police said. They said the operation, launched after a spate of rebel attacks and anti-India protests, was the biggest in recent years in the disputed Himalayan territory.

Indian soldiers, paramilitary forces and police searched house-to-house for militants believed hiding in the Shopian area, known for its vast apple orchards. Helicopters and drones hovered over the villages while ground forces stood guard at village entry points. Schools were closed early. Villagers expressed surprise as soldiers directed them to assemble in central areas. "We don't know what is going on," said Mohammed Subhan Mir, head of Darazpora village.

"There are soldiers all around us, moving everywhere as if it is war." Police said some residents resisted the search, and clashes erupted in at least two villages. No injuries were reported. Authorities

said they were trying to find militants as well as choke off support from a sympathetic public. Villagers have increasingly protected the rebels by hurling rocks and abuse at Indian troops when they enter their villages. At least five civilians have been killed by government forces during such clashes this year.

Senior police officer S P Pani said the troops didn't find any militants. "Still, it was a successful operation as we could sweep through so many villages with a bare minimum of local resistance." Another officer who was part of the operation and spoke on customary condition of anonymity said the troops were lifting their siege of the Shopian villages and were shifting to the neighboring Kulgam area.

Both Shopian and Kulgam have become militant hotbeds in the past year since Indian forces killed a popular rebel leader. The rebel's death triggered a massive surge in anti-India protests in the mostly Muslim region, and police say dozens of young people from these areas have joined the rebel ranks. Last week, several videos showing about 30 militants with rifles marching through

an apple orchard appeared on social media sites despite a ban imposed by Indian authorities on 22 such sites and applications.

Police said they believed the militants were in Shopian, where several banks were also recently looted in attacks blamed on militants. Meanwhile, students chanted pro-freedom slogans and threw rocks at government forces, who responded with tear gas in the northwestern town of Sopore, as students continued anti-India protests for a third week. At least 10 students were reported injured. Young students in school uniforms have clashed increasingly with government forces across Indian-held Kashmir after troops raided a college in the southern town of Pulwama last month.

Rebel groups have been fighting since 1989 for Kashmir's independence or merger with neighboring Pakistan, which also claims the mountainous region. Nearly 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting and the ensuing Indian crackdown. India has accused Pakistan of arming and training the rebels, which Pakistan denies. —AP

PHILIPPINES' DUTERTE SAYS CHAT WITH XI WAS AT TRUMP'S REQUEST

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said yesterday his telephone conversation this week with Chinese leader Xi Jinping to discuss the Korean peninsula crisis was at the behest of his US counterpart Donald Trump. Duterte said he spoke with Xi on Wednesday to convince him to play a bigger role in defusing tension in the Korean peninsula after North Korea test fired another missile early on Saturday.

Duterte discussed the North's test with Trump later on Saturday, at the end of a summit in Manila of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which he is chairman this year. "So, I called President Xi Jinping, I am calling you at the behest of the president

of the United States'," he said in a speech in his hometown in Davao City, "We have all agreed in the ASEAN and even President Trump that you can do something. Actually, the biggest contribution of all other is your intervention,'" he said, recalling the conversation.

The United States has urged China, North Korea's only major ally, to do more to rein in the North's nuclear and missile programs, which have prompted an assertive response from the Trump administration, warning that an "era of strategic patience" is over. "Definitely they are getting the help of everybody here," Duterte said, referring to US diplomatic efforts in Asia to contain North Korea. Xi and Duterte spoke

for about 26 minutes, a source at the Philippine president's office told Reuters, and exchanged views about regional developments and how some concerns could be addressed. Duterte said if asked by Trump, he would happily relay what was discussed with Xi. The maverick and wildly outspoken Duterte has in the past week emerged as an unlikely collaborator in international efforts to prevent regional tension from escalating. As ASEAN chairman, he last week said he would urge Trump not to be provoked by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, warning of a catastrophe if the situation intensified and that Kim "wants to end to the world". —Reuters



HONG KONG: In this photograph received from the South China Morning Post (SCMP) archive taken on May 12, 1967, riot police prepare to fire tear gas shells to disperse a large group of left-wing protesters at the Tung Tau resettlement estate in Hong Kong. — AFP

HONG KONG REMEMBERS BLOODIEST VIOLENCE, RIOTS FROM 50 YEARS AGO

CITY FACES NEW ERA OF TURBULENCE

HONG KONG: Hong Kong is unrecognizable now from the city which 50 years ago was the scene of bloody riots, fuelled by resentment of colonial rule and inspired by the Cultural Revolution unfolding in China. But although memories of the bomb-strewn chaos of 1967 have faded, the city is facing a new era of turbulence as democracy activists take on Beijing and many ordinary residents still struggle to make ends meet.

What started as a labor dispute in an era of poverty and corruption, when many lived and worked in poor conditions, became large-scale street battles fomented by the Chinese Communist Party. The clashes between leftists and police lasted from May to December and left 51 dead, including five police officers. Images from the time show bloodied residents, including women and children, and large groups of protesters facing off against police. Luk Tak-shing, now 70, was jailed during the riots and remembers police swooping on the union building where he worked.

He says he was beaten, arrested and imprisoned for unlawful assembly as 40 union workers were rounded up. Luk had been helping workers organize a strike and he says he saw himself as part of a patriotic movement against colonial power. "These ethnic hostilities had taken root in my heart from a young age," said Luk, who attended a communist-run

leftist school where he learned about historic injustices and racial inequality. "The scenes of police beatings infuriated me, even now when I recount them I'm very agitated," Luk said.

Watershed moment

The riots followed the start of the "Cultural Revolution" in China, which saw mass purges of government opponents, and followed similar unrest in Macau, then under Portuguese rule. They began on May 6 when sacked workers attempted to prevent goods leaving an artificial flower factory and were arrested. Clashes, strikes and more arrests were followed by bomb attacks across the city by protesters, including on tram stops and residential streets.

Calm was only restored in December, when Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai ordered the rioting to stop. Documentary maker Connie Lo, whose film about the riots "Vanished Archives" is now showing in Hong Kong, described the scale of the violence as a watershed. "After experiencing terrorism in the city, people saw the significance of having stability in life," Lo said. The violence was never repeated, and the city was eventually handed back to China by Britain in 1997, becoming semi-autonomous. However, as fears grow that Beijing is squeezing its freedoms, issues around sovereignty and identity are again at the

fore, with tensions exacerbated by sky-high housing prices and cost of living.

In 2016, frustrations boiled over. Young activists calling for more autonomy or even independence from China were among protesters who fought running battles with police in the commercial district of Mong Kok. Although far removed from the severity of the 1967 riots, with no fatalities, it was described as the city's worst violence since then. Leung Kwok-hung, a veteran lawmaker known as Long Hair and a self-identified leftist, said that while there are key differences between today's protesters and those in 1967, the underlying issue for the public is the same—"a government they did not choose".

Moving on

The pro-Beijing government's approach to democracy activists has become increasingly hard-line, with a number of recent arrests of high-profile campaigners. Leung accuses authorities of being "brazenly repressive" and points out that some protesters from 1967 are now part of the establishment. However, others have turned their backs on the Chinese Communist Party. Lau Man-sing, 88, a former underground party member in Hong Kong, recently published a memoir about his disillusionment, saying leftist leaders abandoned ordinary workers after 1997. —AFP

JAPAN TOUGH TO CRACK FOR REFUGEES

TOKYO: It has been a decade since Liliane last saw her little girl. She fled Africa in fear for her life, leaving behind everything she knew and loved in the hope of a fresh start in Japan. Today, she scrapes a living from dead-end jobs, and what Japanese she knows has been snatched from television shows. There is little government help for people like her: free language courses are limited, social housing is hard to find, discrimination is rife.

Yet Liliane is regarded as one of the lucky ones—she was granted refugee status in Japan, a country which refuses more than 99 percent of cases. "It has not been easy," she said, speaking under a pseudonym. She adds: "Here they do not pay for your studies, they do not help you to get bank loans, or give you social housing... we are left to ourselves, we have to fight alone." Anti-refugee sentiment is rising in Europe and the United States but in Japan those seeking haven from tyranny and war have long faced daunting legal and social gauntlets.

One of the world's wealthiest countries, Japan accepted just 28 refugees in 2016 — one more than the previous year—out of the 8,193 applications reviewed by the Immigration Bureau. Officials defend the low number, saying applicants are mainly from Asian countries seeking access to Japan solely for economic reasons. "The number of applications from regions which generate lots of refugees, such as Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, is small," said Yasuhiro Hishida, spokesman for the Immigration Bureau.

Fleeing persecution

Assisted by the UN, Liliane was able to claim asylum on arrival in Japan stating that her life was in danger due to tribal conflict back home. It took two years for officials to accept her as a refugee, a period during which she received assistance from the Catholic Church and charities. But she feels the status brought few benefits. She is no closer to reuniting with her child—now a teenager, her daughter has repeatedly been denied a permit to even visit. For Liliane, further education and a stable life, seem out of reach. She explains: "Japan is a very difficult country for foreigners. The language is really a handicap for us. You need to do absolutely everything to try to speak in Japanese but you don't know where to find free lessons." "Sometimes I think refugee status has no meaning," she sighs. But for Nonnon, being awarded refugee status would at least give her a sense of belonging. —AFP



TOKYO: This picture shows Nonnon, a 47-year-old Myanmar refugee and nail artist, holding a map of Myanmar at a nail salon in Tokyo. — AFP

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

Lifestyle

Friday Times

www.kuwaittimes.net

Katy Perry arrives for the Costume Institute Benefit May 1, 2017 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. —AFP

Headpieces a glamorous touch to help finish any bridal look

'Flawless' heart-shaped diamond highlights Geneva auction

The largest ever "flawless" heart-shaped diamond to appear at auction will go under the hammer at Christie's sale of precious jewels in Geneva this month, and is expected to fetch up to \$20 million. The 92-carat pendant suspended from a pearl sautoir is the showcase piece at Christie's spring sale, set for May 17 at the ultra-luxe Four Seasons des Bergues hotel on the shores of Lake Geneva. Despite what Christie's calls the piece's "pure quality and magnitude", the necklace is unlikely to approach the jaw-dropping sums paid for smaller coloured diamonds



'La Legend' heart-shaped 92 carat diamond is displayed.

in recent years. In Hong Kong last month the 59.60-carat "Pink Star" fetched a record \$71.2 million (65.1 million euros), a price that highlighted the galloping market for rare pink

and blue diamonds. Film buffs with a seat at the Christie's sale will also have the chance to bid on a set of ruby and diamond earrings and matching bracelet given to late Hollywood star Elizabeth Taylor in 1957 by her then husband, director and producer Mike Todd.

Christie's said the parure could sell for up to \$500,000. A total of 250 lots will be on offer at the auction, likely to be attended by high-end buyers from across the globe but especially Asia, a continent that has increasingly scooped up the world's most valuable stones. — AFP



This handout photo released by Christie's auction house shows "La Legende", a 92-carat D color "flawless" heart-shaped diamond pendant, signed by Boehmer et Bassenge.— AFP photos



Belgian fashion designer Serkan Cura holds a feather as he works in his office.



Belgian fashion designer Serkan Cura works in his office.



Fashion's feather master tickles up a storm

Serkan Cura was first tickled by the possibility of feathers when he was just 13. "I found a bird of paradise feather in a street market in Brussels," he told AFP. "It was love at first sight." The thrill has never quite left him. "I made my first wedding dress that year out of feathers and plastic," he recalled. Two decades later Cura is one of the world's top plumassiers—a leading exponent of



Belgian fashion designer Serkan Cura poses for portraits in his office in Paris.

an art that goes back to before Cleopatra, who loved to make dramatic entrances from behind fantails of ostrich feathers. His creations have been worn by stars from Madonna and Karlie Kloss to Heidi Klum and the burlesque star Dita Von Teese, who he says has "the most perfect, beautiful, graceful body I have ever seen".

In fact, Serkan was so taken with her that he had a tailor's dummy made with her "dimensions" for his workshop. Having cut his teeth working with the French designer Jean Paul Gaultier, who tried to poach him from Antwerp's famed Royal Academy of Fine Arts—"I stayed on and finished my diploma and then joined him"—he also spent a decade learning corset making at the feet of the legendary Mr Pearl.

'Showstopping'

Now 35, Cura finds himself invited to show his creations on the elite Paris haute couture catwalk, with his apprentices snapped up by leading houses like Chanel. His showstopping numbers have also featured in US lingerie giant Victoria's Secret spectacular annual \$20 million show. Some of his creations go for six-figure sums, he says, while others—including one dress made entirely from bird of paradise feathers—are destined for museum collections. "I would not sell it for three million euros (\$3.3 million)," he told AFP.

"It will still look amazing long after I am gone." "Feathers are hugely strong," he explained, crushing a delicate piece of feathered lace in his hand before opening his fist again. "Look," Cura said. "Perfect! What other material can take that kind of abuse and still look so delicate and glamorous?" Many of the rare plumes he works with date from the 19th century, and come from the collection of a

historic Parisian plumassier whose stock he bought when it was taken over by the Moulin Rouge.

Rare plumes

"You could never get them now, mercifully for the poor birds. Now all those feathers have to have authentication papers," he said. To get the feathers he needs, Cura, who describes himself as "Belgian by birth but made in Turkey", has a farm in the south of France where he breeds partridges, pheasants and other birds. Still more come from a bird lover in Spain who has dedicated her life to rescuing and caring for exotic species. "Sometimes it takes years to get the feathers you need for a piece," he said. "You have to wait for the feathers to fall from the bird. They only fall twice a year and it depends very much on the quality you get. If the birds are stressed the feathers are not so good and if they fight among themselves they could be damaged, too." Which is why his creations can cost so much. But Cura, who sees his studio more as a laboratory, said he was obsessed with exploring the "endless possibilities that feathers present", particularly with cheaper goose, chicken and even pigeon feathers. One of his most spectacular skirts is made from the stems of goose feathers. "Wearing it, it is a multi-sensorial experience. Really you can do anything with them," he said.

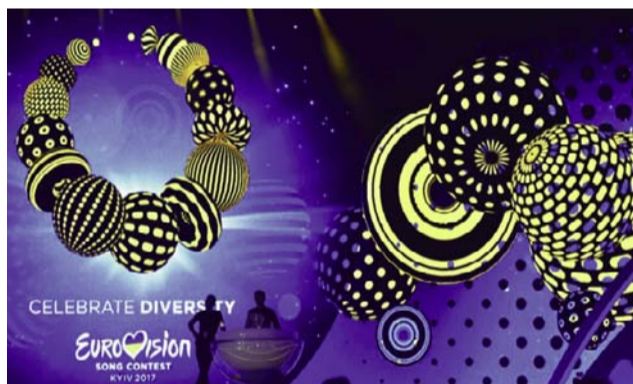
Jean-Philippe Lautreite, who heads the French wedding dress label Cymbeline, which is working alongside Cura on a new experimental range, called him "a true master. You are in another dimension with him." "Serkan, like us, is the exact opposite of fast-fashion. It is tradition and quality that excites us both. You cannot imagine the hundreds of hours of work that goes into these pieces," he added. — AFP

Cher to sing 'Believe' at Billboard Music Awards this month



Cher will sing her late 1990s anthem "Believe" at the Billboard Music Awards this month. Dick Clark Productions announced yesterday that Cher also will receive the ICON Award at the May 21 event in Las Vegas, where the singer is completing a residency at the Park Theater at Monte Carlo. It will be her first awards show performance in more than 15 years.

Other artists set to take the stage at the Billboard Awards include Drake, Bruno Mars, Ed Sheeran, Celine Dion, Lorde, Nicki Minaj, Imagine Dragons, Florida Georgia Line and John Legend. The show will air live on ABC from T-Mobile Arena. — AP



Staff members test the stage at the International Exhibition Centre in Kiev. — AP

Eurovision host Ukraine issues stamp with 2016 winner Jamala

Ukraine's postal service yesterday announced the issue of a stamp honoring 2016 Eurovision winner Jamala as the country gears up to host this year's televised song competition in Kiev. The ethnic Tatar singer from Ukraine's Russian-annexed Crimea brought the annual festival to Kiev by winning last year's closely-contested competition in Stockholm. The 33-year-old instantly became a national heroine for performing a powerful ballad about the Soviet Union's repression of Tatars in the peninsula seized by Russia from Ukraine in March 2014.

Jamala's victory was especially sweet for Ukrainians because she came from behind to pip Russia's entry at the very end of voting by fans from across Europe and national juries. "We take pride in the talent of Jamala, a Ukrainian people's artist," the Ukrpochta postal service said in a statement on its official Facebook page. It also posted a picture of the stamp that features a brown-hued signed portrait of Jamala looking off into the distance.

The stamp is worth four hryvnias (\$0.15 / 0.14 euros) and will go on sale today. It costs slightly more than two hryvnias to send a regular letter inside Ukraine. Eurovision's semi-finals are on May 9 and 11. The final will be held on May 13. The entire event is expected to draw a global television audience of more than 200 million as well as vast numbers of additional viewers online. Kiev is preparing for 20,000 international fans to arrive in a city that only three years ago witnessed a bloody pro-EU revolution in which Ukraine severed its ties with old master Russia. — AFP

REAL-LIFE 'ROCKY' GETS HIS MOMENT ON-SCREEN

Forty-two years after he stepped into the ring against Muhammad Ali as a 40-to-1 underdog, Chuck Wepner's business card still has a picture of the moment when he knocked down the champ. For the New Jersey boxer, it gave him brief hope that he could win. For Ali, it led him to start fighting with a vengeance, eventually taking an exhausted Wepner out with 19 seconds left in the 15th and final round. For Sylvester Stallone, the overmatched underdog's fight was a moment of needed inspiration while writing the script for "Rocky."

Stallone became a superstar and Rocky Balboa became an iconic character. Wepner reeled off a few more wins and continued his day job as a liquor salesman, while living a hard-partying lifestyle that led to prison. Wepner's life story has now arrived on the big screen with Liev Schreiber playing the Bayonne Bleeder in "Chuck," which opens on Friday in New York and Los Angeles before expanding nationwide starting next week.

"Everyone says to me, 'Oh, Chuck, finally you got your due,'" the 78-year-old Wepner said from his living room in Bayonne, the working-class town across the harbor from New York where he grew up. "You know what, I've been living large for 42 years. I fought Ali in '75, I went 15 rounds, I had him down, and then they made the movie 'Rocky.' I was the inspiration. I haven't been waiting around." Wepner and Balboa's story share similarities - low-level working class fighters getting a shot at the champ. But while Rocky went on to beat the Ali-like Apollo Creed in their "Rocky II" rematch, Wepner turned to a life of partying and cocaine. He pleaded guilty to drug charges in 1987 and served two years of a 10-year sentence.

Like Rocky's fight with Hulk Hogan's Thunderlips character in "Rocky III," Wepner was thrown out of the ring by wrestling legend Andre the Giant at Shea Stadium in New York in a 1976 fight. Unlike Rocky, Wepner also fought a bear. Wepner sued Stallone in 2003, arguing that he improperly used his name to promote the "Rocky" films.

Stallone responded that Wepner benefited by making public appearances as "the real Rocky," but later settled. A spokeswoman for Stallone said he wasn't giving interviews ahead of the film. Schreiber said that it's hard to look at some of the parallels between Rocky Balboa and Wepner and not think that Stallone was inspired by Wepner's life.

"But I also know from talking to Sylvester Stallone that he thought the fighter was an amalgamation of several fighters," Schreiber said, "and that probably the biggest inspiration to him was sort of his own battles as an artist, that was really the inspiration for the character." Schreiber, who said he was drawn

life together after he was released from prison and later convinced him to sue. While Wepner admits he did a bad job auditioning after a night of partying when Stallone tried to give him a part as his sparring partner in "Rocky II," the last straw was not being considered for a part in the Stallone and Robert De Niro film "Cop Land," which filmed near Bayonne.

"I sued for \$15 million, fuhgeddaboutit, I didn't get a minute percentage of that," Wepner said. "Stallone and I are friends now. We had to go to court. That was just business. I love Sylvester, I think he's great. I think his moves are great." "Chuck" director Philippe Falardeau said



File photo shows former boxer Chuck Wepner talks to The Associated Press in his home in Bayonne, NJ. — AP

to Wepner's life as a cautionary tale of fame and celebrity, said that storytellers often exploit real people to create their narratives. "And I think that's OK," he said. "I think that's the nature of art and storytelling. Some stories stay very close to the truth ... but I think we should also feel the license to expand on some things and express ourselves as fits the person that's creating the story."

"Chuck" also stars "Mad Men's" Elisabeth Moss as Wepner's second wife and Naomi Watts as his third wife, Linda. It was Linda who helped Wepner get his

that while there are similarities between Wepner and Rocky, Stallone's character was "much more low-key, much more insecure. Chuck Wepner has no insecurities. He's so confident." Falardeau said that Stallone gave the filmmakers his OK. Just as important, Falardeau says: As the movie ends with Schreiber's Wepner and Watts' Linda walking down the boardwalk, he stops for a Polaroid photo in front of a Rocky statue outside of a Planet Hollywood. Falardeau said Stallone lent the statue to the filmmakers from his personal collection. — AP

Stars Wars fans say, 'May the 4th be with you'

Dozens of fans costumed as Jedi knights, stormtroopers of the Galactic Empire and protagonist Luke Skywalker thronged central Taipei yesterday to celebrate Star Wars Day, the 40th anniversary of the sci-fi film franchise. Costume parties, movie marathons and fun runs are among the events being mounted worldwide to celebrate the space saga. Fans on social media tweeted "May the 4th be with you", parodying the Star Wars catchphrase, "May the force be with you."

