

New power tariffs from today for commercial buildings



Erdogan returns as ruling party boss after referendum



Little women stand tall at Dubai fashion show



Ronaldo leads Real Madrid to 33rd La Liga title



AMIR SAYS ARAB-ISLAMIC-US SUMMIT BOOSTS COOPERATION

SHEIKH SABAH THANKS TRUMP FOR MEETING GCC LEADERS, INVITES HIM TO KUWAIT



Min 30°
Max 44°
High Tide 08:55 & 21:01
Low Tide 02:22 & 15:05



150 FILS
NO: 17235
40 PAGES



RIYADH: (Left) US President Donald Trump and HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah take part in a bilateral meeting at a hotel yesterday. (Right) Trump, Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz, HH Sheikh Sabah, Jordan's King Abdullah II, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and other leaders pose for a group photo during the Arab Islamic American Summit at the King Abdulaziz Conference Center yesterday. — AFP

SAUDI KING SLAMS IRAN AS 'SPEARHEAD' OF TERRORISM'

TRUMP CALLS TO ISOLATE IRAN, CONFRONT EXTREMISM

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's King Salman yesterday accused regional rival Iran of exporting extremist Islamic movements to the world and vowed to eliminate the Islamic State group. "The Iranian regime has been the spearhead of global terrorism since the (Ayatollah Ruhollah) Khomeini revolution" in 1979, King Salman said in a speech to leaders including US President Donald Trump. "We did not know terrorism and extremism until the Khomeini revolution reared its head," he said. Saudi Arabia was also determined to "eliminate the Islamic State group", the king said.

In his highly anticipated speech in Saudi Arabia, Trump urged Islamic leaders to take a stand against violence done in the name of religion, describing the struggle against extremism as a "battle between good and evil". Trump lashed out at Iran, accusing Tehran of fuelling "the fires of sectarian conflict and terror" and calling for its international isolation. Saying he came with "a message of friendship and hope and love", Trump told dozens of Muslim leaders that the time had



RIYADH: US President Donald Trump speaks during the Arab Islamic American Summit at the King Abdulaziz Conference Center yesterday. — AFP

come for "honestly confronting the crisis of Islamist extremism".

"This is a battle between barbaric criminals who seek to obliterate human life, and decent people of all religions who seek to protect it. This is a battle between good and

evil." The speech came on the second day of a visit to Saudi Arabia, part of Trump's first foreign tour that will take him next to Israel and the Palestinian territories and then to Europe. The White House has sought to draw a clear distinction during the visit with Trump's predecessor Barack Obama, who Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies saw as lecturing and soft on their rival Iran.

Trump did not hesitate to single out Iran in his speech. "From Lebanon to Iraq to Yemen, Iran funds, arms and trains terrorists, militias and other extremist groups that spread destruction and chaos across the region," Trump said. "Until the Iranian regime is willing to be a partner for peace, all nations of conscience must work together to isolate it." He appealed to Muslim nations to ensure that "terrorists find no sanctuary on their soil" and announced an agreement with Gulf countries to fight financing for extremists.

Unlike the Obama administration which would often raise concerns over civil liberties with longstanding Arab allies, Trump had

Continued on Page 13

RIYADH: The Arab-Islamic-US summit stresses the need of further American and Islamic cooperation in the face of mounting challenges, HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah said yesterday. Addressing the first-ever Arab-Islamic-US summit to take place on Saudi soil, the Amir noted that the meeting was a testament to the Islamic world's eagerness to stave off the growing threat of terrorism, which has marred the sacrosanct image of the Islamic faith.

The Amir pointed out that the summit takes place amid a trying time for the region and will help exonerate Islamic nations from accusations of sponsoring terrorism. On the summit, the Amir said it represents a genuine opportunity for Islamic nations to work closely with the US in efforts to exterminate the scourge of terrorism, which in turn, leads to positive ripple effects.