In Taiwan's capital, fans took the day off from work to pose in costume for photographs at landmarks such as the iconic Taipei 101 tower and the Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall. "I liked Star Wars since I was small," said Annie Tseng, a 40-year-old communications specialist dressed as the series'

black-helmeted arch villain, Darth Vader. "None of my own friends showed up today, but I've made new ones here. I chose Darth Vader because I think he's very handsome."

This year's event featured a duel with light sabers at the Living Mall, a shopping mall with a giant orb that resembles the film's Death Star space station, organizers said.

"Taiwan people love movies and they love sci-fi movies, and very early on they were fans of Star Wars," said Makoto Tsai, 32, a film director and co-organizer of the event. This year is the 40th anniversary of the original 1977 film written and directed by George Lucas and starring Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher, who died last year and is best known for her role as the intrepid Princess Leia Organa. — Reuters



Tourists walk along the beach in the small village Vila do Abraão in Ilha Grande, or Big Island, about three hours from Rio de Janeiro. — AP photos



A young boy jumps off a tourist boat into one of the many beaches on Ilha Grande, or Big Island, about three hours from Rio de Janeiro.



Men play paddle ball on one of the many beaches of Ilha Grande, Brazil.

BRAZIL'S ILHA GRANDE HAVE CLEAN BEACHES

One of the first things visitors will notice about Ilha Grande, or Big Island, is that there are no vehicles. The local government prohibits private cars, maintaining the laid-back rhythms that islanders say are central to their identity. Dirt and sand paths that run parallel to the many beaches, however, often do have travelers: scores of crabs scurrying across at a leisurely pace that only picks up if a human approaches.

"Life here is simple," said Rodison Marcos, a 48-year-old boat operator born and raised here. "We don't need a watch, or a tie or cars." For foreign and Brazilian tourists alike, that slowed development means this tropical island can offer something Rio de Janeiro and surrounding areas have not been able to for years: clean beaches. Ultimately it was a search for unsullied ocean, where my wife and I would feel comfortable letting our three young sons swim, that attracted us.

The island is a three-hour trip from Rio, but no highway or bridge connects it to the mainland. Several boats a day traverse a small stretch of sea from three different ports. The relative isolation means cell phone service is spotty, and Internet often feels nonexistent. In short, it's a place to disconnect while feeling strong connections because everybody appears to know everybody.

"Oh, you are going to the place of Alex, the French guy," a man told me after we arrived in Abraão and asked directions to Bica



Swimmers enjoy the water in one of the dozens of beaches of Ilha Grande, or Big Island, about three hours from Rio de Janeiro.

Beach. "Let me get you a taxi boat." Our Airbnb bungalow was another 10 minutes away by wobbly motorboat. Then we climbed the equivalent of six flights of stairs on a steep path through lush tropical forest. All the huffing and puffing and sweating felt worth it once there. Looking down, we saw blue ocean waters while monkeys jumped between trees.

The island, about 77 square miles (200 square kilometers), is pristine in large part because of an unusual history going back to the 16th century Portuguese colonization. It has been a pirates' lair, a leper colony and most recently, home to a maximum security penitentiary that housed some of Brazil's most violent criminals, along with political prisoners during part of the 1964-1985 dictatorship.

Various rebellions and headline-grabbing escapes created headaches for islanders and kept investors away. In 1994, however, the Candido Mendes prison was closed and demolished. A few years later, the State University of Rio de Janeiro opened a research center to study the environment and sustainable development.

'You can breathe pure air'

Today, there are numerous pousadas, or guest houses, in Vila do Abraão, which has about 3,000 residents. There are also offbeat places to stay, from beachfront villas to isolated jungle



Rodison Marcos, a 48-year-old boat operator born and raised on Ilha Grande, Brazil, ferries tourists from beach to beach.

dwellings. Companies offer excursions that range from some of Brazil's best snorkeling and scuba-diving to walking tours through rainforests teeming with life. Then there are the dozens and dozens of beaches that are both postcard-worthy and often empty.

"Look at this water," said Felipe Ricardo Brito, who sells caipirinhas, a mix of the national alcohol cachaca and limes, on Feiticeira Beach. "It's totally clean. There is no sewage. You can breathe pure air." That is not the case on most beaches in and around Rio de Janeiro, the city that hosted the 2016 Summer Games. An 18-month investigation by The Associated Press during the run up to the Olympics found dangerously high levels of bacteria and viruses in Rio beaches. Only a little more than half of the sewage in Rio is treated, meaning that each day tons of fecal matter ends up in the Guanabara Bay and surrounding beaches.

Still, while Ilha Grande doesn't have a sewage problem, it's far from an environmental paradise. For example, amid a deep economic crisis in the country, the island has struggled with garbage collection. Earlier this year, the island captured national headlines when hundreds of bags of garbage were strewn throughout Vila do Abraão. The local government switched garbage providers and has promised to regularize service. Still, the problem periodically pops up, irking islanders and creating eyesores. When we visited in February, crabs could be seen among the garbage.

There are also worries about overdevelopment. Much of the island is protected wildland, but Brazil has a history of big money interests winning out against environmental protections. Last year, the environmental secretary of the state government invited Ilha Grande residents to present ideas about the future, from development projects to environmental issues. While billed as a way to build consensus, many residents were suspicious that it was really just a precursor to ramming through big changes.

As the island opens up, its industries and demographics are changing. While fishing is still a central industry for many residents, increasingly fishing and crab boats are used to ferry around tourists. And some tourists like it so much that they are finding ways to stay. "Now there are Argentines, Brazilians from other states and hippies living here," said Selma dos Santos Garcia, a 34-year-old Ilha Grande native who sells snacks on the beaches. "And we are at the mercy of tourists." — AP



File photo shows Britain's Prince William and his wife Kate, Duchess of Cambridge, stand outside of Westminster Abbey after their Royal Wedding in London.—Ap photos



A model wears a bridal headpiece called Primrose Bobby Pin which was designed by Behr.

Headpieces a glamorous touch to help finish any bridal look

Brielyn Souza donned a cathedral-length veil for her church wedding in 2015, but popped on a fresh floral crown for the reception. With its earthly beauty, the crown fit the laid-back, rustic-glam feel of her barn party, and felt true to a bride who often wore flowers in her hair as a girl. "It was my version of a bride," Souza, 33, of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, says of the crown. "Some people put on a veil and they feel like a bride. I put on that floral crown and I felt like a bride. I felt complete in my bridal look."

Crowns and other types of headpieces, often made with crystals, rhinestones and pearls, have become more popular among brides in recent years, experts say. Delicate or statement-making, a bridal headpiece serves as a finishing touch, a way to add a little bit of extra glamour to a wedding-day outfit. "They're really an exquisitely beautiful way to finish your look, and something that's really special, rooted in tradition but really modern," says New York luxury accessories designer Jennifer Behr, whose designs have

been worn by many A-list celebrities.

"It's really jewelry for the hair," she said, adding that like makeup, headpieces "bring a lot of brightness and attention and beauty to the face." With all eyes (and cameras) on the bride, Behr, who has a namesake accessories company, says the headpiece is the bride's most important accessory, and can be worn with or without a veil.

The floral crown, made of fresh flowers or fashioned from metal or silk, is a standout among headpieces, says Shane Clark, senior fashion and accessories editor at Brides magazine. "Floral crowns are the biggest hair accessory trend we've been seeing," Clark says. "It makes it feel more romantic. You have that ethereal, hippie, romantic, laid-back vibe."

Behr also offers several golden, metal floral styles she calls "a more sophisticated take on the floral crown. It's a little bit more elegant." If a crown's not your thing, consider a decorative comb, clip or pins. A beautiful comb can hold your veil in place, or pins

or combs could be tucked into an updo or low chignon.

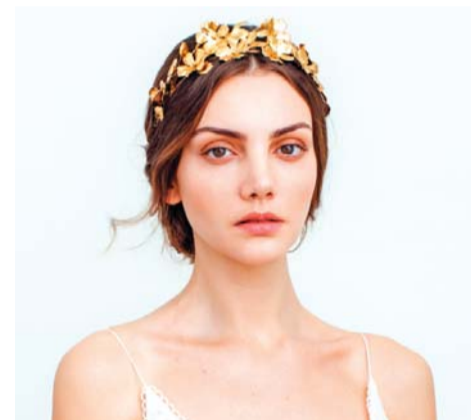
Feels natural

Headbands too, are plentiful. Newer versions, called circlets and halos, which often have ties at the ends, can be worn across the top of the head like a traditional headband or lower down, toward or across the forehead. Hair vines are flexible strands that can be woven into bridal braids. Tiaras, famously worn by British royals like the former Kate Middleton and Princess Diana, are there for those princess moments, and may soon be making a bridal comeback, Clark says.

How to find your perfect hair accessory? Choose something that complements your gown, wedding venue and hairstyle, and a design that feels natural, Clark advises. "Make it your look, but make sure you feel comfortable," she says. While a tiara is befitting the bride tying the knot in a ballgown in a castle, a flower crown works well with a boho, romantic gown or a beach wedding, Clark says. A deco or vintage look is often well suited by a comb or a pin.

There are now many choices in metals, Clark notes, with yellow and rose gold mixing in with the traditional silver finish among hair accessory options. A different color gives the same accessory a completely different feel, she says. Behr says her gold pieces work well with cream or lace gowns. Clark advises matching the metal in a headpiece to the finish of any jewelry. If you're using the headpiece to add color, wear fresh blooms in the same color family as your bouquet and keep the colors appropriate for the season.

Pay attention to scale so your hair accessory isn't out of balance with or competing with details on your gown, Clark says. Remember to try the hair accessory on with your gown and, ideally, bring it to a trial hair appointment, so the stylist can find the best placement to go with your bridal hairstyle, Clark says. If nothing else, remember this about your headpiece: "It shouldn't be the center of attention," Clark says, "because your gown should be." — AP



In this photo provided by Jennifer Behr, a model wears a bridal headpiece called Sabrina Circlet which was designed by Behr.



A model wears a bridal headpiece called Delicate Vine Circlet which was designed by Behr.



A model wears a bridal headpiece called Aster Circlet which was designed by Behr.



A model wears a bridal headpiece called Arielle Chignon Wrap which was designed by Behr.



A model wears a bridal headpiece called Elissa Comb which was designed by Behr.

COOKING ON DEADLINE: SPICY CHICKEN MILANESE

By Katie Workman

Though clearly I wear the apron in my family, this is the recipe I would lay on the kitchen counter with a note saying, "PLEASE MAKE THIS FOR ME FOR MOTHER'S DAY." I love the contrast between the hot crispy chicken and the cool cherry tomato and herby salad, but this is also just fantastic at room temperature. If you are planning to serve it at room temperature, let the chicken cool before topping it with the salad, so the salad won't wilt too much and the chicken won't get soggy. There is a little kick from the Dijon and the

cayenne, and you can up the amounts if you want more spiciness. You can really use any combination of herbs and lettuces for the salad. I am a sucker for the way the bite of arugula plays against all kinds of rich savory foods, so it's my go-to lettuce for toppings like this, but spinach, watercress, mustard greens or baby greens of any kind would also be great.



SPICY CHICKEN MILANESE

Ingredients

Start to finish: 30 minutes
Serves 4
2 large eggs
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
Freshly ground black pepper
2 cups panko bread crumbs
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
8 thin sliced chicken cutlets (about 4 ounces each)
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
2 cups baby arugula
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved

1/4 cup whole parsley leaves
1/4 cup whole chervil leaves (optional)
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Shaved or grated Parmesan cheese to serve

Preparation

In a wide, shallow bowl, beat the eggs with the mustard, cayenne, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. In another wide shallow bowl, mix the panko with the Parmesan. Dip the chicken cutlets in the egg mixture, and allow any excess to drip back into the bowl. Dredge the cutlets in the panko mixture, pressing the chicken down so that the crumbs adhere. Place the cutlets on a baking sheet.

In a large skillet (the largest you have) heat 1/2 cup olive oil over medium high heat until hot. Cook the chicken in batches, without crowding the cutlets in the pan, until they are nicely browned on both sides and cooked throughout, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken to a serving platter, or place two cutlets on four individual plates.

While the chicken is cooking, place the arugula, tomatoes, parsley and chervil (if using) in a medium bowl. Drizzle the remaining tablespoon olive oil and the lemon juice over the greens, and season with salt and pepper. Toss, and place a mound of the salad on top of each cutlet, or just strew the whole salad mixture over the chicken on a serving platter. Top the salad with the shaved or grated Parmesan and serve. — AP

CARAMELIZED TOFU AND LOTS OF VEGGIES BECOME TASTY, PRETTY

By Melissa D'Arabian

If you aren't a tofu fan, listen up. This just might be the recipe that turns it all around for you, like it did for my husband and daughter. I toss extra firm tofu cubes in a lightly spicy (or not; your call) peanut sauce and then roast it until the edges are golden and lightly caramelized. These slightly sweet, peanut-ty cubes sit atop a bowl filled with enough veggies to load up on an array of vitamins, including some makeshift zucchini and carrot noodle-like ribbons. To make this a satisfying meal, I add brown rice, which is more filling than the more traditional rice noodles, and more filling than just sticking with the "veggie noodles."

I love the combo of cold veggies paired with warm rice and just-cooked tofu, but this dish works perfectly as a brown-bag option, served cold or at room temperature. Plus, it's pretty, with the array of vegetable colors, so it will brighten up your lunch, even if you are working through it, eating at your desk.

If you haven't considered including tofu even occasionally into your meal rotation, this ingredient is worth a second look. A 3-ounce-serving has about 10 grams of protein, and offers one-quarter of the day's calcium, plus a nice smattering of other minerals - all for about 90 calories.

Plus, tofu is incredibly wallet-friendly. Even organic, non-GMO tofu can be had for a couple of dollars a block. Tofu can be a divisive ingredient, I realize, so feel free to swap it for chicken or shrimp, a handful of cooked white beans, or even leave it off entirely - the bowl is filling on its own. No matter how you prepare it, you'll want to include this Thai Peanut Veggie Bowl in your repertoire.

THAI PEANUT VEGGIE BOWLS

Ingredients

Servings: 4
 Start to finish: 20 minutes
 2 tablespoons peanut butter (smooth or chunky)
 1 tablespoon honey
 2 tablespoons lime juice, plus 1 additional tablespoons
 2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
 1/4 cup reduced sodium soy sauce
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1-4 tablespoons water, depending on texture
 1 12-ounce block of organic extra firm tofu, blotted dry, cut into large cubes
 4 cups baby spinach
 1 cup shredded red cabbage
 2 medium zucchini
 2 medium carrots, peeled
 1/2 red pepper, cut into small sticks
 1 1/3 cups cooked brown rice, warm
 1 green onion, chopped
 1/4 cup chopped fresh herbs: cilantro, mint, basil (or mixed)
 Salt and pepper, if needed

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 400 F. and line a baking tray with parchment paper. In a medium bowl, place the peanut butter and honey and microwave long enough to soften, about 10 seconds. Whisk until smooth.

Add in the lime juice, vinegar, soy sauce, olive oil and red pepper flakes (if using) and whisk until smooth. Add water, 1 tablespoon at a time until thick, but pourable sauce is created. Remove half of the sauce to a small bowl and set aside. Toss the tofu cubes in the remaining peanut sauce in the medium bowl until coated. Place on the parchment paper and bake until edges begin to caramelize, about 20 minutes, turning halfway through bake time.

Meanwhile, make the zucchini and carrot ribbons by using a vegetable peeler to make as many long, wide strips as you can from each vegetable. Layer in four individual bowls (or to-go containers if making brown bag lunches): Spinach leaves, cabbage, red pepper, warm rice, carrot and zucchini ribbons, green onion and fresh herbs. Top with hot peanut-roasted tofu. Add the final tablespoon of lime juice to the reserved peanut sauce and drizzle over the bowls and serve, adding salt and pepper if desired.

Chef's Note: Chicken tenders or shrimp could be used instead of tofu; adjust the cook time accordingly. Or skip the roasting, and just top the bowl with pre-cooked chicken, shrimp or white beans.





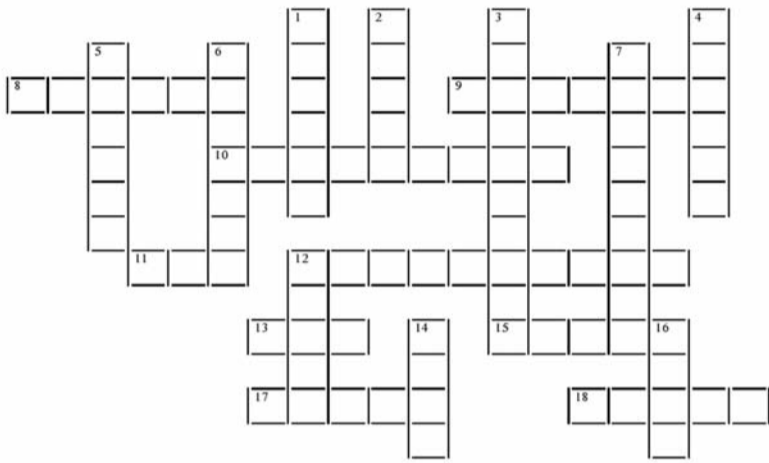
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Friday Times

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

Kids

No More Gunk! & OUCH! Sunburn!



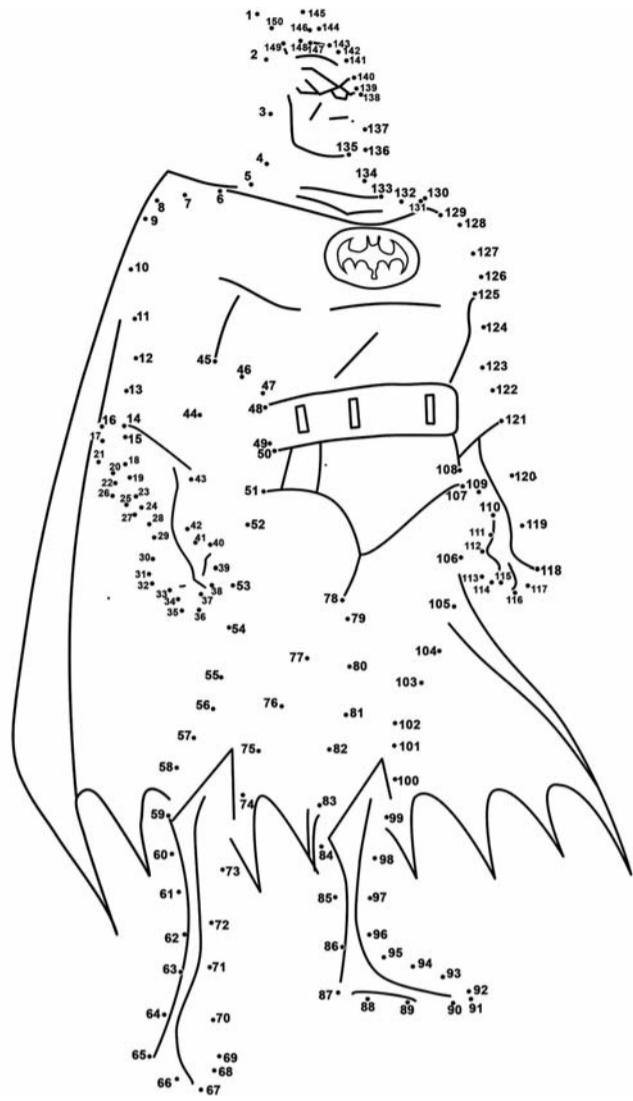
ACROSS

- 8 Builds up on teeth.
- 9 What you'll suffer if you don't protect your skin.
- 10 What you get when teeth rot.
- 11 Teeth will do this if not brushed.
- 12 Shades your eyes.
- 13 Protects your head in sun.
- 15 Author of No More Gunk! & OUCH! Sunburn!
- 17 Illustrator of No More Gunk! & OUCH! Sunburn!
- 18 Cleans between teeth.

DOWN

- 1 Feel like mouth is lined with this in the morning.
- 2 Do this twice every day.
- 3 Wear when playing sports.
- 4 Scrape this when you brush.
- 5 Hole in tooth.
- 6 Doctor who cleans teeth.
- 7 Rub on to prevent sunburn.
- 12 Where smart kids play at noon.
- 14 Yucky stuff on teeth if you don't brush.
- 16 Natural remedy for sunburn.

Connect the dots

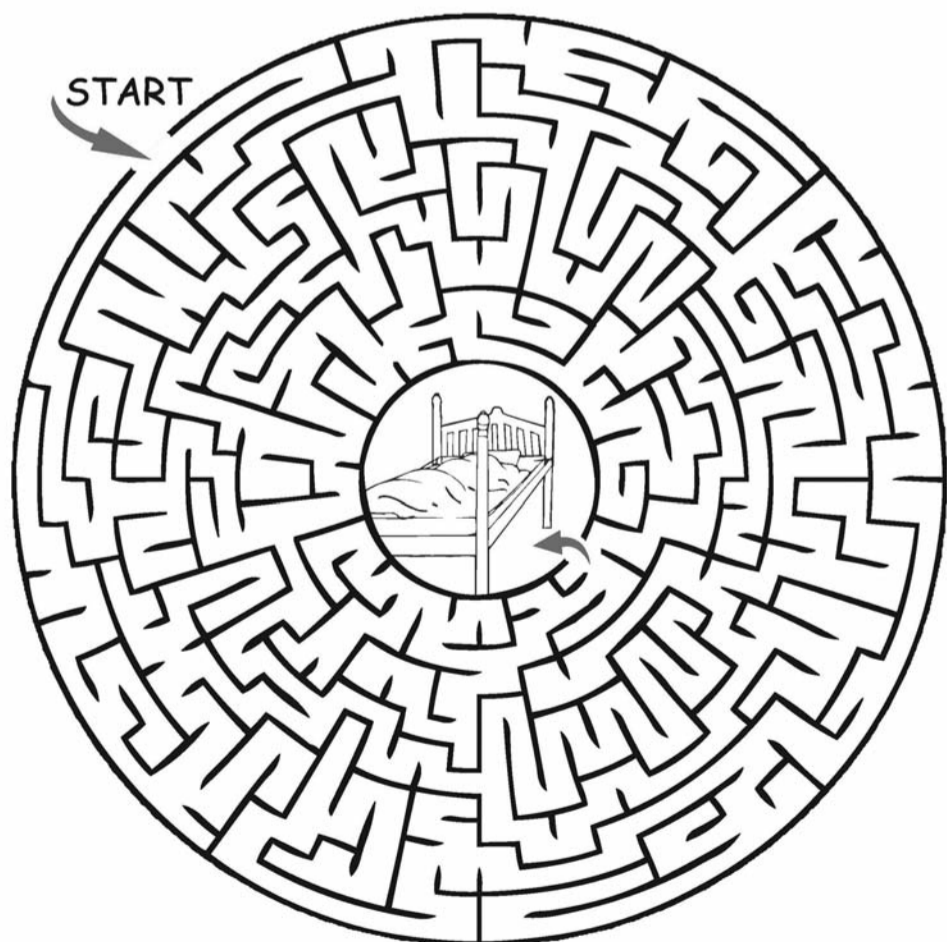
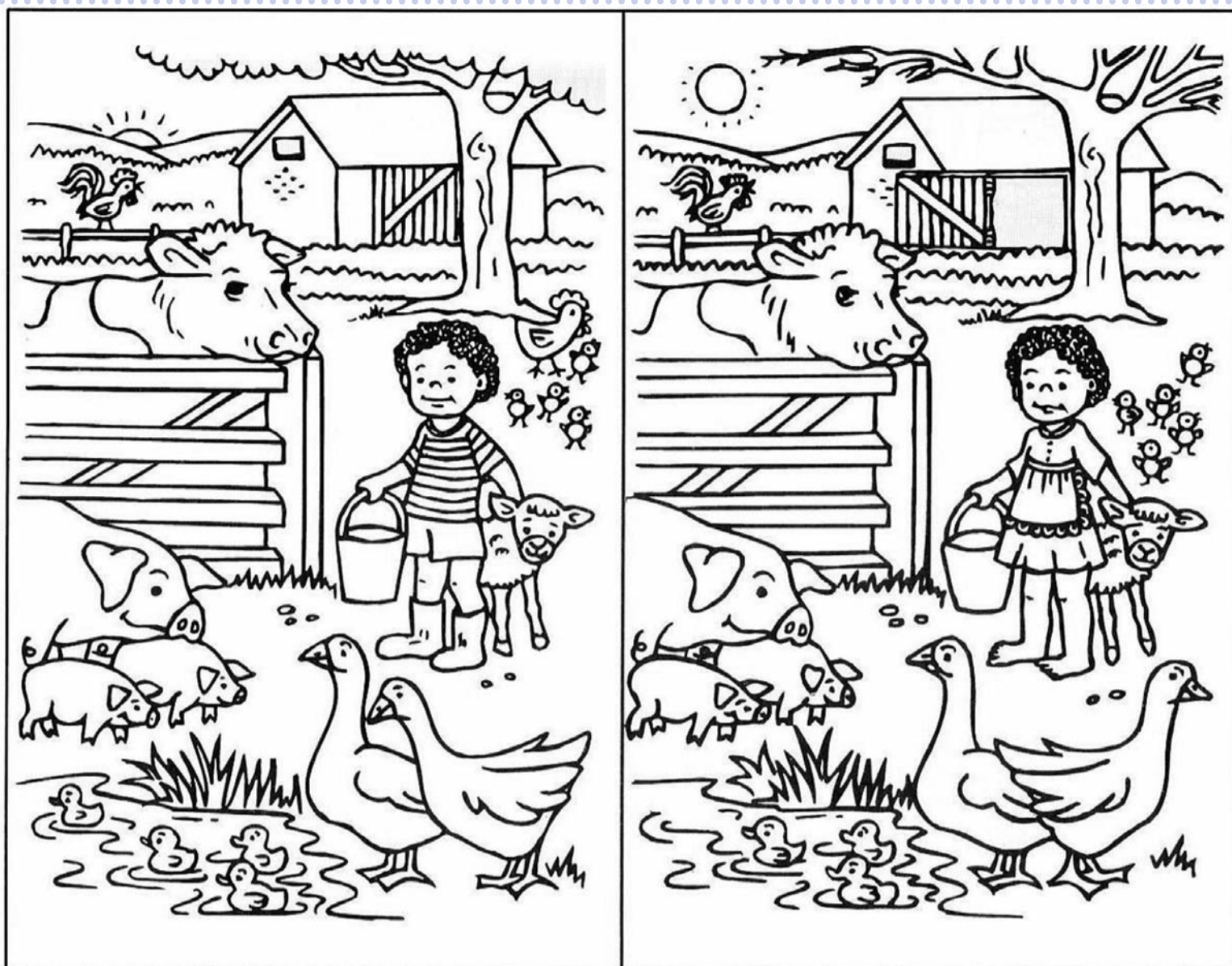


Color me!





Spot the difference



The Corn Field Catastrophe

AUTUMN	CORN	FIELD	GOOD	HAIL
HIDE	HUNT	LOST	NICHOLAS	RAHAB
RIGHT	SEEK	STEAL	WILL	WRONG

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



Friday Times

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

Travel

5 reasons to visit

Castellon

Castillo de Peniscola, the town's 14th-century castle, is the highest point in Peniscola



The hilltop town of Ares del Maestre

Valencia's myriad attractions are no secret, and the Costa Blanca is never short on visitors; but you don't hear a great deal about the province of Castellon, to the north of the Valencia region. This might all be set to change, however, after the long-awaited opening of the region's airport, so there's never been a better time to explore its Mediterranean beaches, mountains and medieval hilltop villages.

The fragrant Costa del Azahar

The 700-year Moorish invasion had a profound effect on the shaping of Spain, and nowhere more so than in this region, where ancient Arab methods of irrigation are still used in the fertile groves of orange, lemon, cherry and almond tree. 'Azahar' means 'orange blossom', which gives not only its name, but - in spring - its scent to this part of the world.

The Costa, like most Spanish coastlines, is a mix of quiet coves and built-up resorts, at its best just before or just after the peak months of July and August. It's not all sandy beaches, however, and there's plenty to see off-season, such as medieval Peniscola, the more workaday fishing port of Vinaros or the town of Benicassim, now a lively resort famous for its festival, but once the summer retreat of the

urban elite, whose houses can still be seen along the seafont.

Peniscola: From the retreat of an antipope to Hollywood film set

Dominating the northern stretch of coast, Peniscola is a handsome medieval walled town sitting high on a rocky isthmus. Its crowning glory is its 14th-century castle, which was built by the Knights Templar on the remains of an Arab fortress. The castle would later become the home of 'Papa Luna', as the Spanish know deposed Pope Benedict XIII, and you will see his name all over town.

Peniscola's other great claim to fame (in addition to its more recent portrayal as the city of Meereen in Season 6 of Game of Thrones) is as the setting for parts of El Cid, and the highest of its walls are, in fact, noth-

ing but a film set. They only add to the atmosphere of the picturesque old town, however, whose winding cobbled streets are undeniably touristy, but is still a charming place to while away an afternoon, particularly in the winter months. For a spot of towel space on the beach, you'll need to walk north away from the town, or otherwise there are a couple of rocky coves to explore to the south.

The craggy mountains and hilltop towns of the Maestrazgo

A world apart from the frenetic coastal strip of the Castellon region, the Maestrazgo (not to be confused with the adjacent Aragonese county of the same name) is a vast and sparsely inhabited region of low mountains and hilltop villages, grazed by Merino sheep - another legacy of the Moorish invasion. The Arabs, too,

were responsible for the terracing of foothills, meaning that crops could be grown on this inhospitable soil. Another distinctive feature of the landscape are the long threads of dry-stone walling, a local craft so prized that a group of Maestrazgo villages have applied to Unesco for Intangible Cultural Heritage status, and the town of Vilafranca has an entire (and surprisingly interesting) museum dedicated to it, the Museo de Pedra en Sec. It's a popular place for adventure sports, from mountain biking to canyoning and spelunking, and the area holds some splendid hiking and driving: as well as Vilafranca, towns to look out for include Morella and north of it, Ares del Maestre, a peaceful place with a huddle of medieval buildings and some prehistoric cave paintings. South of Morella is Sant Mateu, a lively town of grand buildings and tourist-free restaurants.



Costa del Azahar, the 'Orange Blossom Coast', owes its name to the region's abundance of citrus trees.



Fans gather by the tens of thousands for the Festival Internacional de Benicassim, one of Europe's major outdoor music festivals.



Benicassim's world-famous festival

The coastal town of Benicassim erupts every July for one of Spain's biggest music festivals, the Festival Internacional de Benicassim (FIB). Its most loyal fans (or 'Fibers', as they call themselves), are the British, who descend in their tens of thousands for a line-up that in 2017 includes the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Kasabian, Foals, The Weeknd and Deadmau5, as well as Spanish favourites Los Planetas and Love of Lesbian.

It's not hard to see what lies at the heart of its popularity with young foreigners more accustomed to UK prices and Glastonbury

mud, and what it lacks in rolling meadows FIB makes up for with the nearby beach, which is where exhausted party people sleep off the excesses of the night before. Be sure to bring plenty of suncream, a hat and comfortable trainers (you'll be four days walking on concrete), and if you can, it's worth shelling out for a VIP ticket or glamping, since the campsites can get absolutely rammed.

In August, the site hosts a reggae festival, Rototom Sunsplash, which pulls in some of the best-known names from dub, reggae and African music. In 2017 Youssou N'Dour, The Wailers, Toots and the Maytals and Mad Professor head a star-studded bill.

Morella's hilltop charm

Much has been written about the approach to Morella, which rises from the landscape like the fortress of an evil cartoon king, the serfs' houses huddled at the foot of its rather gloomy castle. It is an undeniably spectacular sight from afar, and is no less atmospheric (just a little less intimidating) within. The city walls - an impressive two kilometres long - are still intact, and punctuated with six gateways and 14 towers, some of which have been turned into quirky museums charting aspects of the town's history.

You could spend a day just wandering its narrow streets and sampling the local delicacies

- sheep's milk cheese, truffles in season, artisanal honey - or shopping for textiles (blanket- and rug-weaving is a local speciality), and it's worth factoring in time for lunch. For a small place, Morella has a good selection of restaurants, where you can try the locally produced lamb and charcuterie, as well as the paella and rice dishes more typical of the Castellon coast.

The town has no shortage of sights, either: its castle is in ruins, but it's worth the climb for the view alone, which is spectacular; below it is the Convento de San Francisco, which houses a set of macabre 16th-century paintings; and nearby is the Gothic basilica of Santa Maria la Mayor. — (www.lonelyplanet.com)



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A boss or superior in your workplace may not be very clear with a request of you this day. Give him or her feedback as quickly as you can. This will help to clarify if there is a need for more specific instructions. It might be good for you to volunteer to make a printout of the instructions for others, particularly if the work today may depend on team participants. This will certainly eliminate many frustrations and show off your ingenuity. Make it a point to help-if needed. You might feel respect for an older person this afternoon and be encouraged to help with some difficult chore. A sense of appreciation toward your loved ones creates energies of affection. At home this evening, a quiet evening can complete this most rewarding day.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You and a friend may take a little time to visit over the phone before the workday begins. Your plans are developing and the fun of the process is invigorating. You are quite excited about your day ahead and you look forward to all the adventures. You appreciate beautiful things and dress in the colors you enjoy the most. Today you may decide to break an old habit . . . You pride yourself in replacing the old with a new and positive habit. You eagerly trade a negative for a positive. This could mean less fat and more protein or no cigarettes and more water. You have plenty of enthusiasm and energy and may find yourself talking a little more than usual. Lots of people come up to you to wish you a happy day.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You show a tendency to engage in hard work in order to increase your financial security. You are tuned in to the thoughts and feelings of others and could be of tremendous help to an associate, stranger or friend at this time. You may find yourself serving to guide someone younger than you in matters of importance. You may also perceive how to proceed with plans and decisions with regard to your life situation. This is a time of study and learning, a cycle of mental challenge, curiosity and social growth. Such things are an end in themselves rather than a means to any other end. You have a clear vision into your own inner sense of values, how you appreciate and love. This evening is a good time to let others care for you.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

It is good that you are holding back on some project this morning. To rush into something new before finishing a current work project would cause unfinished business to remain too long. Perhaps, as you move through your day, you could keep notes or create an outline to the steps that will help you begin a new project. From time to time you have insightful pearls of wisdom to share and these could also be added to your note keeping. Your intuition is sharp and you are in a good place to do a little detective work. You are able to find and record successful shortcuts that will expedite work projects efficiently. As others begin to take on your suggestions, business production increases. You may think about setting new goals as you are enthusiastic!



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are likely to obtain success financially through the power of attraction. You may also spend a great deal of time beautifying your surroundings at work and at home. This could mean cleaning off your desk, throwing things away and perhaps adding one or two potted plants to enjoy. A picture or two of company gatherings might be fun. This afternoon you may carry your interest to add a spot of color here and there to your own home area. You might decide on a piece of art this evening that would look great over a couch or mantle. A hobby comes to mind, and you may look around where your photography equipment is stored and consider teaching or attending a refresher class in photography. You look forward to new people and new ideas.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your own inner need for growth may be slowed a short while. Remember the word here is short. Tension happens if you worry; it is best for now to let your expectations go but keep your goals in sight. This all amounts to treading softly and finding another door to your success. Sometimes life just needs to be put on hold while you help another person or relax and enjoy vacation time. Communicating well and timing, however, are most important now. Intelligent conversations in the workplace secure your future. This could be with customers as well as with your peers or with higher-ups. You may feel you are making slow progress, but your patience, timing and hard work really add to your success. An animal companion brings laughter this evening.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may feel ready to conquer the world today. There are opportunities for outdoor activities and perhaps some group sports with your friends later this afternoon. In the business place, you should be able to get your ideas across with ease. This could be the makings of a bright and witty day. Your communication skills are good and you are able to influence someone that needs encouragement. Clear decisions affecting others could be made now. This is a period of great mental activity and heightened communication with others. Intellectualism, the exchange of ideas and the idea of being smart as a fox are the things that have importance. You have lots of energy and can easily accomplish anything you put your mind to at this time.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Easy does it; think through your obligations before adding more choices to your list. If you spread yourself too thin, you could become resentful and you probably enjoy your freedom too much to put yourself in this position. Consider becoming as caring and praiseworthy of yourself as you are critical-balance in all things begins with you. You have plenty of opportunities to do this same thinking with a variety of people. This is a good time to think seriously about your career or work up to now-take stock of your progress. Your energies are positive with regard to financial gains-owning your own land or home is beginning to appeal to you more and more. This afternoon is a good time to be outside and enjoy nature-perhaps with others.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You can expect a little boost, some sort of extra support from those around you. The communication lines are open and you may feel that you could handle most anything. Your professional life is moving along quite well, but don't fall asleep at the wheel so to speak. This can be a productive time for using your imagination as well as your smart mind when it comes to new ways to be productive, gain new clients or find new products to fascinate the public. The time is now to tap into your pragmatic side and seek realism in all endeavors. You are able to put your thoughts into enthusiastic words and this allows you to captivate others. You and a friend may decide to write a play together. Don't give up . . . Together, you will find that magic happens.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You are ready to bust out of that feeling of being trapped. You probably created that feeling for yourself; however, there comes a time for change and you are feeling the need to execute a change. You have been thinking of improving your standing within the business where you work. You will find many opportunities will open up to you at this time-because you are paying attention to the goal you have now set. You may have a desire to learn and know a little about everything and everyone. You may find yourself joining a chess club or sitting around the lunchroom talking to friends about their latest likes and dislikes. This is a time of study and learning, a cycle of mental challenge, curiosity and social or intellectual growth.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You could ignore others in order to get your work completed. This is sometimes necessary and you may have to excuse yourself to a quieter area in order to make progress with some particular project now. This is not particularly a good time to try to get your ideas across to others. Your domestic life may have to run alone for the next few days-you may be heavily involved in work-related matters. If you are in educational surroundings, the same may be true. Financial issues you face this month may require some restructuring. Although you may be working late into the evening, there is still time to have a special time with someone you love. General good feelings and a sense of harmony make this an important time of healing and growth.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You are a curious person who has an urge to know a little about everything. Your instincts are good and when you sense a story is worth telling you may decide to follow it up and do a bit of writing that could be completed later for publication. Do not push any other writing idea until you have completed this undertaking. There is a time schedule issue to be regarded. Later this morning you move into a different direction and you can take care of a variety of business in the workplace. You may have an idea on how to improve workplace conditions-perhaps better lighting. You might have an ongoing list of ideas that could be submitted later. Your energies are most positive as well as contagious. At home tonight you return to your story writing.

COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Kuwait	00965
Albania	00355	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Algeria	00213	Laos	00856
Andorra	00376	Latvia	00371
Angola	00244	Lebanon	00961
Anguilla	001264	Liberia	00231
Antigua	001268	Libya	00218
Argentina	0054	Lithuania	00370
Armenia	00374	Luxembourg	00352
Australia	0061	Macau	00853
Austria	0043	Macedonia	00389
Bahamas	001242	Madagascar	00261
Bahrain	00973	Majorca	0034
Bangladesh	00880	Malawi	00265
Barbados	001246	Malaysia	0060
Belarus	00375	Maldives	00960
Belgium	0032	Mali	00223
Belize	00501	Malta	00356
Benin	00229	Marshall Islands	00692
Bermuda	001441	Martinique	00596
Bhutan	00975	Mauritania	00222
Bolivia	00591	Mauritius	00230
Bosnia	00387	Mayotte	00269
Botswana	00267	Mexico	0052
Brazil	0055	Micronesia	00691
Brunei	00673	Moldova	00373
Bulgaria	00359	Monaco	00377
Burkina	00226	Mongolia	00976
Burundi	00257	Montserrat	001664
Cambodia	00855	Morocco	00212
Cameroon	00237	Mozambique	00258
Canada	001	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Cape Verde	00238	Namibia	00264
Cayman Islands	001345	Nepal	00977
Central African Republic	00238	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Chad	00235	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Chile	0056	New Caledonia	00687
China	0086	New Zealand	0064
Colombia	0057	Nicaragua	00505
Comoros	00269	Niger	00227
Congo	00242	Nigeria	00234
Cook Islands	00682	Niue	00683
Costa Rica	00506	Norfolk Island	00672
Croatia	00385	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Cuba	0053	North Korea	00850
Cyprus	00357	Norway	0047
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Oman	00968
Czech Republic	00420	Pakistan	0092
Denmark	0045	Palau	00680
Diego Garcia	00246	Panama	00507
Djibouti	00253	Papua New Guinea	00675
Dominica	001767	Paraguay	00595
Dominican Republic	001809	Peru	0051
Ecuador	00593	Philippines	0063
Egypt	0020	Poland	0048
El Salvador	00503	Portugal	00351
England (UK)	0044	Puerto Rico	001784
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Qatar	00974
Eritrea	00291	Romania	0040
Estonia	00372	Russian Federation	007
Ethiopia	00251	Rwanda	00250
Falkland Islands	00500	Saint Helena	00290
Faroe Islands	00298	Saint Kitts	001869
Fiji	00679	Saint Lucia	001758
Finland	00358	Saint Pierre	00508
France	0033	Saint Vincent	001784
French Guiana	00594	Samoa US	00684
French Polynesia	00689	Samoa West	00685
Gabon	00241	San Marino	00378
Gambia	00220	Sao Tome	00239
Georgia	00995	Saudi Arabia	00966
Germany	0049	Scotland (UK)	0044
Ghana	00233	Senegal	00221
Gibraltar	00350	Seychelles	00284
Greece	0030	Sierra Leone	00232
Greenland	00299	Singapore	0065
Grenada	001473	Slovakia	00421
Guadeloupe	00590	Slovenia	00386
Guam	001671	Solomon Islands	00677
Guatemala	00502	Somalia	00252
Guinea	00224	South Africa	0027
Guyana	00592	South Korea	0082
Haiti	00509	Spain	0034
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Sri Lanka	0094
Honduras	00504	Sudan	00249
Hong Kong	00852	Suriname	00597
Hungary	0036	Swaziland	00268
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sweden	0046
Iceland	00354	Switzerland	0041
India	0091	Syria	00963
Indian Ocean	00873	Taiwan	00886
Indonesia	0062	Tanzania	00255
Iran	0098	Thailand	0066
Iraq	00964	Toga	00228
Ireland	00353	Tonga	00676
Italy	0039	Tokelau	00690
Ivory Coast	00225	Trinidad	001868
Jamaica	001876	Tunisia	00216
Japan	0081	Turkey	0090
Jordan	00962	Tuvalu	00688
Kazakhstan	007	Uganda	00256
Kenya	00254	Ukraine	00380
Kiribati	00686	United Arab Emirates	00976