Meanwhile, HH the Amir noted that the summit could prove to be a launchpad for productive cooperation between the US and Islamic nations, which will ultimately lead to the defeat of terrorism. Moreover, the Amir cited numerous measures taken by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations to keep the forces of extremism at bay and foster a spirit of amity and goodwill. Sheikh Sabah highlighted the summit as a vociferous message of determination and strength, saying that efforts to fight extremism will remain firm and unyielding. He said that

he was hopeful the monumental meeting would address common concerns, chief among them is to have lasting peace in the Middle East.

Earlier, Sheikh Sabah expressed his satisfaction and appreciation for the visit to the Saudi Arabia by US President Donald Trump and meeting with GCC leaders after being elected president. At the joint US-GCC Summit in Riyadh, the Amir said that "we applaud such initiative, which underscores the depth of relations between the United States and the GCC countries, and reflects the strategic partnership between us and the United States' commitment to the security and stability of the region".

The Amir added that events in Yemen pose a threat to security and stability in the region, especially Saudi Arabia, considering its long borders with Yemen and the continuation of Houthi attacks on it, which "requires us to preserve the sanctity of the kingdom's borders with all our capabilities, and we do not deny here the urgent need for help from our allies topped by the United States of America, as the conflict is not only with Yemen, but there is an outside party that provides them with weapons and money to kill the people of Yemen and neighboring countries".

"There will be no solution except by political means and pressure on the warring parties to return to the negotiating table," HH the Amir added.

Continued on Page 13

TRUMP: TIES WITH BAHRAIN WON'T BE STRAINED ANYMORE

US PRESIDENT PRAISES SISI, HOPES TO VISIT EGYPT

RIYADH: US President Donald Trump said yesterday Washington's relations with Bahrain were set to improve, after meeting with the king of the Gulf Arab state during a visit to Saudi Arabia. "Our countries have a wonderful relationship together, but there has been a little strain, but there won't be strain with this administration," Trump said during a photo session with Sheikh Hamad bin Issa Al-Khalifa in Riyadh. "We're going to have a very, very long-term relationship. I look forward to it very much - many of the same things in common."

Trump's White House decided this year to pursue a \$5 billion sale to Bahrain of 19 Lockheed Martin F-16 aircraft and related equipment, which was held up last year by human rights concerns.

Separately, Trump said yesterday he hoped to visit Cairo soon, praising President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi after a meeting in Saudi Arabia and declaring that "safety seems to be very strong" in Egypt. Speaking through a translator,



RIYADH: US President Donald Trump and Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa take part in a bilateral meeting at a hotel yesterday. — AFP

Sisi described Trump as "a unique personality that is capable of doing the impossible". "I agree!" the billionaire president responded as everyone laughed. Trump even complimented Sisi on his footwear, saying: "Love your shoes. Boy, those shoes. Man..."

Trump said he was having "very, very

important talks" with Sisi. "We've really been through a lot together positively," said Trump, who is on his first foreign visit since taking office. "I will get to Egypt. We will absolutely be putting that on the list very soon," he said. Sisi had "done a tremendous job under trying circumstance". — Agencies

MELANIA HAILS 'EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN' AT SAUDI COMPANY VISIT

IVANKA: SAUDI PROGRESS ON WOMEN 'ENCOURAGING'

RIYADH: US First Lady Melania Trump praised the "empowerment of women" at a General Electric all-female service center in the Saudi capital yesterday, saying the women should work together and educate their children well. She is accompanying US President Donald Trump on his first international visit since taking office in January, and told 200 female employees she tried to find balance between her role of First Lady and mother.

"It is about finding the balance," she told the women, who took pictures of her with their smartphones. Later on Twitter, she wrote "Enjoyed talking to the incredible women working hard @GE_Saudi service center. Great strides being made towards the empowerment of women." Dressed in a tan knee-length dress, Melania shared a photo of herself with seven women dressed in abayas, the



RIYADH: US First Lady Melania Trump (second right) chats with employees during a visit to the GE All-Women Business Process Services and IT Centre yesterday. — AFP

loose-fitting, full-length robes local women are required to wear in public in Saudi Arabia. She earlier visited the American International School of Riyadh and gave out books. The school, unlike most others in the conservative kingdom, has both male and female

students of different nationalities. Meanwhile, Trump's daughter Ivanka said yesterday that ultra-conservative Saudi Arabia has made "encouraging" progress in empowering women but more freedom is needed.