00:20 Street Outlaws
01:10 What On Earth?
02:00 Sydney Harbour
02:50 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
03:40 Fast N' Loud
04:30 Storage Hunters UK
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 How Do They Do It?
06:00 World's Top 5
06:50 You Have Been Warned
07:40 Gold Rush: Parker's Trail
08:30 What On Earth?
09:20 Idris Elba: No Limits
10:10 Impossible Engineering
11:00 Rise Of The Warrior Apes
12:40 Supertruckers
13:30 Wheeler Dealers
14:20 Diesel Brothers
15:10 Harley And The Davidsons
16:00 Supertruckers
16:50 Supertruckers
17:40 Supertruckers
18:30 Supertruckers
19:20 Supertruckers
20:10 Supertruckers
21:00 Fast N' Loud
21:50 Diesel Brothers
22:40 Harley And The Davidsons
23:30 Supertruckers

00:00 Binny And The Ghost
00:25 Hank Zipzer
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:25 Hank Zipzer
05:45 The Hive
05:50 The 7D
06:00 Jessie
06:25 Jessie
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 The Zhuzhus
07:20 Elena Of Avalor
07:45 Bunk'd
08:10 Stuck In The Middle
08:35 Bizaardvark
09:00 Austin & Ally
09:50 Good Luck Charlie
10:40 Dog With A Blog
11:05 Dog With A Blog
11:30 Gravity Falls
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:00 Welcome To The Ronks
12:15 The Zhuzhus
12:40 Hank Zipzer
13:05 Star Darlings
13:10 Good Luck Charlie
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Jessie
14:25 Binny And The Ghost
14:50 Sunny Bunnies

14:55 The Zhuzhus
15:45 Elena Of Avalor
16:10 Liv And Maddie
16:35 Teen Beach 2
18:25 Alex & Co.
18:50 Best Friends Whenever
19:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
19:20 Binny And The Ghost
19:45 Austin & Ally
20:10 Jessie
20:35 Cracked
20:40 Disney The Lodge
21:05 Girl Meets World
21:30 That's So Raven
21:55 Star Darlings
22:00 Shake It Up
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 Henry Hugglemonster
00:15 Calimero
00:30 Art Attack
00:55 Zou
01:05 Loopdidoo
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Zou
02:05 Art Attack
02:30 The Hive
02:40 Loopdidoo
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:10 Art Attack
03:35 Loopdidoo
03:50 Calimero
04:05 Art Attack
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
04:45 Zou
05:00 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster

05:45 Loopdidoo
06:00 Zou
06:15 Calimero
06:30 Loopdidoo
06:45 Henry Hugglemonster
07:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
07:25 Sofia The First
07:50 The Lion Guard
08:15 PJ Masks
08:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
09:05 Goldie & Bear
09:35 The Lion Guard
10:00 Sofia The First
10:30 Doc McStuffins
10:55 Miles From Tomorrow
11:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
11:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
12:15 Gummi Bears
12:40 Miles From Tomorrow
13:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
13:35 PJ Masks
14:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
14:30 The Lion Guard
15:00 Sofia The First
15:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
15:55 Sofia The First
16:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
16:50 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
17:15 Sofia The First
17:40 Doc McStuffins
18:05 PJ Masks
18:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
19:05 The Lion Guard
20:05 Goldie & Bear
20:35 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
21:00 Gummi Bears
21:25 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
21:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:00 Doc McStuffins
22:55 PJ Masks
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
23:35 The Hive



06:00 Gravity Falls
06:25 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
06:50 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
07:15 Milo Murphy's Law
07:25 Danger Mouse
07:40 Supa Strikas
08:05 Two More Eggs
08:10 K.C. Undercover
08:35 Counterfeit Cat
09:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
09:25 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
09:50 Future-Worm!
10:20 Pair Of Kings
10:45 Pair Of Kings
11:10 Danger Mouse
11:35 Supa Strikas
12:00 Supa Strikas
12:30 Gravity Falls
12:55 Annedroids
13:20 Pair Of Kings
13:45 Pair Of Kings
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Pair Of Kings
14:40 Pair Of Kings
15:05 Hercules
16:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
16:50 Walk The Prank
17:15 Mech-X4
17:40 Milo Murphy's Law
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:10 Gravity Falls
18:35 Mighty Med
19:00 Atomic Puppet
19:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
19:55 K.C. Undercover
20:20 Mech-X4
20:45 Mighty Med
21:10 Walk The Prank
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
22:10 Ultimate Spider-Man
22:35 Boyster
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am

16:00 It's Not Rocket Science
16:55 Surprise Surprise
17:50 Coach Trip
18:45 Emmerdale
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Guess This House
21:00 It's Not Rocket Science
21:55 Surprise Surprise
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Emmerdale



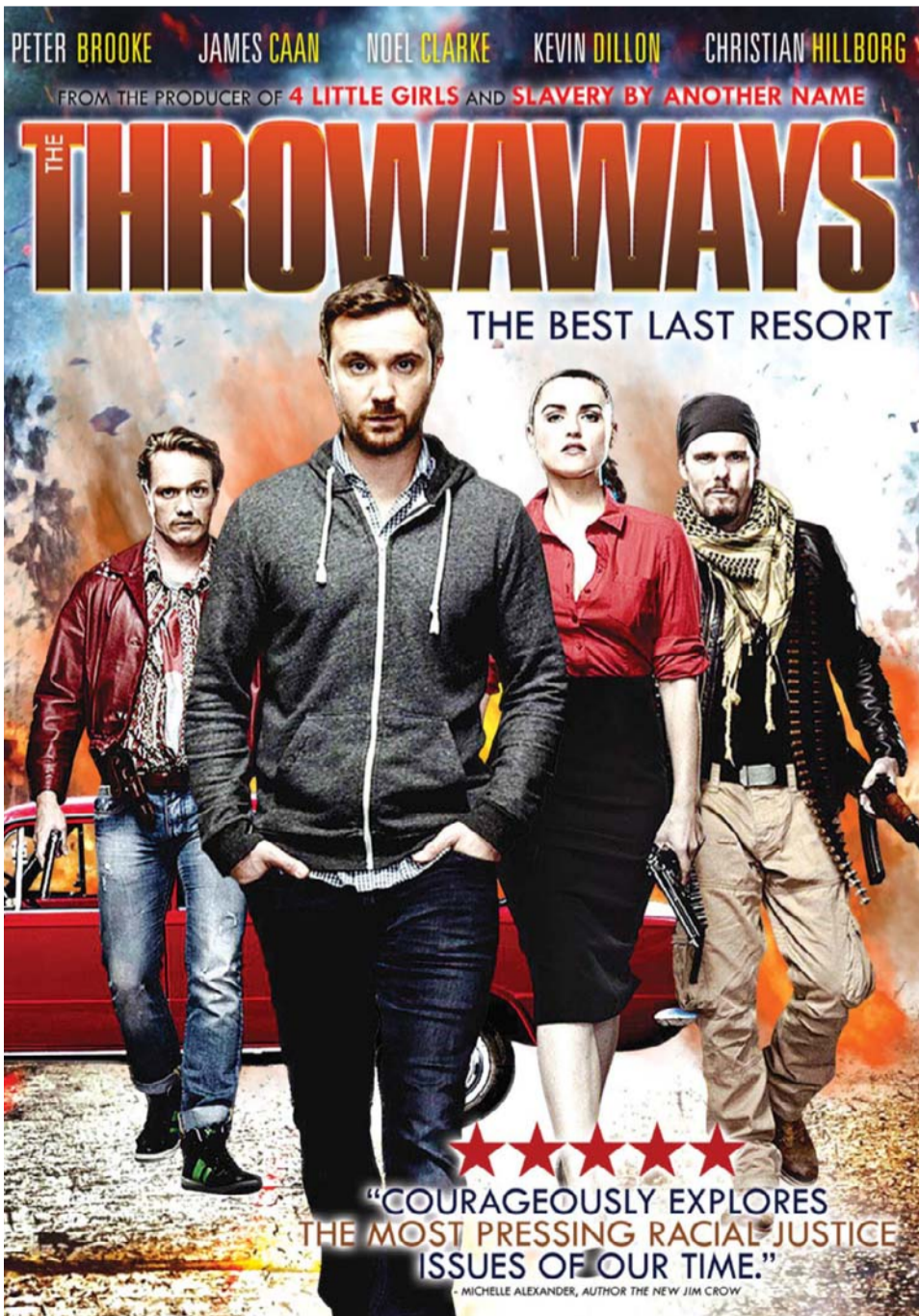
00:15 Access 360 World Heritage
01:10 Lucky Chow
01:40 Dog Whisperer
02:35 What's For Sale?
03:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
03:55 Street Food Around The World
04:25 My Dubai
04:50 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
05:45 Lucky Chow
06:15 Hotel India
07:10 Dog Whisperer
08:05 What's For Sale?
08:30 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
09:25 Street Food Around The World
09:55 My Dubai
10:20 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
11:15 Lucky Chow
11:45 Hotel India
12:40 Croatia's Finest
13:05 My Dubai
13:35 What's For Sale?
14:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
14:55 Street Food Around The World
15:25 Tom's Istanbul Delight
15:50 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
16:45 Poh & Co.
17:15 Trekking The Great Wall
18:10 Living Free With Kimi Werner
19:05 Street Food Around The World
19:30 Tom's Istanbul Delight
20:00 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
21:00 Trekking The Great Wall
22:00 Poh & Co.
22:25 Living Free With Kimi Werner
23:20 My Dubai



00:00 The First 48
01:00 The Jail: 60 Days In
02:30 Homicide Hunter
03:30 Cold Case Files
04:30 The Jail: 60 Days In
06:00 My Crazy Ex
07:00 My Crazy Ex
08:00 Evil Up Close
09:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
10:00 Homicide Hunter
11:00 The First 48
12:00 The First 48
13:00 My Crazy Ex
14:00 Evil Up Close
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
17:00 The First 48
18:00 The First 48
19:00 Evil Up Close
20:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 Killer Kids
23:00 Deadly Wives



00:30 Science Of The Movies
01:20 Bad Universe
02:10 Raging Nature
03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
03:25 Destroyed In Seconds
03:50 Don't Drive Here
04:40 How It's Made
05:05 How It's Made
05:30 Strangest Weather On Earth
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:25 Kids vs Film
07:50 Bad Dog
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Science Of The Movies
10:20 Mythbusters
11:10 Bad Dog
12:00 Don't Drive Here
12:50 How It's Made
13:15 How It's Made
13:40 Strangest Weather On Earth
14:30 Doki
14:55 Kids vs Film
15:20 Bad Dog
16:10 Science Of The Movies
17:00 Battle Bots
17:50 Don't Blink
18:15 Don't Blink
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
19:05 Destroyed In Seconds
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Mythbusters
21:10 Battle Bots
22:00 Don't Blink
22:25 Don't Blink
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds
23:15 Destroyed In Seconds
23:40 Don't Drive Here



THE THROWAWAYS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



00:05 Mariah's World
01:50 E! News
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 WAGs
04:40 WAGs
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
06:55 E! News
07:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop
09:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
12:00 E! News
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 E! News
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop
16:10 Celebrity Style Story
16:40 Live From The Red Carpet
18:05 Fashion Police
19:00 E! News
20:00 So Cosmo
23:00 E! News
23:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



00:10 The Chase
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:30 Guess This House
03:25 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
04:20 5 Star Family Reunion
05:15 Come Date With Me Australia
06:10 The Chase
07:05 Guess This House
08:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
09:00 5 Star Family Reunion
10:00 Come Date With Me Australia
10:55 The Chase
11:50 Guess This House
12:45 Emmerdale
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 The Chase
15:10 Guess This House



00:20 Mother Croc
01:10 Unlikely Animal Friends: Bark-Tacular
02:00 Croc Invasion
02:50 Animals Gone Wild
03:45 Man V. Monster
04:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
05:35 Croc Invasion
06:30 Animals Gone Wild
07:25 Man V. Monster
08:20 Ultimate Animal Countdown
09:15 Animal Fight Club
10:10 India's Wild Edens
11:05 Animal Mummification
12:00 Life On The Barrier Reef
12:55 Puma: Lion Of The Andes
13:50 Animals Gone Wild
14:45 Animal Fight Club
15:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
16:35 Python Hunters
17:30 Wild Vietnam
18:25 Operation Sumatran Rhino
19:20 Animal Fight Club
20:10 Ultimate Animal Countdown
21:00 Python Hunters
21:50 Wild Vietnam
22:40 Operation Sumatran Rhino
23:30 Life On The Barrier Reef



00:10 Origins: The Journey Of Humankind
01:00 Inside
02:00 Locked Up Abroad
03:00 Genius
04:00 Origins: The Journey Of Humankind
05:00 Street Genius
05:30 Street Genius
06:00 Parched
07:00 Scam City
08:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
08:30 Danger Decoded
09:00 Street Genius

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

09:30 Street Genius
10:00 Locked Up Abroad
11:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
12:00 Mystery Caves Of Guangxi
13:00 Helicopter Wars
14:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
14:30 Danger Decoded
15:00 Scam City
16:00 Locked Up Abroad
17:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
18:00 Underworld, Inc.
19:00 Scam City
20:00 Locked Up Abroad



00:03 Max & Ruby
00:26 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:37 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:47 The Day Henry Met
00:52 The Day Henry Met
00:58 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:20 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:42 Zack & Quack
02:04 Team Umizoomi
02:26 Olive The Ostrich
02:31 Olive The Ostrich
02:36 Paw Patrol
02:59 Little Charmers
03:11 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
03:23 Dora The Explorer
03:45 Max & Ruby
04:08 Bubble Guppies
04:32 Shimmer And Shine
04:55 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
05:17 Zack & Quack
05:28 The Day Henry Met
05:33 The Day Henry Met
05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
06:00 Rusty Rivets
06:12 Paw Patrol
06:37 Dora The Explorer
07:00 Zack & Quack
07:21 Dora And Friends
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
08:07 Paw Patrol
08:30 Shimmer And Shine
08:53 Dora The Explorer
09:15 The Day Henry Met
09:22 Paw Patrol
09:45 Rusty Rivets
09:57 Bubble Guppies
10:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
10:40 Zack & Quack
10:52 Team Umizoomi
11:15 Shimmer And Shine
11:38 Louie
11:45 Louie
11:53 Olive The Ostrich
11:58 Olive The Ostrich
12:03 Max & Ruby
12:26 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:47 The Day Henry Met
12:52 The Day Henry Met
12:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:41 Zack & Quack
14:03 Team Umizoomi
14:25 Olive The Ostrich
14:30 Olive The Ostrich
14:35 Paw Patrol
14:58 Little Charmers
15:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
15:22 Dora The Explorer
15:44 Max & Ruby
16:07 Bubble Guppies
16:31 Shimmer And Shine
16:54 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
17:17 Zack & Quack
17:29 The Day Henry Met
17:34 The Day Henry Met
17:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
18:00 Rusty Rivets
18:13 Paw Patrol
18:37 Dora The Explorer
19:00 Zack & Quack
19:21 Dora And Friends
19:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
20:07 Paw Patrol
20:30 Shimmer And Shine
20:53 Dora The Explorer
21:15 The Day Henry Met
21:22 Paw Patrol
21:45 Rusty Rivets
21:57 Bubble Guppies



THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER ON OSN MOVIES HD



ACTION

00:00 Sanitarium
02:00 Double Team
04:00 Christmas Twister
06:00 The Tower
08:15 Metro
10:15 Double Team
12:00 The Throwaways
13:45 The Tower
16:00 I Am Number Four
18:00 Bad Company
20:00 The Transporter: Refueled
21:45 Insurgent
23:45 Never Back Down: No Surrender



FAMILY

01:00 Hotel For Dogs
02:45 Peter Pan Live!
05:00 Herbie Fully Loaded
06:45 Ducktales: The Movie
08:15 Hotel For Dogs
10:00 Charlotte's Web
11:45 Herbie Fully Loaded
13:45 The Emperor's New Groove
15:15 Meet The Robinsons
17:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Curse Of The Black Pearl
19:30 The Borrowers
21:00 The Parent Trap
23:15 Meet The Robinsons



00:00 Poltergeist
01:45 Unstoppable
03:30 One Fine Day
05:30 Big
07:30 Last Knights
09:45 Up Close And Personal
12:00 Unstoppable
13:45 Gridiron Gang
16:00 The Chronicles Of Narnia: Voyage Of The Dawn...
18:00 Goldfinger
20:00 The Color Of Money



COMEDY

01:15 Awful Nice
03:00 Kicking And Screaming
04:45 Bad Words
06:15 Ride
08:00 Junior
10:00 Kicking And Screaming
11:45 Ride
13:30 Junior
15:30 Baby's Day Out
17:15 Lovesick



FESTIVAL

00:15 Gainsbourg: A Heroic Life
02:15 Before I Disappear
04:00 From Rocky To Creed The Legacy Continues
05:00 My Old Lady
06:45 Neil Young: Heart Of Gold
08:30 Wildlife
10:15 Before I Disappear
12:00 A Country Called Home
13:45 The Beat Beneath My Feet
15:15 I Believe In Miracles
17:00 Life Of A King
18:45 Alex Of Venice
20:15 The Zero Theorem
22:00 Taxi Driver



KIDS

01:00 The Wild Thornberrys Movie
02:30 Oops Noah Is Gone
04:15 The Tale Of Despereaux
06:00 Moomins And The Comet Chase
07:30 Egon And Donci
09:00 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
10:30 The Nutcracker Sweet
12:00 The Wild Thornberrys Movie
13:45 Frog Kingdom
15:30 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
17:00 Sava
18:45 The Adventures Of Rocky And Bullwinkle
20:30 Frog Kingdom
22:00 Egon And Donci
23:30 Sava



00:30 How Do They Do It?
00:55 Food Factory
01:20 Home Factory
02:10 Superhuman Showdown
03:00 Nextworld
03:48 Mythbusters
04:36 How Do They Do It?
05:00 Food Factory
05:24 Home Factory
05:48 Home Factory
06:12 Superhuman Showdown
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 Nextworld
08:14 Mythbusters
09:02 Superhuman Showdown
09:50 How Do They Do It?
10:14 Food Factory
10:38 Home Factory
11:02 Home Factory
11:26 Nextworld
12:14 Mythbusters
13:02 How Do They Do It?
13:26 Food Factory
13:50 Superhuman Showdown
14:38 Nextworld
15:26 Home Factory
15:50 Home Factory
16:14 Mythbusters
17:02 Superhuman Showdown
17:50 Nextworld
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 You Have Been Warned
20:20 How Do They Do It?
20:45 Food Factory
21:10 Superhuman Showdown
22:00 You Have Been Warned
22:50 Nextworld
23:40 Mythbusters



00:20 Oprah's Master Class
01:10 90 Days To Wed
02:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
02:25 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
02:50 Love, Lust Or Run
03:15 Cake Boss
03:35 Oprah's Master Class
04:20 Little People, Big World
04:45 Little People, Big World
05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
06:00 Little People, Big World
06:25 Little People, Big World
06:50 Little People, Big World
08:30 Outdaughters: Busby Quints
09:20 Little People, Big World
10:10 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
11:00 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
11:50 Love, Lust Or Run
12:15 Love, Lust Or Run
12:40 Love, Lust Or Run
13:05 Love, Lust Or Run
13:30 Love, Lust Or Run
13:55 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
14:45 Oprah's Master Class
15:35 Cake Boss
16:00 Cake Boss
16:25 Cake Boss
16:50 Cake Boss
17:15 Cake Boss
17:40 Are You Fitter Than A Pensioner?
18:30 Promzillas
19:20 Outdaughters: Busby Quints
19:20 Little People, Big World
21:00 Outdaughters: Busby Quints
21:50 Little People, Big World
22:40 My Extreme Excess Skin
23:30 Return To Amish

Mysteries Solved
18:00 Brad Meltzer's Lost History
19:00 Mud Men
20:00 America's Book Of Secrets
21:00 Ancient Aliens
22:00 Smartest Guy In The Room
22:30 Smartest Guy In The Room
23:00 The Universe



00:20 Lost Worlds
01:10 Billion Dollar Wreck
02:00 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
02:50 Storage Wars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Pawn Stars
05:00 Mountain Men
06:00 Lost Worlds
06:50 Time Team
07:40 Battle 360
08:30 Ax Men
09:20 Ice Road Truckers
10:10 Swamp People
11:00 American Pickers
11:50 Big Easy Motors
12:40 American Restoration
13:30 Hunting Hitler
15:10 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle
16:00 Swamp People
19:20 Leepu And Pitbull
20:10 Ice Road Truckers
21:00 American Pickers
21:50 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour



00:00 Tia Mowry At Home
01:00 Dinner At Tiffani's
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:00 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
07:00 The Kitchen
08:00 The Pioneer Woman
09:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
10:00 Cooking For Real
11:00 The Kitchen
12:00 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen
17:00 Cooking For Real
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Iron Chef America
20:00 Jenny Morris Cooks Morocco
21:00 Reza Spice Prince Of Vietnam
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



BEFORE I DISAPPEAR ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL HD

Word Search Puzzles

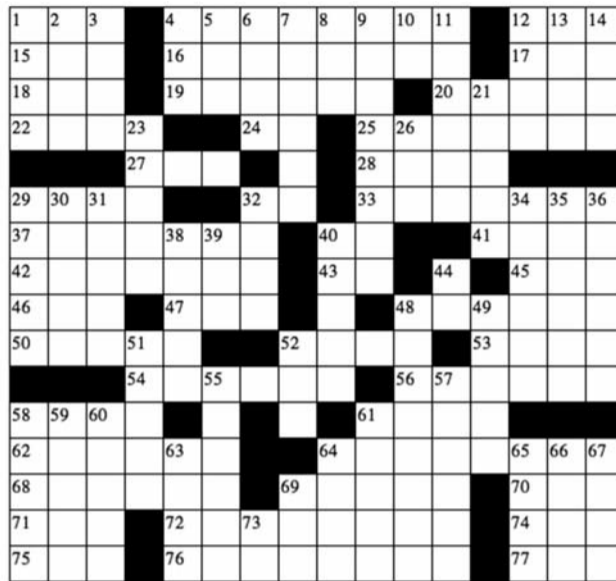
90's Songs 4

Find and circle all of the 1990's songs that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional song.