Continued on Page 13



RIYADH: A handout picture provided by the Saudi Royal Palace yesterday shows Saudi's King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud (C-R) and US President Donald Trump (C-L) chatting during a meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council at the King Abdulaziz Conference Center in Riyadh. — AP, AFP and Amiri Diwan photos

AMIR LEAVES RIYADH AFTER ATTENDING SUMMITS

RIYADH: His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation have left Riyadh yesterday after attending the 7th consultative summit of the GCC leaders, Gulf-US summit and Arab-Islamic US summit. His Highness the Amir was seen off at the King Salman Air Base Airport by head of the Mission of Honor, the Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Abdulaziz Al-Fayez and Kuwaiti Ambassador in Riyadh Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA



US President Donald Trump talks with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah ahead of the US-Gulf Cooperation Council meeting in Riyadh yesterday.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attends a meeting between US President Donald Trump and leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council at the King Abdulaziz Conference Center in Riyadh yesterday.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is handed a note during a bilateral meeting with US President Donald Trump, yesterday in Riyadh.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain.

ROADMAP TO INCREASE JOBS OFFERED BY KUWAIT'S PRIVATE SECTOR: MINISTER

JORDAN: Kuwait has drawn up a roadmap to boost the perceptions of business index over the coming five years, together with increasing the job opportunities offered by the private sector, said Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan.

Roudhan revealed the plan yesterday in a statement to a panel discussion on streamlining trade and investment in the region, held on the third and final day of the World Economic Forum (WEF) on the Middle East and North Africa at the Dead Sea, Jordan. He added that Kuwait is hard at work to bolster the non-petroleum gross domestic product (GDP) over the five years to come, with an annual rate of four percent, through turning the country into a trade hub.

This will be achieved via improving the business environment; creating new economic opportunities; providing means to secure success and growth of business; and developing the relevant legislations, including trade laws, Roudhan told the session. Themed 'Empowering

Generations into the Future,' the forum that started on Friday and opened its main session a day later, has grouped about 1,100 public and private sector officials as well as political and business leaders from more than 50 countries.

Empowering women and youth, creating jobs for the unemployed, addressing the needs of refugees and host communities and e-extremism were some of the topics discussed during the WEF sessions. This was the 9th World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa Jordan hosts since it was first held in the Dead Sea in 2003.

Separately, Roudhan held talks yesterday with Jordan's Minister of Industry Trade and Supply Yarub Qudah on the sidelines of the forum, which focused on bolstering the Kuwaiti-Jordanian economic, trade and investment ties. Roudhan and Qudah discussed supporting business incubators, and the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Arab World. They reiterated that the Kuwaiti-Jordan economic ties offer a model example on the Arab scene. — KUNA



JORDAN: Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalid Al-Roudhan meets with Jordan's Minister of Industry Trade and Supply Yarub Qudah. — KUNA

CROWN PRINCE MEETS OFFICIALS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Seif Palace National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem. His Highness the Crown Prince also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs and member of the Supreme Planning Council Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and member of the council who gave His Highness an explanation of the visit of the Kuwaiti delegation to China and its participation in the Belt and Road Initiative which was held in the Asian nation between May 14-15.

His Highness thanked the team, wishing that the said conference would contribute to the consolidation of international trade and investment and human interaction. His Highness asserted the need for the diversification of revenue sources and increase non-oil revenues to achieve the noble desire of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to transform Kuwait into an international trade and financial hub and to achieve Kuwait's vision 2035. The meeting was attended by head of the protocol at His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and members of the Supreme Planning Council.

Legalese

KUWAIT'S LABOR LAW: THE PROBATION PERIOD

By Fajer Ahmed

Around 70 percent of Kuwait's population is not Kuwaiti and that is a number to be proud of. I repeatedly write about what a blessing the non-national community in Kuwait has on Kuwait's culture, economy, and so on, as Kuwait can be a place of opportunity for many. Unfortunately though, a significant number of expats face employment issues because of multiple reasons. One of these reasons being legal loopholes, while another being abuse of power (by Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis alike) and a third being lack of awareness of their rights and freedoms under Kuwait's law. Knowing that the laws in Kuwait are not accessible to non-nationals causes issues and therefore I am really grateful and proud that I get to share with you my humble knowledge of Kuwait's employment law but do hope that one day (hopefully very soon) the laws will be more accessible to the 70 percent that are not Kuwaiti; a step that is essential for Kuwait to progress.

Today, I will be writing about a very specific topic under employment law that non-Kuwaitis (and Kuwaitis) need clarification on: The probation period under Kuwait Labor Law 6 for 2010. A probation period is a period of time where both the employee and the employer can test each other out to see if they are 'fit' for each other. Everyone, Kuwaiti or non-Kuwait, regardless of the job position can go through a probation period. It is there in order for the employers and the employee to both try the work and see if it is what is best for them. After all, spending eight hours a day, 40-48 hours a week is a lot of time and you really should be spending it doing what you love.

Visa transfer

Question: My understanding is that the first 100 working days are a probation period which means I can leave my work at any time. Yet if I can leave within the first 100 days, then how come I cannot transfer my visa in Kuwait? I have been brought in from my country for this job and I believe I deserve 100 days to try the job out as well as to see if life in Kuwait will suit my needs.

Fajer: The visa laws/bylaws in Kuwait are separate from the Kuwait Labor Law and unfortunately the visa law does not allow transfers through the probation period, which is something I think the officials should consider. I understand that the reason transfers are not allowed unless a period has passed is because so many employers lose money bringing non-Kuwaitis into Kuwait, and training them. But I also know that the law has placed a three-month notice period for contracts without a period, and for those with a period, there are consequences as well. So for now, unfortunately, you cannot transfer within your probation period if you are coming to Kuwait to work for a certain employer.

100 days

Question: Is the probation period 100 working days or 100 days in general from the day that I commence work? It seems like the probation period in Kuwait is three months and not 100 days, can my employer force me to sign on 90 days instead of 100?

Fajer: This depends on your contract. If there is no clause in your contract, then it is according to article 32 of Kuwait Labor Law, which states: "The probation period of the worker shall be specified in the work contract, provided that it shall not exceed 100 working days." So it is 100 days of actual work even though it has become common practice in Kuwait that the probation period is 90 days in general and not 100 working days. The article mentioned above stated that the probation period should not exceed 100 days therefore my opinion is that the probation could be less to the benefit of the employer and not the employee. The probation period under the 'new' labor law is 100 days and not 90 days. Some companies unfortunately have not updated these contracts.

Leaving

Question: What should I do if I would like to leave on my probation period?

Fajer: Legally speaking, you can leave at any time through your probation period without submitting any papers, but this is theoretical. I think it is best to submit an official email or letter and not get approval but get confirmation, in order to protect yourself and also be fair to your employer. This is essential especially if you are non-Kuwaiti.

If you have any legal questions, please email Ask@FajerTheLawyer.com

NEW POWER TARIFFS ON COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS TODAY

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: New power tariffs will be applied starting from today on commercial buildings, the Ministry of Electricity and Water's (MEW) consumer affairs director Salem Al-Qassaba said, urging all commercial licensees and store owners to check with the department to pay their dues for the period prior to May 22, 2017. Qassaba added that MEW will launch an awareness campaign today at Al-Hamra Tower to explain the need to pay off old debts to avoid mixing old bills with those calculated according to the new tariff. Qassaba said that the new tariffs would be applied on investment residential buildings from August 22, 2017.

Expat employees

First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled stressed that the total number of cases filed against the ministry since 2013 is 18. Responding to parliamentary inquiries about the total number of expat employees working for the ministry, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said it was only five, in addition to 135 laborers, and stressed that his ministry had been substituting expats with citizens for years with a few exceptions when expats' expertise is needed.