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

- ADIA DISARM LATELY SAY IT
ALRIGHT EVERLONG LOUNGIN SLIDE
ANGEL EVERYTHING MASTERPIECE SUKIYAKI
ANYTHING FINALLY MISSING TELL ME
ANYWHERE FOOLISH GAMES MR. JONES TIME
BIG POPPA HERO NO DIGGITY TOO CLOSE
BLACK CAT I KNOW NO RAIN TWO PRINCES
CRAZY I SWEAR NOBODY KNOWS UNBELIEVABLE
CREEP INFORMER NOT TONIGHT WANNABE
DEAR MAMA JUMP AROUND RUN-AROUND WHO DAT
DECEMBER JUMPER RUNAWAY TRAIN WITHOUT YOU
DISAPPEAR LAST KISS SAVE TONIGHT YOU'LL SEE

CROSSWORD 1598



ACROSS

- 1. Edible tuber of any of several yams.
4. A person who eats human flesh.
12. Type genus of the family Myacidae.
15. The compass point midway between east and southeast.
16. The state of being split or cleft.
17. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
18. Aromatic bulb used as seasoning.
19. Salted roe of sturgeon or other large fish.
20. Wild ox of the Malay Archipelago.
22. A pilgrimage to Mecca.
24. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
25. Island country in the Atlantic east of Florida and Cuba.
27. A newt in its terrestrial stage of development.
28. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
29. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
33. Any tropical Asian palm of the genus Calamus.
37. (Old Testament) Wife of Isaac and mother of Jacob and Esau.
41. A Loloish language.
42. A city of east central Mexico (west of Veracruz).
43. An associate degree in nursing.
45. The habitation of wild animals.
46. The molecular weight of a substance expressed in grams.
47. A doctor's degree in dental medicine.
50. Squash bugs.
53. An independent group of closely related Chadic languages spoken in the area between the Biu-Mandara and East Chadic languages.
54. A player who kicks the football.
56. Pleasantly occupied.
58. Medium-sized tree having glossy lanceolate leaves.
62. Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
68. Small often spiny insectivorous mammal of Madagascar.
70. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
71. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
72. Showing empathy or ready comprehension of others' states.
74. A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.

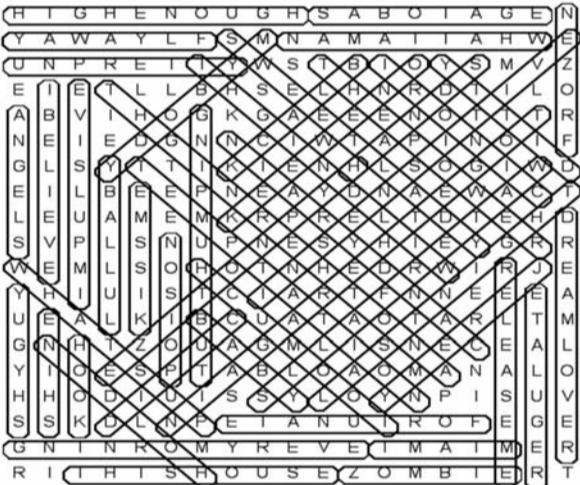
- 75. A boy or man.
76. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
77. Related by blood.

DOWN

- 1. Not only so, but.
2. The largest continent with 60% of the earth's population.
3. A form of rummy using two decks and four jokers.
4. Being one hundred more than two hundred.
5. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
6. A river in northwestern Russia flowing generally west into the Gulf of Finland.
7. A worker who attaches something by nailing it.
8. Any of various coarse shrubby plants of the genus Iva with small greenish flowers.
9. A tower that is part of a defensive structure (such as a castle).
10. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
11. Of an instrument of certain death.
12. Injure or wound seriously and leave permanent disfiguration or mutilation.
13. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
14. (Greek mythology) Greek god of war.
21. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
23. A city in southwestern Spain that is famous for making sherry.
26. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
30. Argentine soldier who became president of Argentina (1895-1974).
31. A promontory in northern Morocco opposite the Rock of Gibraltar.
32. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Republic of Chad or its people or language.
34. A state in southeastern India on the Bay of Bengal (south of Andhra Pradesh).
35. Physical discomfort (as mild sickness or depression).
36. In the Arabian Nights a hero who tells of the fantastic adventures he had in his voyages.
38. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
39. A defensive missile designed to shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles.
40. An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
44. The district occupied entirely by the city of Washington.
48. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
49. A doctor's degree in musical arts.
51. Someone who skis.
52. (of champagne) Moderately dry.
55. Grayish baboon of southern and eastern Africa.
57. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
59. Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
60. A gland in which gametes (sex cells) are produced.
61. A genus of Indriidae.
63. A short high tone produced as a signal or warning.
64. Wife of Ramachandra.
65. Framework for holding objects.
66. Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
67. A symptom of some physical hurt or disorder.
69. Of a light yellowish-brown color n 1.
73. A soft yellowish-white trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Yesterday's Solution

90's Songs 3



- ANGELS HANDS LULLABY THE POWER
ANOTHER NIGHT HIGH ENOUGH MIAMI THIS HOUSE
BABY HOLD ON MY BODY TOGETHER AGAIN
BLACK HOOK ONE WEEK TOO MUCH
CANDY RAIN HYPNOTIZE POISON TUBTHUMPING
CUPID I BELIEVE REGULATE UNPRETTY
DITTY IMPULSIVE RELEASE ME WATERFALLS
DREAMLOVER INSENSITIVE SABOTAGE WHAT'S UP
EVERY MORNING IRONIC SHINE WHATTA MAN
FLY AWAY JEREMY SHY GUY WILD NIGHT
FORTUNATE KISS ME SWEET LADY ZOMBIE
FROZEN LAST NIGHT TEMPTATION

The hidden song title is: SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT

Daily SuDoku

5x5 grid for Daily SuDoku with numbers 5, 8, 9, 3, 6, 6, 8, 5, 4, 1, 4, 8, 5, 1, 7, 9, 9, 2, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 3, 2, 7, 9.

Yesterday's Solution

9x9 grid for Yesterday's Solution with numbers 4, 1, 8, 6, 7, 2, 9, 3, 5, 6, 9, 5, 4, 1, 3, 8, 2, 7, 3, 2, 7, 8, 9, 5, 6, 4, 1, 5, 4, 1, 9, 3, 7, 2, 6, 8, 7, 3, 6, 1, 2, 8, 5, 9, 4, 9, 8, 2, 5, 4, 6, 7, 1, 3, 8, 7, 4, 2, 6, 1, 3, 5, 9, 1, 6, 3, 7, 5, 9, 4, 8, 2, 2, 5, 9, 3, 8, 4, 1, 7, 6.

Yesterday's Solution

15x15 grid for Yesterday's Solution with words GAG, SANDARAC, BIRD, ADE, IDEOLOGY, AAR, NAN, DEW LAP, NGWEE, SPIKELETT, EDODAG, UTENSIL, SWAMPY, ATE, ABYE, IG, TRUCE, OPEL, SAMOA, HUNKPAPA, KB, GAND, EMF, DERV, AB, PIA, REEDMACE, LABLAB, ENDEAR, THAI, LENA, AC, PO, CHA, WANNABE, AMOEBI, ABAD, DESMODUS, AGA, DED, ATABRINE, ALB, IDA, MAHARAJA, LUG.

FROM GRAVE TO LAB: SHE THROWS SCIENCE AT COLD CASES

CHARLESTON: Ryan Brown grew up playing sports and the cello, shooting games of pool in his basement, surrounded by friends. Two weeks before his 28th birthday, Ryan died in the bathroom of a department store. Alone. He was killed by a heroin overdose, yet another victim of the scourge ravaging American communities, most acutely throughout economically depressed, former industrial regions of the country.

"I don't want one more person to die. I'm coming out of the closet about addiction," Ryan's mother, Cece Brown said. Perhaps nowhere is America's opioid crisis more severe than in Ryan's native West Virginia, a mountainous state of less than two million people west of the nation's capital. Coal was once king here, but now is in decline with little to replace it, leaving the local economy badly damaged, and Wal-Mart as the state's biggest employer.

It is a place where most of those looking for hope leave in search of opportunity, and where those without hope often turn to drugs. Opioids permeate entire communities, with devastating effects: 150 of every 1,000 babies are already addicted at birth, suffering painful withdrawal symptoms. In Huntington, a city in the state's northwest corner portrayed as the epicenter of the nationwide crisis, 28 people overdosed—two fatally—on a single day last August after injecting heroin laced with fentanyl, a dangerous synthetic opioid. "This epidemic doesn't discriminate," the town's mayor Steve Williams said. "Our youngest overdose was 12 years old. The oldest was 77."

Shining a light

In Cece and Bobby Brown's small house on a side street of the state capital Charleston, the loss of their younger son feels like a fresh wound. Both stress Ryan had none of the stereotypical signs of a drug user. He excelled at math, won a college scholarship, made friends easily and loved to crack jokes. But he came home after his second year at the University of West

Virginia addicted to heroin. His parents only found out when he collapsed of an overdose in the bathroom. Despite years of treatment, and a long period when his life seemed on track, two years ago he went out to the shopping mall with a friend, and never came back. Their willingness to talk and shine a light on the problem, despite the continuing stigma that addicts and their families face, is the tip of the spear in a new strategy to battle the scourge.

From painkillers... to heroin

The vast majority of heroin users nationwide resorted to that drug after becoming addicted to powerful pain medications like oxycodone, according to the US Drug Enforcement Agency. The highly addictive narcotics flooded into West Virginia in mind-boggling numbers for years, and unlike heroin were distributed in the open, with the help of "pain clinics" that weren't overly strict about writing prescriptions, and pharmacies that made no effort to keep tabs on how many pills went out the door.

Among those addicts are many older, retired coal miners, who were injured on the job but continued working with the help of pain medication. When their prescriptions were cut off after authorities finally cracked down on the supply—they turned to heroin, sometimes smoking rather than injecting it. But arresting traffickers and users, suing drug companies and distributors and shutting down pharmacies that pumped out pills, has not been enough to stem the flow of drugs.

'Full arsenal'

"We can't arrest our way out of this problem"—that is the new mantra of all those involved in the fight. The economic incentives for dealers are powerful: one kilogram of fentanyl, for instance, costs \$5,000 and makes a million tablets sold at \$20 each for a gain of \$20 million. And there are too many facets to the crisis: the

overwhelmed jail and foster care systems; the shortage of treatment options and struggles with health insurance coverage; the job prospects of former addicts with a felony on their record.

A new DEA pilot program called the 360 Strategy is working with law enforcement and community groups to divert addicts into treatment rather than jail, and educate about the dangers of prescription drugs and heroin. Despite the stepped-up fight, the numbers state-wide don't look good: deaths are up, it still has the highest overdose rate in the country, and 43 percent of people imprisoned last year had a substance abuse issue so acute they needed immediate medical attention. "Right now under any measurement we are in the midst of a

downward spiral and failing miserably," Huntington's mayor said. "I am not putting lipstick on a pig." Attacking a scourge of this magnitude, he says, will require a "full arsenal"—including talking about the problem.

Heartbreak

Ryan's mother Cece says she wants people to know opioid addiction can happen to anyone, but that there is hope. That hope is sometimes hard to see on the streets of Huntington, where one police officer told AFP "90 percent of what we do is drug related." One addict being arrested, described the devastation in his life: "I've lost the place I stayed at, I've lost a lot of good friends," he said. "Now that I come to think about it, it's ruined my life a lot." — AFP

KOMODO DRAGON ATTACKS A TOURIST

LABUAN BAJO: A komodo dragon, one of the world's largest lizards, attacked a tourist in Indonesia who was trying to photograph the giant creatures feasting on a goat, police said yesterday. Singaporean Loh Lee Aik, 67, was rushed to hospital with leg injuries after being pounced on by the venomous creature. Sudyono, the head of the Komodo National Park-islands in central Indonesia that form a protected habitat for the lizards—said it was the first attack by one of the creatures on a foreign tourist since 1974, when a visitor from abroad was killed. Loh had been staying at a village on Komodo island before setting off in search of the lizards Wednesday.

But he failed to take a park ranger with him, something all visitors to the islands are advised to do. "He was probably very excited taking pictures of the komodo, he didn't realise another komodo was approaching him and then he was bitten," local police spokesman Jules Abraham Abast said. "Luckily it was a small komodo that

bit him." He was given first aid at the site before being taken by boat to nearby Flores island, where he was admitted to hospital. Abast and the hospital said he was in a stable condition. The attack happened during the Komodo mating season, which runs from May to August and is a time when the lizards are more aggressive.

Abast said Loh had failed to report his visit to authorities and urged visitors to do so in future to avoid such incidents. Thirty people have been bitten by komodo dragons since 1974, with five of the victims dying, according to Komodo National Park authorities. Recent research has found that the dragons' jaws have highly sophisticated venom glands that can cause paralysis, spasms and shock through haemorrhaging. The lizards are native to several Indonesian islands, and are considered a vulnerable species, with only a few thousand left in the world. They can grow up to three metres (10 feet) long and weigh up to 70 kilograms (154 pounds). — AFP

CLINIC
PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE GULF REGION

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Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

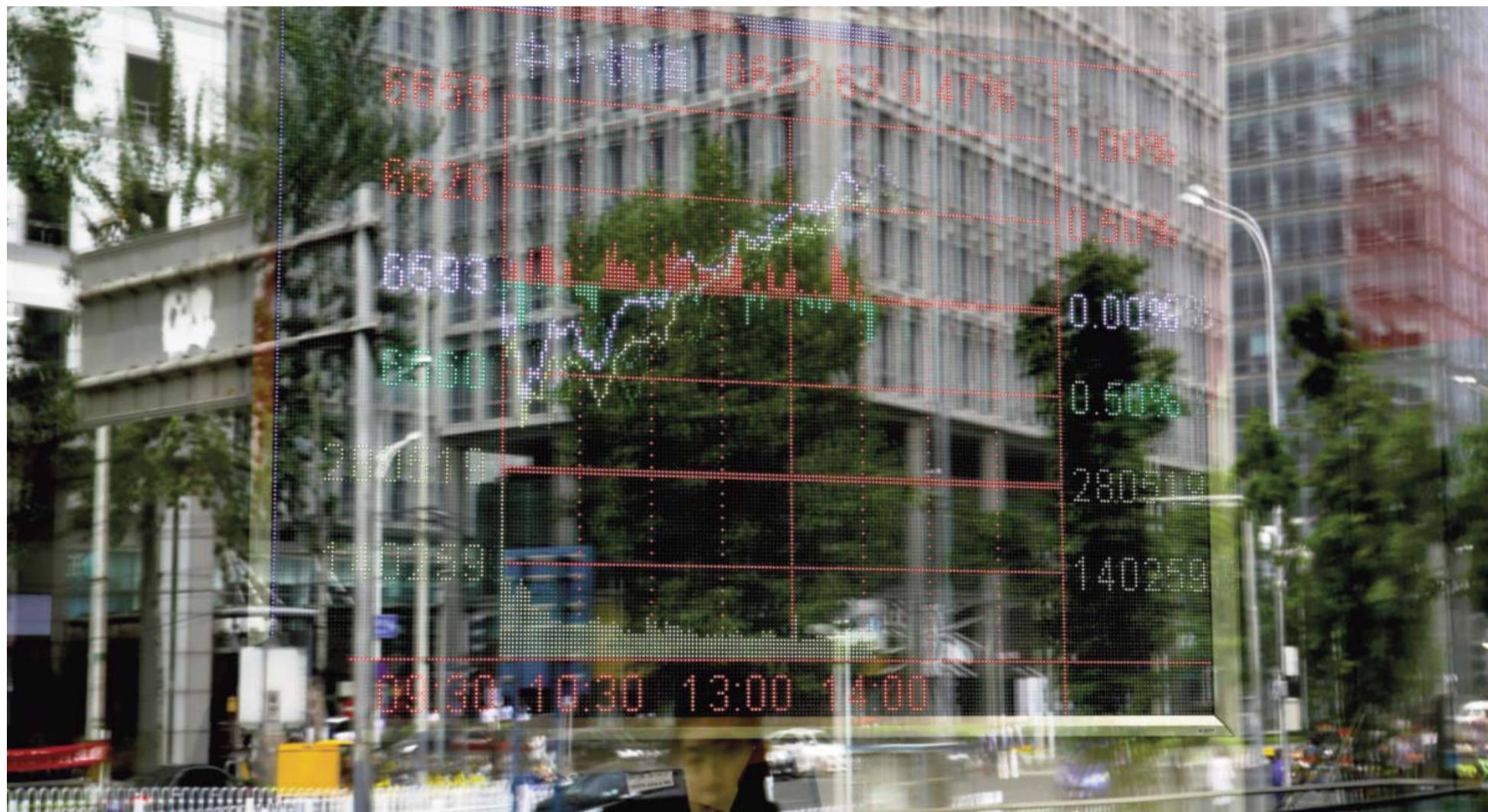
IRAN IN TALKS WITH UK OVER JETLINER FUNDING

Page 38

Page 40



ADB chief to cooperate with China's OBOR, AIIB



BEIJING: A pedestrian and office buildings are reflected on a brokerage house's window as an electronic board displaying stock trading index in Beijing yesterday. Most Asian stock markets slipped yesterday after a lackluster day on Wall Street as the Fed used its latest assessment of the US economy to signal that more interest rate increases are coming. — AP (See Page 39)

POLITICS, POTHOLES AND PRICE DROPS THE STORY OF KENYA'S CRUDE

LOKICHAR, Kenya: Kenya plans to export its first oil in June, but analysts say the test phase faces major challenges and appears motivated primarily by political considerations just months ahead of elections. British company Tullow announced the discovery of oil in Kenya in March 2012, when prices were well over \$100 (92 euros) a barrel, close to Lokichar in the country's arid Turkana region. Since then reserves totalling 750 million barrels have been found and there are hopes of more to come. But at the same time oil prices crashed and have been slow to recover.

Kenya's oil is good quality-with low sulfur content and good density-but with a wax-like consistency meaning it must be transported at a high temperature to keep it liquid, making the cost of exporting it higher.

By road and pipe

Turkana is deep inland so Kenya's oil will only be available for export after the construction of a 900 kilometre (560 mile) pipeline to a new port to be constructed at Lamu on the Indian Ocean coast. The pipe is planned to move around 100,000 barrels per day, but

construction is not expected to start until next year. In the meantime, Kenya has announced a two-year "pilot program" moving a modest 2,000 barrels a day by road, more than 1,000 km to the existing port of Mombasa.

The journey along congested and badly maintained roads takes several days. Promised road repairs on the first 300 km are behind schedule but might be completed in August, local media reports.

Discount...

In the national press the government presents the road exports as a way to "test the market" and says buyers in China and India are interested. Andrew Kamau, a senior official in Kenya's energy ministry, told AFP the pilot program is about increasing understanding of how the oil reserves will respond to full-scale extraction. "The idea is to get information, of course we're not going to make any profit during the pilot scheme," Kamau said.

"If you extract oil during these tests, you might as well export it," he added. Kamau said the early exports will allow foreign refineries to get used to the specific characteristics of

Kenyan crude, and to take the price hit early that often accompanies new oil entering the global market. "I'd rather suffer the discount when I produce 2,000 barrels a day rather than when I produce 100,000," he said.