Home-based licenses

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) is scheduled to issue a decision organizing the issuance of home-based business licenses this or next week, said informed sources, noting that according to this decision, citizens would be allowed to apply for such licenses to enhance the potentials of families and housewives and allow them to start their own home-based businesses.

9,877 students

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training's (PAAET) admission and registry dean Dr Rabah Al-Nejadah said PAAET colleges and institutes would accept 9,877 new students in the coming academic year. Nejadah added that applicants would now be able to upload documents needed for the application to PAAET's website.

COURT ORDERS KU TO UPGRADE STUDENT'S GPA

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The administrative court passed a historic verdict mandating Kuwait University's faculty of law to change a student's GPA from A- to A. Meanwhile, the criminal court yesterday sentenced a Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) director and a supervisor to seven years in prison and dismissal, sentenced another sector manager and supervisor to three years in prison and dismissal from his positions, fined other suspects and acquitted 16 other employees who had all been detained over charges of embezzling MEW funds.

Lawyer's detention

Commenting on the recent detention of lawyer Meshaal Saad Al-Khannah over charges of slandering a member of the judiciary, Kuwait Lawyers Society (KLS) Chairman Nasser Humoud Al-Kraiween stressed that KLS will continue defending lawyers' constitutional and legal rights. Kraiween added that KLS had addressed all relevant authorities and that it was high time to clear things up and protect lawyers' dignity.

Food safety

The Municipal Council's Deputy Chairman Meshaal Al-Jowaisri criticized allowing the entry of 26 tons of pumpkin, that were later proved to be inedible and deformed, into the country without examining them. Jowaisri also warned about products arriving from a neighboring country, calling for examining them prior to allowing their sale in local markets.

Road project

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) assistant under-secretary for roads engineering Ahmad Al-Hassan announced that Jamal Abdul Nasser Street development project's leg between the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the UN Roundabout will open on May 26.



ABOLISH ARTICLE 153: EXPRESSIVE EXHIBITION AT 'THE HUB' GALLERY

KUWAIT: Twelve years have passed since Kuwaiti women got the right to participate in the political battle in Kuwait; this date, the 16th of May, coincides with the launching of one of the most important creative exhibitions that show a collection of artistic work and photographs representing women in order to encourage them to obtain their full rights as well as a support and show solidarity with the abolition of Article 153 of the Kuwaiti Penal Code. This article allows men to get away with

killing their mothers, daughters, sisters and wives if they suspect them of sexual impropriety with a light punishment of a prison sentence for a period not exceeding three years or a fine of KD 15 or one of these penalties, and this is contrary to the principles of Islamic law. Dr Al-Anoud Al-Sharikh, Sheikha Al-Nafisi, Lulu Al-Sabah, Amira Behbehani and Sundus Hussain are the organizers of this exhibition. They are the ones who initiated this idea to demand the cancellation of this arti-

cle and its negative consequences on human rights in general and women's rights in particular. The exhibition will last for a week in the hall of 'The Hub' Gallery located on the Arabian Gulf Street - Sharq. It will include paintings, jewelry and sculptures created by a group of young Kuwaiti and Arab artists to promote this awareness campaign in all segments of Kuwaiti society in the hope of achieving justice and equality between men and women and the exclusion of violence in any way.

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May his soul rest in peace

CAR CATCHES FIRE OUTSIDE JAHRA HOSPITAL



By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Firefighters extinguished a blaze that engulfed a vehicle outside the Jahra Hospital yesterday morning. No injuries were reported in the incident. A case was filed for investigations to determine the cause of the fire.

Thief caught

The Capital criminal investigations detectives arrested an Arab man for robbery, said security sources, noting that along with a compatriot, the suspect had stolen two safes from a private company. The sources added that one of the two suspects, who used to work for the company, was arrested while attempting to leave the country, while the other had already left and is being summoned by Interpol. The suspect confessed, telling detectives that after stealing the two safes, they took them to a desert area where they broke them open and split their contents.

Crackdown

Within its pre-Ramadan inspection campaign, Mubarak Al-Kabeer municipality inspectors toured a number of co-ops, foodstuff stores and warehouses and restaurants, examining all food items and cleanliness, said team leader Nasser Al-Hajri. He said the campaign resulted in confiscating and destroying three tons of inedible and expired foodstuff items, closing down a warehouse and filing four citations involving selling expired foodstuff and operating without a license.

In Brief

AHMADI GOVERNOR MEETS ENVOY

KUWAIT: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah hosted Moroccan Ambassador to Kuwait Jaafar Hakeem at his office in the governorate's general diwan yesterday. The two sides discussed the bilateral relations between the two countries and ways of improving cooperation, especially between governorates.



KUWAITI NAVY TO CONDUCT DRILL

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Naval Force is set to carry out live ammunition exercises on Tuesday and Wednesday from 7:00 am until 5:00 pm, the Defense Ministry said. The shooting range will be 16.5 nautical miles east of Ras Al Julai'a to Qaruh Island, and six nautical miles east of Ras Azzour to Umm Al-Maradem island, the ministry noted in a statement. Therefore, the ministry urged sea-goers to steer clear of the area during the drill period. — KUNA



PAS SUPPORTS FEMALE ATHLETES

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Sport (PAS) said on Saturday it is eager to provide more financial support to women's sports as per an integrated system under the umbrella of Women's Sports Federation. PAS Deputy Director-General Humoud Fleitah said in a statement following a meeting with Secretary-General of the Al-Oyoun Girls' Club Fatma Al-Shemmari that the PAS would do everything possible to revamp women's sports in the country. — KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: Water sports lure young Kuwaitis during the summer. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The US ambassador to Iraq Douglas Silliman poses for a group photo with Kuwait Red Crescent Society members. — KUNA



The US ambassador to Iraq Douglas Silliman meets with the Deputy Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Anwar Al-Hasawi and KRCS members.

KRCS RAISES MONEY FOR REFUGEES, YEMENIS

ENVOY COMMENDS KUWAIT'S SUPPORT TO DISPLACED IRAQIS

KUWAIT/IRBIL: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) will launch a donations' campaign with the onset of the holy month of Ramadan to raise money for treating Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon as well the injured and patients in Yemen. Lama Al-Othman, director of projects development at the society, said yesterday that the financial allocations would be used for patients in need for dialysis, treating refugees suffering from cardiac diseases and illnesses, cancer, spinal problems or those who need artificial limbs. The society receives donations throughout the fasting month at its headquarters from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, or via its website. Donors who show up first encourage others to follow suit, particularly amid Ramadan's special spirituality, she says. The KRCS has organized a series of medical and

relief operations for the refugees and the people of Yemen.

Kuwait's support

Meanwhile, the US ambassador to Iraq Douglas Silliman yesterday paid tribute to Kuwait's humanitarian efforts, especially the country's relief initiatives to alleviate the sufferings of the displaced Iraqi people. In a press statement after meeting the Deputy Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Anwar Al-Hasawi, Silliman lauded the KRCS's programs supporting the displaced families in Iraq.

These programs have been appreciated by the Iraqi authorities and the humanitarian organizations operating in the country, the envoy said. During the meeting, the US diplo-

mat was briefed on the society's philanthropic efforts and initiatives both on the local and regional scenes as well as around the globe. He was also offered an account of Kuwait's efforts through the "Kuwait is by your side" campaign to help the Iraqis.

Meanwhile, Hasawi said in a statement that the society is committed to continuing consultations with the parties concerned with the issue of the displaced in Iraq, out of keenness to help and support. The KRCS looks forward to more coordination with the regional and

international organizations in Iraq to achieve the relevant humanitarian and development projects there.