... and distraction

But such explanations do not impress critics. "This early oil pilot scheme is a distraction from what really matters, that is getting the pipeline done and starting production properly," said Charles Wanguhu, director of the Kenya Civil Society Platform on Oil and Gas (KCSPOG), adding that it is "not good value for money". According to his organization's calculations, production has to double and prices increase significantly if the government is to avoid losing tens of millions of dollars under the pilot program. WTI crude, the US benchmark, is trading at around \$49 but Turkana crude is unlikely to achieve this price when it enters the market, suffering a discount due to its novelty and small volumes.

The government estimates that the pilot program will be profitable at \$43, according to energy minister Charles Keter, but KCSPOG

says the real break-even is closer to \$53, a figure backed by an oil industry source.

PR stunt?

"It is normal that there should be a test phase, but in these cases, one generally limits oneself to learning the properties and reactions of the reservoirs, one tests the extraction but one does not launch it on the market," said Benjamin Auge, a researcher at the French Institute of International Relations (known by its French acronym, IFRI).

And many observers see it as nothing more than a publicity stunt ahead of general elections on August 8 aimed at allowing the government to claim a success. "The government is highlighting the progress made and the imminent production of crude, and it's fair enough," said Stanislas Drochon, director of Africa oil and gas at consulting firm IHS Markit. "Usually, such tests are not the subject of such media and political coverage," he added. Stunt or test, Tullow wins, said Wanguhu. The company is "not going to lose any money" on the pilot program while keeping "on good terms" with the government. — AFP

IRAN IN TALKS WITH UK OVER JETLINER FUNDING

UK AGENCY WILLING TO BACK BOEING SALES TO IRAN

PARIS: Iran is in talks with Britain's export credit agency to facilitate the financing of aircraft sales to state airline IranAir as part of its pact with world powers to lift sanctions over its nuclear program, a senior Iranian official said.

IranAir's plan to buy more than 180 jets from Airbus and Boeing is the most visible economic deal on the table after major powers last year lifted most sanctions on Iran in return for restrictions on its nuclear activities. But financing for the purchases has been hard to secure because most Western banks are holding back, concerned about the future of the 2015 agreement after US President Donald Trump called it a bad deal and ordered a review.

So far, IranAir has taken delivery of just three Airbus jets, for which it paid cash, industry sources say. Deputy Roads and Urban Development Minister Asghar Fakhrieh-Kashan said the UK's export credit arm, UK Export Finance (UKEF), had tentatively offered support for at least some Airbus jets built in Britain, France, Germany and Spain. It could also offer some support to Airbus's US rival, Boeing, he added. "We have received some offers from UKEF, that is under review by Iran," Fakhrieh-Kashan told Reuters.

Two aircraft industry sources who asked not to be named also confirmed talks were taking place.

UKEF and both major planemakers declined to comment. Countries in parts of the world where banks won't invest

often turn to European and US governments for export credits or loan insurance when they want to buy big-ticket items like aircraft from those countries' companies.

About 6 percent of aircraft deliveries depend on such support, which removes some but not all of the risks banks face in lending to airlines with poor credit, helping to grease the wheels of trade.

This fallback system has been frozen for more than a year, however, as European agencies demand more controls after Airbus acknowledged making faulty applications for UK aid, triggering a fraud probe, and UKEF's equivalent in Washington, the Export-Import Bank (EXIM), faced a battle over its future.

US President Donald Trump hinted in his campaign he might get rid of the EXIM Bank, which some conservative members of Congress have argued perpetuates cronyism. He has since talked up the benefits of exports for US jobs and in April nominated a new bank president and a member of the board.

Iran and UK elections

Speeding up aircraft deliveries is seen as a priority for Tehran as President Hassan Rouhani's government seeks to show results from the sanctions deal ahead of elections on May 19.

Iran says the prospect of buying Western jets to renew its decaying fleet was built into the 2015 nuclear deal and that any barriers to completing the pur-

chases would undermine the accord. On the UK side, Prime Minister Theresa May's recent decision to hold a snap election in early June means any new funding deal is unlikely to be finalised before then.

UK government agencies like UKEF avoid major new initiatives during campaigning and a deal involving a topic as sensitive as trade with Iran would need approval before it could go ahead.

Airbus said last week on an investors' call that it hoped to receive some support from European export financing agencies this year. But a source familiar with the process said it remained unclear how quickly UKEF would lift a temporary ban on Airbus funding as the UK and French fraud investigation continues.

If UKEF provides support for Boeing deliveries, it would not be the first time, but it would be rare. The main proviso is that a certain proportion of parts in each jet need to be made in Britain - usually 20 percent. For Boeing exports, that would typically mean the jets would have to have Rolls-Royce engines. The Boeing planes ordered by Iran all have engines made by US supplier General Electric or GE and its French partner Safran. UKEF has said in the past it recognizes the need to be flexible on foreign content in view of global supply chains. People who have dealt with the agency before say it may be able to consider equipment bought by Boeing from British companies. — Reuters

UK SERVICES FIRMS REBOUND, HOMEBUYERS STAY CAUTIOUS

LONDON: Britain's economy picked up some steam in April after slowing in early 2017, a closely-watched survey suggested yesterday, welcome news for Prime Minister Theresa May ahead of a national election in just over a month's time. But separate figures from the Bank of England showed caution on the part of house-buyers in March, adding to signs of a slowdown in the housing market as rising inflation squeezes consumers.

The Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) of Britain's giant services industry unexpectedly rose to a four-month high of 55.8 in April, above all the forecasts in a Reuters poll of economists.

The reading was the second strongest since mid-2015, a good backdrop for May and her Conservative Party who are trying to convince voters that the opposition Labor Party cannot be trusted to run the economy after the June 8 election. At the same time, the survey included some warning signs for the economy, which has so far coped with the shock of last June's Brexit vote much better than expected by the Bank of England and private-sector economists before the referendum.

Prices charged by service firms rose at the fastest pace since July 2008 and company executives reined in their optimism about the year ahead for a third month in a row. Taken with PMIs for manufacturing and construction published this week, the April survey suggested the economy was growing at a quarterly pace of 0.6 percent at the start of the second quarter, Markit said, double the pace of the first quarter.

IHS Markit economist Chris Williamson said that kind of momentum was unlikely to last as households increasingly felt the pinch from rising inflation. "We expect consumer spending to slacken in coming months, with the April survey highlighting continued weakness in sectors such as hotels, restaurants and other household-facing businesses," Williamson said. — Reuters

LEBANESE GOVT OKAYS 2017 DRAFT BUDGET

BEIRUT: Lebanon's government has endorsed a 2017 draft budget and preparations are underway to send it to the parliament for approval after 11-year absence. The move has created a positive atmosphere and revived hopes to help institutions assume their missions. The country has not ratified a state budget since 2005 due to political bickering between political rivals. As a result of the draft, there were different stances by several parties; some were optimistic, however others were cautious.

Lebanese Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil had announced during a news conference that the 2017 budget deficit hit LL 7283 billion (\$4.86 billion). He noted that the government tried to reduce the 2017 deficit by part of a percentage point compared with the 2016 budget, from 9.3 percent down to 8.7 percent of gross domestic product.

"The deficit is projected to drop to LL7.283 trillion (\$4.831 billion) in 2017 from LL7.453 trillion in 2016," he told the conference held to reveal details about the 2017 draft budget approved by the cabinet. He said that the government has finished discussions on the 2017 budget and it is now preparing it to send it to the parliament for approval. The budget will contain all expenditures and revenues of the salary scale, he said, adding that there is a link between the Finance Ministry and all other ministries in a bid to include all transactions in the budget without any delays. The new budget includes measures for combating waste, improving collection of taxes and transferring money of Beirut port to the treasury, in addition to other measures. The government will allocate LL 7152 billion (\$4.768) for debts, LL 7373 billion (\$4.9 billion) for salaries of public servants and LL 2100 billion (\$1.4 billion) for electricity.

In a statement to KUNA, Minister of Economy and Trade Raed Khoury said that there would be a state budget after 11 years and this is an indication that the state is serious to achieve its mission and accomplishments. He added that Lebanon's general debt exceeded \$70 billion, while annual deficit hit about USD 5 billion, noting that the current budget seeks to encourage the private sector to take part in investment in the country. —KUNA



ATHENS: People walk at central Athens Omonia square yesterday, one day after Greece and its creditors closed a troubled chapter on fiscal reforms with a preliminary deal on pension and tax cuts, offering hope for a debt relief agreement later this month. —AFP

News

in brief

**Corporate earnings
Shell quarterly profits
surge on oil prices**

LONDON: Net profit at Royal Dutch Shell increased more than sevenfold in the first quarter as oil prices recovered from heavy declines, the energy giant said yesterday. Profit after tax came in at \$3.538 billion (3.247 billion euros) in the three months to March, compared with \$484 million in the first quarter of 2016, the Anglo-Dutch group said in a statement. Royal Dutch Shell chief executive Ben van Beurden said the group had "benefited from improved operational performance and better market conditions." Energy producers across the world are reaping the benefits of higher oil prices, which have strongly increased their revenues and profits.

**Siemens on track for full
year after steady Q2**

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: German engineering giant Siemens yesterday confirmed its full-year forecasts as it reported stable profits and slightly increased revenue in the second quarter of its business year. Siemens, which runs its business year from October to September, said in a statement that net profit edged up 0.7 percent to 1.45 billion euros (\$1.58 billion) in the period from January to March. Revenues were up 6.0 percent at 20.2 billion euros. Siemens said it achieved a strong growth in revenue in all its industrial businesses, ranging from wind turbines and power plants to trains and medical equipment.

**SocGene Q1 hit by
Libyan settlement**

PARIS: French bank Societe Generale said yesterday that net profits were hit in the first quarter by a provision covering the settlement of a long-running legal dispute with Libya's sovereign fund. Societe Generale said in a statement that its net profit fell by 19.2 percent to 747 million euros (\$813 million) in the period from January to March, short of analysts' expectations. The decline was largely attributable to a 350-million-euro provision to settle litigation with the Libyan Investment Authority, the bank explained. Societe Generale and the LIA said Thursday they had signed "a confidential settlement agreement that resolves all matters between both parties concerning five financial transactions entered into between 2007 and 2009."

**EURO JUMPS AFTER FRENCH
DEBATE, FED HOPES TOP OUT**

LONDON: The euro surged towards 6-month highs around \$1.0950 yesterday as support for the dollar from Wednesday's Federal Reserve statement faded and investors took heart from French centrist Emmanuel Macron's performance in a TV presidential debate. The dollar had gained against a number of major currencies in early trade in Europe but buying faded as major European names judged the Fed's meeting gave was no reason for further ramping up bets on rises in US rates this year.

That rethink knocked around half a cent off the dollar's value against the euro to leave it trading 0.4 percent lower on the day at \$1.0928 by 1130 GMT. "There have been some technical factors in the moves this morning," said Ulrich Leuchtmann, head of G10 FX strategy with Commerzbank in Frankfurt. "The initial drop yesterday was understandable but when the Europeans came in this morning there were some second thoughts. The PMI data (today) and the French TV debate have also probably helped a little." There was buying of French stocks and bonds in response to Macron's solid showing in his debate with anti-EU nationalist Marine Le Pen on Wednesday, which headed off worries of a last minute surge for the far-right candidate.

The dollar continued to perform well, however, against the yen - reaching 113 yen for the first time in seven weeks - and the bloc of commodity-linked currencies headed by the Australian dollar. The weakness of the Aussie - typically a pro-growth play - at a time when the mood on stock markets is upbeat, stems from sharp falls in the price of iron ore and other commodities that suggest a rise in concern about the Chinese economy. — Reuters



PARIS: General Confederation of Labour (CGT) members hold a CGT banner as workers and unions members gather during a protest in front of Tati department store yesterday in the Barbes district of Paris as Tati payment stoppage raised concerns about their jobs. — AFP

EUROZONE BUSINESSES RACE INTO Q2, HIT SIX-YEAR HIGH RECOVERY BROAD AND SUSTAINABLE

LONDON: Eurozone businesses raced into the second quarter, increasing activity at the fastest rate in six years in April, according to a survey yesterday which suggested the bloc's economic recovery is broadly based and sustainable. Activity expanded slightly faster than initially thought, and survey compiler IHS Markit said the data was consistent with a GDP growth rate of 0.7 percent. Official data last Friday showed the bloc far outpaced the US economy in the first quarter of the year.

IHS Markit's final Composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), regarded as a good guide to growth, rose to a six-year high of 56.8 in April from March's 56.4. An earlier flash reading had suggested a slightly shallower rise in activity. "Details continue to paint a positive picture - solid demand, rising capacity pressure, higher hiring intentions - also supported by the convergence in terms of countries," said Apolline Menut at Barclays. Earlier PMI surveys covering the bloc's four biggest economies painted an encouraging picture.

Europe's largest economy is enjoying solid growth as although activity in Germany's services sector fell slightly it remained strong in April. French services activity only eased off March's near six-year high. In Italy, service sector growth was at its fastest rate for almost a decade, while Spain's hit a 20-month high.

Adding to upbeat signs, eurozone retail sales increased for the third consecutive month in March and by more than market expectations, showing shoppers have so far not been deterred by rising prices, official estimates released yesterday showed. Pointing to continued solid expansion this month, growth in new business in April slowed only slightly from the six-year high set in March. The euro zone composite sub-index dipped to 55.9 from 56.2.

Matching an impressive performance reported by manufacturers earlier this week, firms in the service industry, which accounts for a far greater slice of the economy overall, also said growth was at a six-year high. The services PMI rose to 56.4 from 56.0, hitting its highest since April 2011.

The increase in activity came despite firms raising prices again, albeit at a weaker rate than in March, when they ramped them up at the fastest rate in nearly six years.

Official data on Friday showed inflation rose more than expected in April,

returning to the European Central Bank's target, but the ECB kept its policy stance steady last week, even leaving the door open to more easing.

But with growth and inflation stronger, pressure is mounting on the ECB to start dialling back its lavish stimulus. "The encouraging picture from the survey data is likely to help raise many forecasters' expectations of euro zone economic growth in 2017, and will also no doubt add to speculation that ECB rhetoric will turn increasingly hawkish," said Chris Williamson, chief business economist at IHS Markit. — Reuters

EUROPEAN STOCKS EDGE UP AFTER FED, FRENCH DEBATE

LONDON: European stock markets rose yesterday as investors assessed the outlook for US interest rates following a meeting of the Federal Reserve. London's benchmark FTSE 100 index was 0.4 percent higher approaching midday in the capital, as markets reacted also to a clutch of European earnings updates.

In the eurozone, Frankfurt's DAX 30 and the Paris CAC 40 each grew 0.8 percent compared with Wednesday's closing values and ahead of France's weekend presidential election.

"European assets are in high demand... with the euro moving back above \$1.09 and the Dax at an all-time high, as Emmanuel Macron was deemed to have trounced his rival in last night's debate," said Chris Beauchamp, chief market analyst at IG traders. French centrist Emmanuel Macron and his far-right presidential rival Marine Le Pen clashed Wednesday over terrorism, the economy and

Europe in a bad-tempered TV debate that laid bare their profoundly different visions for the country. The duel ahead of Sunday's election was billed as a confrontation between Macron's call for openness and pro-market reforms and Le Pen's France-first nationalism.

The dollar fell back against the euro following the debate and after gains for the US currency Wednesday when the Federal Reserve opened the door for another US interest rate hike next month.

Asian stock markets mostly turned lower in a holiday-filled week. On the corporate front Thursday, shares in HSBC jumped 3.7 percent to 669.30 pence, topping the FTSE 100, after the banking titan posted a rise in pre-tax profits, excluding one-off charges.

Royal Dutch Shell was also a strong riser, winning around 2.8 percent after the energy group reported a surge in first-quarter net profits thanks to rebounding oil prices. — AFP

WORLD FOOD PRICES FALL FOR 3RD MONTH IN APRIL

ROME: World food prices fell for the third month in a row in April as values declined for all agricultural commodities except meat, the United Nations food agency said yesterday.

The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index has been falling for five years due to ample supply, a slowing global economy and a strong US dollar. Food on international markets was still 10 percent more expensive than in April last year, the FAO said, after rising cereals prices drove it to a two-year high in February. The index measures monthly changes for a basket of products including cereals, oilseeds, dairy products and sugar. April's reading of 168 points was down 1.8 percent from March.

Meat prices were boosted by strong demand in the European Union and higher sales to China and South Korea, while seasonal demand pushed up the cost of ovine meat. Sugar led the decline in all other farmed commodity prices, slumping 9.1 percent as expectations for large export supplies from Brazil coincided with weak global demand for imports. The FAO marginally raised its forecast for global cereals output in the 2017-18 season, to 2.599 billion tons. Global wheat production is expected to hit 740 million tons, short of last year's record harvest. —Reuters

UK CAR SALES TUMBLE 20% IN APRIL AFTER BUMPER MARCH

LONDON: British new car registrations slumped by 20 percent in April, the biggest year-on-year drop for over six years after record demand in March, when customers brought forward purchases to avoid a tax increase, an industry body said yesterday.

Sales fell 19.8 percent to 152,076 vehicles last month, traditionally a period when fewer vehicles are sold after a new license plate series is issued in March, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said. Demand in March was at a record high as individuals and businesses in Europe's second biggest autos market sought to avoid paying an increase in excise duty that came into force from April 1 for the most polluting vehicles.

Registrations so far this year are up 1.1 percent, despite forecasts that demand would fall by at least 5 percent this year due to the uncertainties around Brexit and after consecutive record performances. Following an 8.4 percent rise in March and a slump in April, also hit by fewer selling days due to Easter, the SMMT said it foresaw less erratic swings in the months ahead. "We ... expect demand to stabilize over the year as the turbulence created by these tax changes decreases," SMMT Chief Executive Mike Hawes said.

But the industry faces a number of challenges ahead including new levies and tighter rules on the most polluting vehicles, which appear to be already dampening demand for diesel vehicles. —Reuters

ADB CHIEF TO COOPERATE WITH CHINA'S OBOR, AIIB

ADB AND AIIB AGREED TO CO-FINANCE 3 PROJECTS

YOKOHAMA: The Japanese-led Asian Development Bank is willing to cooperate, rather than compete, with China's development finance and infrastructure plans under its "One Belt, One Road" initiative, the bank's head said yesterday. ADB President Takehiko Nakao's comments were made at the start of the bank's four-day annual meeting in Yokohama, eastern Japan, where China's rising influence is expected to be among key topics of discussion.

His public comments align with those of policymakers seeking to dispel the view Japan and China are competing for influence through development finance. However, Nakao warned creditors about the costs of projects in economies that are targeted by China's high-profile OBOR initiatives.

"It's a good idea to connect countries and to promote activities in this region," Nakao told reporters on Thursday, when asked about how the ADB should deal with the OBOR.

"We can cooperate because we have similar ideas," he said at a news conference kicking off the annual meeting. He added that he discussed areas of cooperation with Chinese Finance Minister Xiao Jie, who will be in Tokyo for a meeting with his counterparts from Japan, South Korea and Southeast Asian nations today.

Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda, who before Nakao headed the ADB, said there was ample room for AIIB to cooperate with other development banks like the ADB and the World Bank. "There are huge infrastructure needs so it's great to have more institutions keen to support this," he told reporters yesterday, adding that he did not think the AIIB would conflict with the roles played by the ADB and the World Bank.

More competition?

The ADB is coming off a record year for lending and is the region's major financier for development, but its meeting could quickly fade as attention turns to the OBOR summit on May 14-15. Many OBOR projects are supported by China's state-owned banks and its fledgling regional lender, the Asia Infrastructure



TOKYO: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Takehiko Nakao speaks during the opening press conference of an ADB annual meeting in Yokohama, near Tokyo yesterday.—AP

Investment Bank (AIIB), which could become a potential rival of the Manila-based ADB but for now is much smaller.

Nakao said the vast need of infrastructure finance in Asia meant that the ADB and the AIIB could cooperate and complement each other, instead of considering each other as rivals. "Because we have different objectives and different kind of ideas about management, I think we can complement each other," he said. "There are many things in common so we can cooperate."

The ADB and the AIIB have agreed to co-finance three projects - two last year and one this year, Nakao said.

The two lenders have discussed how they can use local currencies for financing instead of dollars, how they can enhance expertise by their staff and how they can secure environmental and social safeguards, Nakao said.

The ADB was established as a Japanese initiative in 1966 to offer development assistance in Asia. All of the ADB heads up until now have been Japanese, including Nakao.

The AIIB is viewed by some as a challenger to both the Western-dominated World Bank and the ADB, which is primarily funded by Japan and the United

States. Partly to differentiate itself, the ADB has broadened its activities beyond infrastructure such as financing of steps for poverty reduction, healthcare and education.

The growing prominence of China in Asian development finance, reflected by the creation of AIIB, has alarmed Japan's government, enough to promote "quality" infrastructure finance as its key initiative in aiding developing Asian economies. However, he warned the ADB needed to pay attention to the "economic feasibility" of some OBOR-linked projects, particularly in sparsely-populated Central Asian nations.

And despite signs of co-operation, some analysts say China's muscle-flexing is making business harder for Japanese companies. "Both China and Japan are active in development financing and infrastructure financing in the region. We've seen some competition in the region over projects," said Fitch Ratings director Mervyn Tang.