30 tons

In other news, Kuwait distributed 30 tons of urgent food aid to displaced Iraqis in the war-torn northern Iraqi city of Mosul. The aid is part of Kuwait's ongoing campaign entitled "Kuwait is By Your Side," an initiative launched to mitigate the misery many Iraqis are mired in, said Najim-el-Din Mohammad, a representative

of Iraq's Barazani Charity. On the recipients of the aid, he said they face dismal conditions and are in dire need of such support, as he thanked Kuwait for the copious amounts of aid that has flowed into Iraq. Meanwhile, Iraq's Minister of Immigration and Immigrants Dr Jassim Al-Jaf urged international organizations to work together to rebuild areas that have been liberated from "the clutch of terrorism." Kuwait handed out some 6,000 food baskets to needy Iraqi families living outside of camps scattered across the war-ravaged city. — KUNA



KRCS workers distribute aid to displaced Iraqis in Mosul.



KUWAIT: The Human Resources Group at the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) hosted a field training program for new experts of the Ministry of Justice's General Department of Experts. The training course took place at Sheraton Hotel in cooperation with the bank's legal department.



PORTS DEVELOPMENT PART OF KUWAIT 2035 VISION

KUWAIT: Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) witnessed a remarkable development to cope with 'Kuwait 2035 vision' to transform the country into an international financial and commercial center. The KPA logistic transportation is the best investment in the strategic location of Kuwait. Kuwait is currently constructing Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, a leap in shipping. The country will also work on a number of projects to develop the operating ports, in order to elevate their quality, efficiency and capability to meet the international approach in reactivating the Silk Road that connects East Asia and Europe with the region's country. —KUNA

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London	128	663
Paris	133	830
Barcelona	156	1,004
Phuket	264	836
New York	268	1,105
Seoul	360	1,329
Los Angeles	374	2,028
Melbourne	575	2,525

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Crime

Report

MAN MUGS BORROWER AFTER SHE FAILED TO PAY HIM BACK

KUWAIT: An Iraqi man was arrested for assaulting and robbing a female citizen's purse and money, said security sources. According to the suspect, he had known the woman and lent her KD 500, but when it took her too long to give him the money back, he seized the opportunity of knowing that her purse was full of money and snatched it. He also assaulted her when she tried resisting him. A case was filed.

Blackmail

A citizen was arrested for threatening and blackmailing a female citizen through phone calls he made from a friend's mobile phone, after claiming that his phone battery was dead, said security sources. The case started when a citizen was summoned to a police station to face charges of calling and threatening a woman. The man strongly denied the charges, and after inquiring about the calls' timing, he recalled that a friend had asked to use his phone on that date. The friend was summoned and confessed to making the calls.

Smuggling foiled

A citizen was arrested on arrival at the Nuwaiseeb land border exit with four joints of hashish, said security sources.

Thieves at large

Responding to a social media video showing masked robbers waving to security cameras outside a citizen's diwaniya, police detectives managed to determine the suspects' vehicle license plate number and a search is on for them.