"For a while, Japan really was the core financier. When you bring in a competitor, it means the likelihood of competition for pricing ... There's more a danger of overpaying for a project or getting lower returns for a project." —Reuters

BOSCH WARNS AGAINST NATIONALISM IN EUROPE



RENNINGEN: Volkmar Denner, CEO of German technology concern Bosch, poses in a concept car prior to the company's annual press conference at the Bosch Technology Center in Renningen yesterday.—AFP

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: Germany-based Bosch, the world's largest car components supplier, yesterday warned against nationalism even as it presented an optimistic forecast for the full year. "Our environment is not only transforming in terms of technology and business, but also more than ever with regard to politics, I would even say populism," said chief executive Volkmar Denner. "We want a world and above all a Europe without nationalism," the CEO continued in a speech at a research centre in Renningen, near Stuttgart in southwestern Germany.

German business leaders have watched with anxiety as France's anti-EU, anti-euro presidential contender Marine Le Pen has come closer to the Elysee palace than ever before, becoming one of two candidates in a

run-off vote slated for Sunday. Le Pen's headline policies include calls to close France's borders and return to the former national currency, the franc. "Globalization is useful to our business, while returning to borders would harm it," Denner went on, echoing the arguments of Le Pen's pro-business opponent Emmanuel Macron in a television debate Wednesday night. Bosch, which employs some 390,000 people from 150 countries, aims to boost revenue between 3.0 and 5.0 percent year-on-year in 2017 after achieving a 3.6-percent expansion last year. It reported a 12 percent increase in revenue in the first three months of this year compared with 2016's first quarter. The privately-owned firm releases less detailed results than companies listed on the stock market. — AFP

YANKEES RALLY PAST BLUE JAYS 8-6

NEW YORK: Aaron Judge hit his major-league-leading 13th home run and scored the tying run in the seventh inning as the New York Yankees rallied from an early four-run deficit and posted an 8-6 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays on Wednesday night. Judge had his first career three-hit game with a single in the first, a two-run homer in the third and a single in the seventh, when the Yankees scored three times off Joe Biagini (0-1). Matt Holliday also hit a three-run homer as New York won for the 16th time in 21 games. Four relievers combined on five scoreless innings, with Dellin Betances (3-1) recording four outs for the victory and Aroldis Chapman posting his sixth save. Steve Pearce hit a three-run homer and Justin Smoak added an RBI single off CC Sabathia in the first inning. The Blue Jays scored their other runs on a bases-loaded walk by Russell Martin and a groundout by Kendrys Morales.

Astros 10, Rangers 1

Charlie Morton produced his second consecutive quality start while Marwin Gonzalez continued his early-season power surge as Houston bashed Texas. Gonzalez doubled as part of a four-run second inning and belted a two-run homer in the Astros' four-run sixth. It was his eighth home run of the season. Morton (2-3) followed a strong outing against the Oakland Athletics earlier this homestand with six solid innings. The Astros backed him with four home runs—solo shots by Carlos Correa and Brian McCann and two-run blasts from Gonzalez and Josh Reddick.

Mets 16, Braves 5

Jose Reyes had two hits and five RBIs to spark New York's 20-hit attack in a rout of Atlanta. Every player in New York's starting lineup had a hit and seven players had multiple hits, with left fielder Michael Conforto, catcher Rene Rivera and first baseman T.J. Rivera each picking up three. Reyes was 2-for-4 with a double and matched his career high with five RBIs, which he last accomplished in 2003. The 16 runs set a season best and the 20 hits matched a season high for the Mets.

Red Sox 4, Orioles 2

Josh Rutledge drove in two runs and Drew Pomeranz tossed 5 1/3 innings as Boston defeated Baltimore. Chris Young and Dustin Pedroia each had an RBI for Boston, which has taken two of the first three contests in the four-game series. Pedroia was 1-for-3, moving into a tie with Harry Hooper for eighth on Boston's all-time hits list, with 1,707. Pomeranz (3-1) allowed five hits and walked two while striking out seven. Craig Kimbrel struck out the side to notch his American League-leading 10th save in the ninth.

Cubs 5, Phillies 4

Willson Contreras' two-out pinch-hit double keyed a four-run sixth inning as Chicago claimed a come-from-behind victory over Philadelphia. Contreras laced a 1-1 pitch from left-handed reliever Joely Rodriguez into the left-field corner to drive home Ben Zobrist and Jason Heyward with the tying and go-ahead runs. The Cubs' Jake Arrieta (4-1) earned his second victory in three starts.

Wade Davis, the fourth Chicago pitcher, faced four batters in a scoreless ninth for his seventh save. The Phillies' Jerad Eickhoff (0-3) took the loss, sailing through five innings before getting into trouble.

Twins 7, Athletics 4

Kennys Vargas drove in five runs, including a three-run homer, and Hector Santiago pitched six effective innings in his return from the



LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles Dodgers center fielder Andrew Toles make a catch on a sacrifice fly hit by San Francisco Giants' Hunter Pence during the 11th inning of a baseball game on Wednesday, May 3, 2017. — AP

bereavement list as Minnesota won its fourth straight game. Santiago (3-1), who didn't miss a start but left the team following the death of his grandmother, allowed three runs on four hits and three walks. Eddie Rosario had two hits to extend his hitting streak to 13 games and drove in a run. Oakland's Kendall Graveman (2-2) surrendered six runs on five hits and a career-high-tying four walks in 3 1/3 innings. Yonder Alonso hit a two-run homer for the A's, who have lost eight of their past nine games.

Reds 7, Pirates 2

Billy Hamilton and Eugenio Suarez each hit three-run homers and Devin Mesoraco added a solo shot, helping Rookie Davis earn his first major-league victory for Cincinnati. Davis (1-1) pitched five shutout innings in his fourth career start and second since spending two weeks on the disabled list with a bruised right forearm. The home runs by Hamilton and Mesoraco were their first in a combined 526 at-bats. Andrew McCutchen hit a two-run homer for Pittsburgh, his 28th career blast against the Reds and 18th at Great American Ball Park. Pirates starter Jameson Taillon (2-1) suffered his first defeat of the season, allowing six runs in five innings.

Indians 3, Tigers 2

Jose Ramirez hit a two-run triple and Carlos Carrasco tossed six strong innings as Cleveland edged Detroit. Ramirez, who also scored a run, increased his team-high RBI total to 23 with his fourth-inning hit. Francisco Lindor added two hits and scored a run. Carrasco (3-2) gave up two runs and five hits, with five strikeouts, in six innings. Matthew Boyd (2-2) took the loss for Detroit, allowing three runs and five hits in 7 2/3 innings. Jim Adduci led the offense with two hits and an RBI, but he struck out to end the game with two aboard.

Nationals 2, Diamondbacks 1

Ryan Zimmerman broke a tie with an RBI double in the sixth inning as Washington

defeated Arizona, spoiling a strong start by Robbie Ray. Zimmerman lined a double to center off Ray to score Bryce Harper and give Washington a 2-1 lead. Zimmerman was 2-for-3, giving him a 10-game hitting streak, at least two hits for the sixth game in a row and a .427 average this season. The winning pitcher was Jacob Turner (1-0), who came on in the sixth and allowed two hits in four scoreless innings. The loser was Ray (2-2), who struck out 10 and yielded two runs and four hits.

Royals 6, White Sox 1

Nate Karns and two relievers combined on a two-hitter as Kansas City topped Chicago. Melky Cabrera's first-inning, two-out single was the lone White Sox hit until Jose Abreu homered with two out in the ninth. Karns (1-2), who was acquired in a Jan. 6 trade from Seattle for Jarrod Dyson, picked up his first victory since June 25. Karns became the first big league pitcher to strike out four in an inning this season. The last Royals pitcher to accomplish that was Kevin Appier on Sept. 3, 1996, in Toronto.

Marlins 10, Rays 6

JT Realmuto drove in four runs as Miami rallied for eight runs in the sixth and seventh innings to beat Tampa Bay. The Marlins set their season high for hits (17) and matched their high for runs. The Rays reset their high for runs allowed and matched it for hits allowed. Austin Pruitt, who had overcome early struggles to allow one earned run in his previous 11 2/3 innings, came into the game with a 4-2 lead in the sixth. He gave up hits to the first seven batters he faced.

Rockies 11, Padres 3

Ian Desmond hit his first two home runs of the season and rookie right-hander Antonio Senzatela held the Padres to three runs on six hits over six innings Wednesday night as the Colorado Rockies routed San Diego 11-3 at

Petco Park. Desmond capped a four-run Rockies first against Padres starter and loser Jered Weaver with a two-run homer covering 352 feet into the left field stands. His second homer was a 375-foot solo shot, also off Weaver, to open the fifth. Desmond, who came off the disabled list Sunday after missing the season's first 25 games with a left hand fracture, finished 3-for-5 with three RBIs. DJ LeMahieu and Nolan Arenado each drove in two runs for the Rockies.

Giants 4, Dodgers 1

Gorkys Hernandez drove in the go-ahead run with a double in the 11th inning, and the San Francisco Giants earned a 4-1 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers on Wednesday night at Dodger Stadium. Hunter Pence and Buster Posey both went 2-for-5 with an RBI as the Giants (11-18) took two of three from the Dodgers (15-14).

Mariners 8, Angels 7

Jean Segura hit a two-run homer and capped a four-run eighth inning with a two-run single as the Seattle Mariners rallied for a wild 8-7 victory over the Los Angeles Angels on Wednesday night. The Mariners, who saw an early 4-0 lead evaporate when the Angels scored six runs in the sixth, loaded the bases in the eighth against Blake Parker (0-2). Kole Calhoun's two-out homer in the ninth off Edgar Diaz pulled the Angels within 8-7. Diaz then hit Mike Trout with a pitch, but struck out Albert Pujols for his fifth save. Jean Machi (1-0), called up from Triple-A on Tuesday, pitched a perfect eighth for the victory. Brewers at Cardinals, ppd. Wednesday's game between Milwaukee and St. Louis was postponed because of rain. A makeup date will be announced at a later time. The Cardinals also announced that the game against the Brewers, originally scheduled for 1:45 pm ET, has been pushed back to 7:15 pm ET because of the weather forecast.—Reuters

ELEGANT BATSMEN DISPEL IPL POWER 'MYTH'

NEW DELHI: Big-hitters like Chris Gayle have long hogged the Twenty20 limelight but this season's Indian Premier League has proved that elegant, old-school batting is just as important in cricket's shortest format. South Africa's Hashim Amla has been delighting cricketing purists by racking up large totals with his conventional style of play while Kane Williamson of New Zealand is also showing there's more to T20 than power. "T20 is not about sixes... T20 is about making sure that there are no dot balls [deliveries on which no run is scored] and both these batsmen have made sure that there are very few dot balls," Indian batting great Sunil Gavaskar told AFP.

"Playing the ball according to its merit and keep the scoreboard ticking is the key. That's how they have been more successful

this year. "You look at the entire T20 game and you will see that any time there will be more boundaries than sixes. And you can hit the boundaries along the ground, you can hit them one bounce into the fence," he added. Amla has amassed 315 runs in eight matches for Kings XI Punjab, including a maiden T20 century-one of four tons to have been hit so far in the tenth edition of the IPL. The 34-year-old right-hander, famed for his classic stroke-playing, has also notched two half-centuries and has been instrumental in putting his team in contention for a play-off place.

Busting myths

Amla has recorded 12 sixes and 32 fours while maintaining a strike-rate of 140. Williamson has accumulated 228 runs for

Sunrisers Hyderabad in just five matches, including a sublime match-winning knock of 89 against Delhi Daredevils. The 26-year-old New Zealander has hit just 17 fours and nine sixes and has kept his run-rate, which is above 160, topped up by his ability to sneak in quick singles and twos. "I think it's a big myth that T20 is just for power-hitters. Even players like (India legend) Rahul Dravid and Amla have a fairly impressive white-ball average," Dileep Premachandran, editor-in-chief of Wisden India said.

"If you look at Amla's significant innings in this IPL, there have been big hits as well. Most of these batsmen have enhanced their repertoire significantly," Premachandran added. The success of Amla and Williamson this season has overshadowed the performances West Indies' Gayle and Proteas ODI

captain AB de Villiers, who usually dominate coverage of the IPL with their big-hitting antics. The pair have failed to fire for a struggling Royal Challengers Bangalore side this time around with Gayle picking up 152 runs in six matches and de Villiers 196 in seven.

Left-handed Australian David Warner is still flying the flag for the powerful hitters and leads the runs table with 489 but the exploits of Amla and Williamson show that the graceful shot-players can also thrive in T20. "Players like Amla and Williamson should not be branded and said that they can play 'X' form of cricket," former Indian women's captain and IPL commentator Anjum Chopra said. "It was only a matter of time before they established themselves as a force to reckon with in the IPL," she added.— AFP



Italy's Vincenzo Nibali leads during the twentieth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 110.5 kilometers in this file photo. The 32-year-old Nibali is aiming to make it a hat trick of victories in his home Grand Tour. — AP

CZECH KICK BIKERS SET SIGHTS ON 100TH GIRO

PRAGUE: A group of Czech kick bikers are tackling this year's 100th edition of the Giro d'Italia after hotfooting it onto the elite cycling circuit for the first time at the centenary Tour de France in 2013. They proved their mettle four years ago by finishing the Tour, with all its tough climbs and wild descents, just like top world cyclists Chris Froome, Nairo Quintana or Peter Sagan. Now the group of seven men are determined to complete the Giro's 3,615 kilometers - including each and every one of its gruelling 21 stages on kick bikes, which have no pedals and feature a large front wheel and a smaller back one. "Perhaps the Tour de France is the most famous race, but the Giro is undoubtedly the most difficult," said Vaclav Liska, a theatre actor, dubbing the race "a real hell."

"And I'm not speaking about the Dolomite stages which are even worse than hell," he added. The Giro will celebrate its anniversary by taking the racers to all regions of Italy. After starting on May 5 on the Mediterranean island of Sardinia, the peloton will criss-cross the Italian peninsula to arrive in the northern city of Milan on May 28. "Even the wildest dreams can come true," added Liska, who will tackle the Giro alongside five other Czechs and one Finn. "We'll do each stage ahead of the peloton of cyclists. In other words, the cyclists will get there only a day after us," he chuckled.

Extreme performance

Making their dream come true will involve a lot of sweat and some danger; the kick bikers will spend up to 17 hours a day on roads that will still be open to traffic. At night, they will sleep in tents pitched at camping sites before their arrival by a service team using four cars. "The moment when we will drink a cup of Italian coffee on a sunny terrace outside Milan Cathedral will be truly fantastic," said Liska. In 2013, the group covered some 3,500 kilometers between Porto-Vecchio, Corsica, and the Champs-Elysees in Paris during the 100th edition of the Tour. "It was an extreme performance and it took our bodies all summer to recover," says Jan Vlasak, another member of the group that includes a pizza seller and a lawyer.—AFP

INDIA BREAKS INTO FIFA TOP 100 AFTER 21 YEARS

MARADONA TO VISIT INDIA AHEAD OF U-17 WC

NEW DELHI: The Indian men's football team yesterday climbed to the 100th spot in the latest FIFA world rankings-their best rating in more than two decades. Despite having a population of well over one billion, India languishes as a footballing minnow, ranked equally alongside Nicaragua, Lithuania and Estonia in a global table headed by Brazil. India-where the national pastime of cricket is something of an obsession that squeezes other sports out of the running-last made the top 100 in 1996, reaching an all-time high of 94, before plunging.

The boost in ranking comes after India beat Cambodia 3-2 in Phnom Penh on March 22 in a friendly clash before edging out Myanmar 1-0 in Yangon on March 28 during an AFC Asian Cup qualifying match. Head coach Stephen Constantine congratulated his side on the milestone, but warned them against complacency ahead of important matches. "As long as we keep heading up the ladder I am happy. It points out that we are heading in the right direction," the 54-year-old Englishman was quoted as saying by the All India Football Federation (AIFF).

"There are major matches ahead and we cannot take things lightly. There's no place for complacency," said Constantine, who took charge of the Indian team in 2015. India will play a friendly against Lebanon on June 7 and then an Asian Cup qualifier against Kyrgyzstan on June 13. The team has won 11 of their last 13 matches, including an unofficial match against Bhutan, scoring 31 goals in the process. "It's pleasing that we are presently ranked 100. At the same time, we need to stay aware of the challenge in hand. The AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers UAE 2019 are an acid test for us," said Kushal Das, AIFF general secretary.



KOLKATA: Photo shows former Argentina's national team coach and former football star Diego Armando Maradona as he gestures towards unseen Indian fans while attending an event at The Mohun Bagan Football Club in Kolkata. Football legend Diego Maradona is set to visit the soccer-crazy city of Kolkata in September 2017, ahead of the FIFA Under-17 World Cup being hosted by India. — AFP

U-17 World Cup

In another development, football legend Diego Maradona is set to visit the soccer-crazy city of Kolkata in September ahead of the FIFA Under-17 World Cup being hosted by India. The Argentine superstar will participate in a charity football match against Kolkata's greatest cricket export and former Indian captain Sourav Ganguly, the event promoters said. Maradona-who was given a hero's welcome when he first visited the eastern Indian city in 2008 - will also be presented with a lifetime achievement award in West Bengal state.

"It is such an honor for me to be able to make this trip. Kolkata is a very

special place and I have good memories from my trip there many years ago, the fans were fantastic," Maradona posted on his Facebook page. "#India is a very passionate football nation, and I look forward to meeting a whole new generation of fans while continuing to spread the overwhelming love that I have for this beautiful game." Football is hugely popular in Kolkata, with fans closely following international matches, despite India's dominant obsession with cricket. The city has also hosted Brazilian great Pele, who last visited in 2015. Maradona's visit is expected to build enthusiasm for the U-17 World Cup, which India is hosting for the first time this October.—Agencies

MILLIONS UP FOR GRABS AS DORTMUND FACE HOFFENHEIM

BERLIN: Millions of euros are at stake when Borussia Dortmund host Hoffenheim in the Bundesliga tomorrow as both teams battle for the greater share of Champions League riches that come with a top-three finish. Third place translates to more than 12 million euros in guaranteed revenue from participation in the Champions League group stage, compared to fourth place, which offers three million euros for its berth in the qualifying rounds. Bayern Munich have already secured the title and RB Leipzig are comfortably in second place on 63 points.

Hoffenheim sit third on 58 with Dortmund a further point adrift with three matches remaining and the final standings likely to be determined by the outcome of their match. Apart from the revenue boost, a top-three finish also means a longer off-season for players, instead of needing to be in peak

shape by August for the Champions League qualifiers. "We have the form, the self-confidence and mentality to get a home win at this stage," Dortmund coach Thomas Tuchel said. "Our performances, the intensity is top. We will be prepared." Dortmund have had a roller coaster of a season with an erratic domestic campaign ruining their hopes of playing a major role in the title race.

However, they enjoyed a successful Champions League run before their quarter-final elimination to Monaco, following a bomb attack on the team bus that injured defender Marc Bartra and severely affected their performances over the tie. They did recover to eliminate holders Bayern Munich late last month to reach the German Cup final and still have a shot at some silverware this season. "Now we need some time to catch our breath," Tuchel said. "It was a very busy month on all levels and

with some bizarre stories as well." "But I have to give my team a big compliment because it is unbelievable the level of intensity they have shown throughout this period."

Hoffenheim are comfortable in their role as underdogs with major shareholder Dietmar Hopp claiming third place "would be asking a bit too much from the gods of football". "It is more likely that we will finish in fourth place and then will have to go the Champions League qualifications," said billionaire Hopp, who funded the club's rise through the amateur leagues all the way to the Bundesliga in 2008. Hoffenheim have been more consistent than Dortmund, though, having lost half as many games as the Ruhr valley club. They have also won five of their last seven league matches to earn a deserved shot at the Champions League pot of gold. —Reuters

EUROPA CARROT FAILS TO INSPIRE THE ITALIAN TRIO

MILAN: The race for Italy's final European berth has turned into a slow crawl among seemingly reluctant rivals, with AC Milan, Inter Milan and Fiorentina all suffering recent embarrassing setbacks to compound already lacklustre seasons. With Juventus on the brink of a sixth successive title, AS Roma and Napoli heading for the Champions League and Lazio and Atalanta set for the Europa League group stage, the illustrious trio have been left to scrap it out for sixth place. Milan will at least have some say in the title race as a win or draw at home to Roma on Sunday, coupled with a Juventus victory at home to Torino the day before, will hand the Turin side another Serie A triumph.

Finishing sixth earns a place in the Europa League third qualifying round, which is played in late July and early August, and while Italian clubs always stress the importance of playing in Europe, it is not the most enticing of prizes. The early start to the season, additional matches and travelling can take a heavy toll on teams, leading to a loss of domestic form as the campaign progresses. When Sassuolo qualified last season, the club's modest resources could not cope with the burden. As injuries built up, their league form was affected and they are now 14th in the table.

Milan, a shadow of their once great selves, currently occupy sixth place on 59 points with four rounds of fixtures remaining, followed by Inter on 56 and Fiorentina on 55. Milan have won only one of their last five games and their last two results were a 2-1 home defeat by lowly Empoli and a 1-1 draw at relegation-threatened Crotona. Neighbors Inter, meanwhile, have fared even worse, failing to win any of their last six games. They will be expected to end that run at Genoa, suffering an ever more miserable season, on Sunday. Fiorentina appeared ready for a late surge two weeks ago when they came from behind to beat Inter 5-4 for a rousing win.

But, instead of capitalizing on that victory, they slumped to a shoddy 2-0 defeat last Sunday against a Palermo side who had only won three games all season. "This was one of our worst performances in my two seasons here," Fiorentina coach Paulo Sousa said. "These players performed below their potential. It was not the right attitude and I did not see the right hunger." Milan coach Vincenzo Montella, meanwhile, said that his team had been distracted by the sale of the club to a Chinese consortium, which was completed last month after protracted negotiations. "Inevitably, something happened on a mental level," he said. "What has happened, on an unconscious level, is no one's fault. There's been a major change and we need to find a new balance. These are normal, inevitable situations." — Reuters



MONACO: Monaco's French midfielder Tiemoue Bakayoko (left) fights for the ball against Juventus' forward from Croatia Mario Mandzukic and Juventus' defender Giorgio Chiellini (right) during the UEFA Champions League semi-final first leg football match Monaco vs Juventus on May 3, 2017. — AFP

MONACO AIMING TO PUT EUROPEAN WOES ASIDE

MADRID: Monaco will look to put the disappointment of their Champions League semi-final first-leg defeat to Juventus behind them when they travel to second-bottom Nancy tomorrow night. The Monegasques have a three-point lead at the top of the Ligue 1 table with four to play, and have a game in hand over their nearest rivals, Paris Saint-Germain.

A win would put them within touching distance of their first league title since 2000. Coach Leonardo Jardim also believes that a positive result this weekend could have a catalytic effect ahead of Tuesday's return leg. "I talked to the players, I told them we needed to believe," Jardim said. "The best thing we can do is

to win in the league tomorrow at Nancy. Winning there would then offer the opportunity to play the second match in Turin with strong motivation and confidence. I want to tell everyone that we have to support the team tomorrow."

A 3-1 defeat to third-placed Nice last weekend means that PSG must rely on Monaco slipping up if they are to stand any chance of lifting a fifth straight Ligue 1 crown. With many of the young Rouges et Blancs outfit having no experience with the pressure of a title run in, PSG know that they can put the pressure back on Monaco tomorrow with a victory at home to Bastia, now at the bottom of the table.

Full back Thomas Meunier says they

still believe there can be one final twist this season. "We're not going to give up on anything. We'll play to the end and do our utmost to try and catch Monaco," Meunier said. "We have had a great season with more than 80 points. Monaco and Nice were able to keep pace. That's great for the league and it'll help us grow, too." Likewise, manager Unai Emery is refusing to give up: "It's more difficult now, but the title is not lost. We're going to continue working for that, to win the three matches that remain and the Coupe de France final." The weekend's action draws to a close on Sunday when Marseille host Nice in the Mediterranean derby. — Reuters

SPURS LOOK TO CRANK UP PRESSURE ON CHELSEA

MANCHESTER: If Chelsea needed any reminder that there is still work to be done to secure a second title in three years, the Premier League schedule should ensure there is no complacency in Antonio Conte's squad. Second-placed Tottenham visit West Ham United today and a win for Mauricio Pochettino's team would cut the gap to leaders Chelsea to just one point ahead of the Blues' Monday game against relegation-threatened Middlesbrough.

Both the title-chasers are in buoyant mood after crucial wins last weekend with Spurs triumphing over Arsenal in the North London derby and Chelsea winning 3-0 against Everton at Goodison Park in the toughest game on paper of their run-in. "We keep going, it's hard to do anything else. We can't control what Chelsea do, we just have to keep winning our games," said Spurs forward Harry Kane, who scored in the 2-0 win over Arsenal to take his league tally to 21 for the season.

"We have another London derby today's night and hopefully we can win that, drop it down to one point and see what happens... We're playing as well as we ever have done in the Premier League." Tottenham have won nine consecutive league games but West Ham will remember that they were only minutes away from doing what no team has managed this season-beating Spurs at White Hart Lane. Spurs fought back from 2-1 down in stoppage time, with two Kane goals, to claim a 3-2 win in November and Hammers defender Winston Reid knows the England forward will be a threat again.

"When we played them at White Hart Lane, he didn't have a shot on target for 89 minutes, then out of nowhere he had scored a penalty and another goal from open play and they had won the game," he said. Chelsea start as clear favorites against second-bottom Middlesbrough but they will have noted the fighting spirit shown by Boro in their 2-2 draw with fourth-placed Manchester City on Sunday. In the battle for Champions League qualification, third-placed Liverpool are at home on Sunday to Southampton—a club they have raided for several players in recent seasons—while fifth-placed Manchester United take on Arsenal, in sixth.

Manchester City will expect to get back to winning ways, after three games without a victory, when they host Crystal Palace on Saturday. Sam Allardyce's team, however, are unlikely to roll over as they still need points to secure their safety after their home loss to Burnley last Saturday. At the bottom of the table, Hull City will be hoping to pull further away from the drop zone when they face already-relegated Sunderland, while Swansea, in 18th and two points adrift of the safety zone, face a tough home game against Everton.—Reuters

English Premier League table

LONDON: English Premier League table ahead of the weekend's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Chelsea	34	26	3	5	72	29	81
Tottenham	34	23	8	3	71	22	77
Liverpool	35	20	9	6	71	42	69
Man City	34	19	9	6	65	37	66
Man Utd	34	17	14	3	51	25	65
Arsenal	33	18	6	9	64	42	60
Everton	35	16	10	9	60	40	58
West Brom	34	12	8	14	39	43	44
Southampton	33	11	8	14	39	44	41
Bournemouth	35	11	8	16	50	63	41
Leicester	34	11	7	16	42	54	40
Stoke	35	10	10	15	37	50	40
Watford	34	11	7	16	37	55	40
Burnley	35	11	6	18	35	49	39
West Ham	35	10	9	16	44	59	39
Crystal Palace	35	11	5	19	46	56	38
Hull	35	9	7	19	36	67	34
Swansea	35	9	5	21	40	69	32
Middlesbrough	35	5	13	17	26	45	28
Sunderland	34	5	6	23	26	60	21

— relegated

Note: top four qualify for Champions League; teams finishing fifth to seventh qualify for Europa League; bottom three relegated to Championship.



Sulley Muntari

RACISM SCARS EUROPEAN SOCCER

ROME: As monkey chants boomed around the Italian soccer stadium, Sulley Muntari became more incensed. The Ghanaian player sought out the referee and asked for intervention to silence the fans hurling racist abuse. Referees have the power to stop games and have warning messages amplified around stadiums. Nothing like that happened, though, during Sunday's Serie A game on the island of Sardinia. Instead Muntari, exacerbated by the referee's indifference, repeatedly pointed at his skin color.

The veteran Pescara midfielder's protests were apparently ignored, and it further complaints from Muntari in the second half for the referee finally to act at Cagliari. But what happened next has enraged players and anti-discrimination campaigners. Far from being protected by the referee, Muntari was booked for dissent. Aghast, Muntari walked off and was booked again for leaving the field without following procedures - his two yellow cards amounting to a red, and ejection from the game. Even when the incident was reviewed in the following days, Italian soccer authorities sided with Cagliari against Muntari.

The 32-year-old former Inter and AC Milan midfielder was handed a one match ban for receiving two yellow cards. Cagliari escaped punishment because Serie A's disciplinary body said only 10 fans were to blame. "Only a callous commission disciplinary would ignore the full picture of what went on here," Piara Powar, executive director of the anti-discrimination Fare Network, told The Associated Press. "It's set a very dangerous precedent. There are recurring incidents and the Italian football authorities are not dealing with them in the right way."

Muntari's case hasn't been the only one in recent days. Both Inter Milan and

Lazio were found guilty by Serie A's disciplinary division after fans bellowed racist abuse during games. The punishment for both teams was having parts of their stadiums closed - but only if there is a repeat of the conduct. For Powar, who advises European soccer's governing body on discrimination, these cases demonstrate a complete "failure of the regulatory processes." It's not a problem confined to one or two countries. "It's endemic across Europe at the moment," Powar said.

Sanctions

Derisory fines were typical in racism cases until a high-profile incident in 2013 spurred the authorities into action. Just like last weekend, it saw a Ghanaian walking off an Italian soccer field that sparked change. On that occasion, the whole AC Milan team joined in the protest by Kevin-Prince Boateng. Within months, it resulted in sanctions being strengthened across global soccer. FIFA insisted on a minimum five-game ban for racism by players, and European body UEFA doubled the entry-level punishment in a tougher approach.

For abuse by fans, a sliding scale of punishments was adopted. Parts of stadiums could be closed for the first offense and further racist abuse should ultimately result in fans being locked out completely. League officials also have the power to dock points or relegate teams for serious repeated incidents. Administrators also face more rigorous scrutiny for discriminatory conduct. One of the earliest offenders after the new rules were adopted was the man campaigning to lead Italian soccer. Carlo Tavecchio was banned by UEFA for six months at the start of his Italian federation presidency in 2014 over a reference to bananas when discussing the presence of foreign players in Italy.

FRANCE

Corsica has also been the scene of racist crimes at soccer this season. On a visit by Nice to the French Mediterranean island in January, striker Mario Balotelli - the son of Ghanaian immigrants to Italy - endured monkey chants being bellowed at him by Bastia supporters. Bastia was given a suspended one-point deduction and forced to close part of its stadium for three games.

BRITAIN

Scotland's Glasgow derby last weekend saw a Rangers supporter make a monkey gesture at Scott Sinclair after the Celtic player scored. The fan was quickly identified and has already appeared in court. England has also been the scene of high-profile cases this decade. Luis Suarez was banned for eight games in 2011 while playing for Liverpool, and Chelsea captain John Terry was suspended for four games the following year. Two lower-league players this season received the minimum five-game ban.

UEFA

The disciplinary department at European soccer's governing body has also been clamping down on racist chanting in continental fixtures. Serbia was warned in March by UEFA that its teams could be kicked out of European competitions for further infractions by fans. Croatia has also been targeted in the UEFA crackdown, along with teams from Italy, Hungary Poland and Ukraine. The pressing concern is Russia, host of the 2018 World Cup where there have been persistent reports of discriminatory displays and chants. Former Chelsea midfielder Alexei Smertin was put in charge of investigating soccer racism in Russia in February despite previously declaring: "There's no racism in Russia."— Reuters

CAVS CRUISE PAST RAPTORS; LEONARD SHINES FOR SPURS

LOS ANGELES: Kawhi Leonard scored a game-high 34 points as the San Antonio Spurs defeated the Houston Rockets 121-96 on Wednesday to level their NBA playoff series at one game each. Leonard also delivered eight assists and seven rebounds for the Spurs, who now travel to Houston for games three and four of the best-of-seven second round Western Conference series. "We were focused," Leonard said. "We lost by 30 points last game so we didn't want to disappoint the fans." San Antonio's win could prove to be costly because of an injury to guard Tony Parker. The Frenchman had to be carried off the floor by teammates with 8:43 remaining after suffering a left leg injury.

Meanwhile, LeBron James reached another milestone and the Cleveland Cavaliers nailed 18 shots from beyond the arc en route to a 125-103 rout of the Toronto Raptors in their East playoff series. San Antonio led 97-83 at the time of Parker's injury. The incident took place when Parker missed a short layup and landed underneath the Rockets' basket. He had scored 18 points before leaving the game. Parker clutched his left knee as he lay on the floor. He was carted off by teammates Dewayne Dedmon and DeJuan Murray and did not look up as the crowd chanted his name.

"I just hope he is OK because we need him the next game," Leonard said. Parker is expected to undergo an MRI scan today. Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said of Parker, "It is not good." LaMarcus Aldridge scored 15 points for the Spurs while Jonathon Simmons added 14 points and Danny Green scored his 12 points all in the first half. In Cleveland, James became the NBA's second all-time leading scorer in the postseason with a 39 point performance as the Cavaliers crushed the Toronto Raptors in game two. James nailed a three pointer in the second half to surpass Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (5,762 points) for second place. Michael Jordan is first with 5,987 playoff points.

Offers reward

"You find somebody to stop LeBron in these moments, I'll give you \$100," Toronto's DeMar DeRozan said. The win gives Cleveland a 2-0 series lead but game three is in Toronto today. James also joined Ray Allen, Reggie Miller and Manu Ginobili to become the fourth player in league history to make 300 playoff three-pointers in a career. And he now has 89 playoff games with at least 30 points, which moved him past Kobe Bryant. Only Jordan (109) has more.

James scored 17 points in the third quarter to give Cleveland a 99-73 lead heading into the fourth. "I'm feeling pretty good," James said. "My teammates do a great job of putting me in position. My coaching staff do a great job of putting me in position to be successful." And, I put a lot of work in on my craft and I live with the results. Just blessed I'm able to make a few plays tonight to help us win another game." Kyrie Irving added 22 points and 11 assists for Cleveland, who also received 18 points from Channing Frye.

Iman Shumpert came off the bench to score 14 for the Cavaliers, who easily won game one 116-105 on Monday. The Raptors were led by Jonas Valanciunas who had 23 points. All-Star guard Kyle Lowry scored 20 points but injured his left ankle in the third quarter and was out of the game for good by the fourth. The Raptors have never won a playoff series when trailing 0-2 and are now a dismal 1-6 in game two's on the road. DeRozan, the Raptors' leading scorer this season, was limited to five points on two-of-11 shooting. "It sucks. To lose like we did," DeRozan said. "Now I just have the added time having to wait till today's night to redeem myself." — AFP



CLEVELAND: Toronto Raptors' Kyle Lowry (right) drives to the basket against Cleveland Cavaliers' JR Smith during the second half in Game 2 of a second-round NBA basketball playoff series on Wednesday, May 3, 2017. — AP

PENGUINS EDGE CAPITALS AS DUCKS TOP OILERS 4-3

PITTSBURGH: Forget about revenge for the brutal cross-check that knocked Pittsburgh Penguins star Sidney Crosby out of the playoffs indefinitely. Marc-Andre Fleury didn't want any part of it. The Pittsburgh Penguins goaltender came up with a more effective method of retribution against the Washington Capitals. "The best way to make them pay is winning," Fleury said. That's something the defending Stanley Cup champions keep doing no matter who is - and who isn't - in the lineup. Fleury stopped 36 shots, rookie Jake Guentzel took advantage of a fortunate bounce for his playoff-leading eighth goal and Pittsburgh pushed Washington to the brink of elimination with a 3-2 victory in Game 4 on Wednesday night.

Game 5 is tomorrow night in Washington. Rivals can outplay and outshoot the Penguins all they want - outscoring them is another matter entirely. Patric Hornqvist provided the Penguins with an early boost and Justin

Schultz's power-play goal just past the game's midway point was enough for Fleury to do the rest. Rendered a backup most of the season behind Matt Murray, Fleury is now Pittsburgh's most vital player, one who seems to thrive in the face of Washington's incessant pressure. "He's elevated his game at an important time," Penguins coach Mike Sullivan said. "He's a competitive guy. He's a Stanley Cup-winning goaltender and I think he's showing it."

Consider the Capitals believers. Washington has pumped 142 shots at Fleury through four games, nearly 50 more shots than the Penguins have managed the other way (93). And yet all those opportunities have translated into just one victory. "We had good chances and we didn't bury them," Washington coach Barry Trotz said. "Our backs are against the wall." Again. One more win by Pittsburgh and the Penguins will send the Presidents' Trophy winners home for the ninth time in 10 playoff meetings. The Capitals insist

it's not mental, though at times they were their own worst enemy. Guentzel's goal came when a crossing pass deflected off Washington defenseman Dmitry Orlov and by Braden Holtby. Washington took seven penalties, including a high-sticking call against TJ Oshie with less than two minutes left in regulation. Oshie called it an "amateur play," one symbolic of a night in which the Capitals failed to take advantage of a Penguins team missing Crosby, defenseman Kris Letang and forward Conor Sheary. Alexander Ovechkin managed just two shots and Washington's power play went 0 for 4. "I would say our top players didn't play as well as they need to be to top players," Trotz said. "They need to step up right now."

Ducks 4, Oilers 3 (OT)

Ryan Getzlaf was a one-man wrecking crew at a big moment for the Anaheim Ducks. Getzlaf scored twice and assisted on two goals, including Jakob Silfverberg's game-winner 45 seconds into overtime, and the Ducks topped the Edmonton Oilers 4-3 in Game 4 of their second-round playoff series on Wednesday night. "If he keeps doing this, we're going to have fun time here," Silfverberg said. "He's one of the best players in the league and when he plays like he did tonight with that aggressiveness and physicality, he kind of pushes the whole team to move forward with him." Rickard Rakell also scored for Anaheim, which has won two in a row after dropping the first two games of the series at home. John Gibson made 29 saves.

Drake Caggiula, Connor McDavid and Milan Lucic scored for Edmonton, and Cam Talbot had 35 stops. "It's a 2-2 series now," Caggiula said. "We have to make sure we play a full 60 minutes going forward here. We were in this situation last series too, and it worked out just fine." Anaheim had a 3-2 lead before Caggiula snapped a rebound over Gibson's head at 18:18 of the third. It was the rookie's first career playoff point. Game 5 is today night, back in Southern California. "We haven't accomplished anything yet," Getzlaf said. "All we did was get our home-ice back. We've got to take this one, breathe, breathe, the next day and a half here and get ready for Game 5." — Agencies



ALBERTA: Edmonton Oilers defenseman Matthew Benning (83) hits Anaheim Ducks right wing Corey Perry (10) during the first period of Game 4 of an NHL hockey second-round playoff series, on Wednesday, May 3, 2017. — AP



Red Bull Car Park Drift Championship Kicks off at Sirbb Circuit Today

The Secrets of Drifting That Will Crown a Hero from Kuwait



Ahead of the start of the 2017 season of Red Bull Car Park Drift competition in Kuwait, the local qualifier drifters have been preparing and rehearsing intensively while equipping their cars with the needed tools in preparation for the competition vying national championship title. What will motorsports lovers witness at Sirbb Circuit during the weekend? What are the secrets for a successful drift that will allow the car driver to represent Kuwait at the Regional Final in Qatar later this year?

Only sixteen participants managed to make it through the qualifier of Red Bull Car Park Drift competition yesterday in Kuwait, and thus earned the chance to drift on Friday during the National Final. The final is organized by Basel Salem Al-Sabah Motorsport Club and is held under the sponsorship of the Public Authority for Sports, and in partnership with Drag 965, GoPro, Acqua Eva, Al-Anbaa Newspaper, Kuwait Times Newspaper, Falken, Shop & Ship and Total.

As a first necessity for participation, the car should be a rear-wheel drive not a front-wheel drive; it should have a sports seat and shall meet the safety conditions which were set out by the organizers and which include the driver's outfit, the helmet, safety belt, etc. The engine's power and the tires' quality play undoubtedly a key role along with the car's body, equipment and shape. These elements affect, at a certain percentage, the final point that will be given to the participants.

Turning to the drifting techniques, and in order for the driver to drift, he should start driving and then steer the wheel quickly to the maximum in the direction of the speci-



fied turn on the track, before steering it in the opposite direction to prevent the car's rotation around itself. It is important to balance the speed to get the mission done and brace for entering the next turn which, before entering, he should steer the wheel again in the opposite direction to straighten the car.

The balance game will be essential for drivers who have to follow the specified track with the front of their cars while the rear should be moving in right and left sides according to the drawn destination. The driver should lose speed as he enters the turn and therefore, he must be ready to

press again on the accelerator and maintain the drift movement of the rear of the car. He should also bear in mind that the tires' friction with asphalt slows down the drift and torque, which brings us back to the key issue of balance between the movement of the steering wheel and the pressure on the accelerator so that the car doesn't get out of track nor rotate around itself.

The total points given by the referees are 400: 160 points for drift skills, 40 for each of the engine's roar, the smoke produced by the tires' friction with the track ground and the car's rotation around itself

in a narrow box within the track, in addition to 60 points for each of the car's look and the ability to get as close as possible to the cones that delimit the track without colliding with them.

It is worth noting that the track, designed by Abdo Feghali, a rally champion and one of the top drift experts in the world, will constitute a main test for those who aspire to win Red Bull Car Park Drift competition. There is no doubt that the details based on which the track was designed as well as the special stages that were added to it, will play a crucial role in determining the identity of the 'King of Drift'.

Electrifying BMX and Motorbike Shows

The National Final of Red Bull Car Park Drift will feature a side act by the famous Pro Stunt Biker Shadi Al-Dhaheeri and a show by

BMX Red Bull champion, Mansour Al Safran who presents professional bike shows. His debut was back in 2006 in Red Bull Street Style Championship and one of his remarkable sports achievements was during his participation at the Asian free style tournament in Malaysia 2013 when he won the 3rd place. The Saudi motorsports champion, Shadi Al-Dhaheeri, is visiting Kuwait to show his extraordinary skills as part of Red Bull Car Park Drift National Final, including his ability to stand on the bike seat while driving it. Al-Dhaheeri started his motorbike shows in 2005 and since then, he developed his talent and skills to become in 2007 the first professional biker to perform in KSA. Shadi will start off his engine today so as to overwhelm the audience with a special round of brilliant shows. Stay tuned to see how he 'tames' his motorbike.



Shadi Al-Dhaheeri



Mansour Al-Safran



Friday Times

Sports

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

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Cavs rout Raptors

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