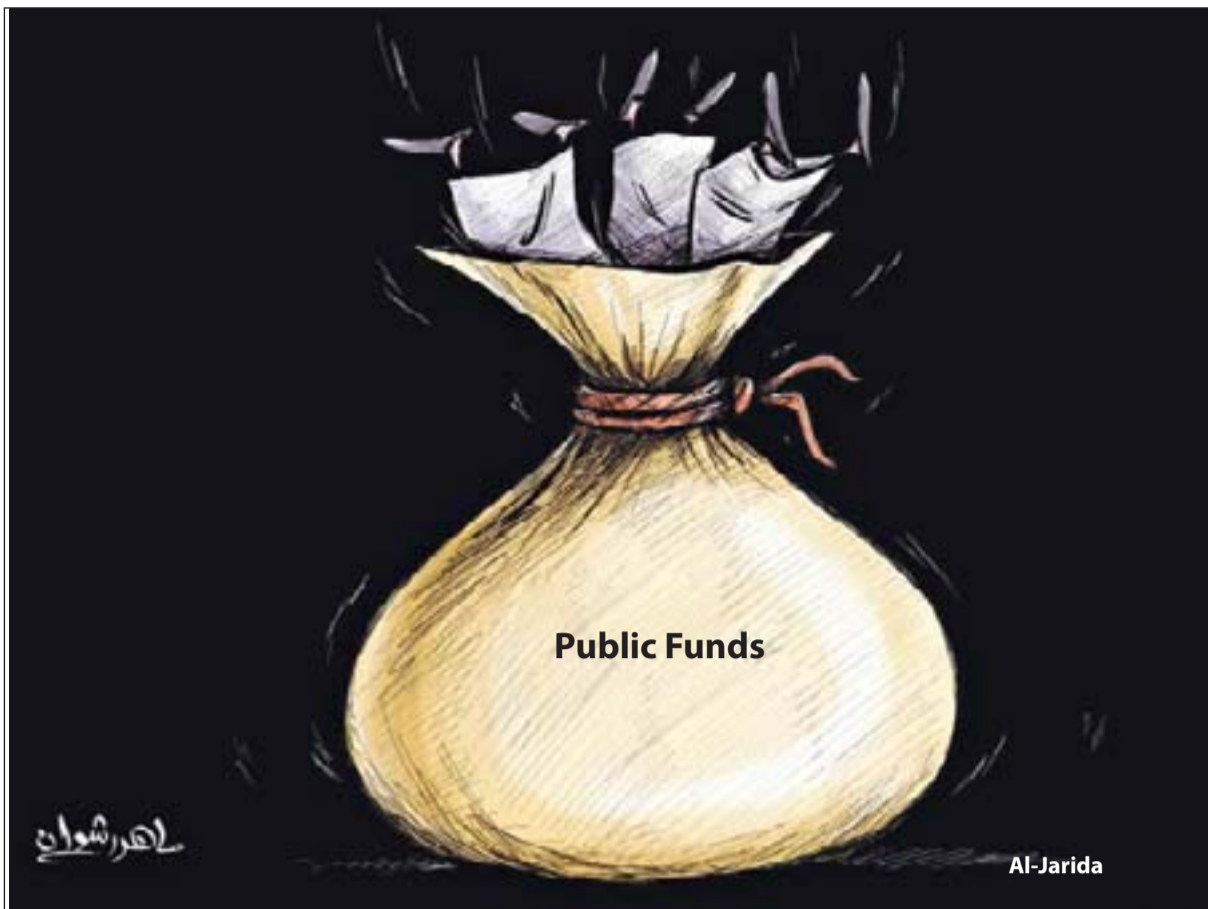


Fugitives arrested

Three citizens (a woman and two men including one already wanted for a criminal case) and an Egyptian woman were arrested under the effect of drugs in a vehicle in Hawally. A citizen wanted for nine robberies and a three-year prison sentence was arrested in Jahra and referred to relevant authorities.

Kidnapper sentenced

A bedoon was sentenced to 10 years in prison for kidnapping an Asian woman and taking her to a desert area in Kabd to rob her possessions. — Translated from the Arabic press



الجريدة

Al-Jarida

THE GOVERNMENT AND POLYGAMY

By Dr Hassan Jouhar

The political arena indicates the nearness of a new political 'marriage' in which the government will be the groom as usual while the young bride will be the remnants of the opposition. According to the constitution and political norms, such 'marriage' contract is surely a true legal one in terms of acceptance by both sides.

The opposition's shy decision to take part in the recent elections, the inaugural session witnessing the speaker's election and the prime minister's grilling session seem to have exposed this secret marriage to the public. Meanwhile, a few of the previous opposition MPs will now hesitate to officially declare that they have a truce with the government and thus, immunizing it from political accountability on one hand, and admit losing the parliamentary majority needed to pass legislations they had always described as corrupt and oppressing to liberties on the other. They only settled for a deal to return some citizenship they were behind withdrawing in the first place, which was the dowry paid in this marriage contract.

The government seems to welcome such 'marriage' because it strongly believes in polygamy and uses it as a means to retain its prestige as the 'dominating man of the family'. This marriage also solves some problems, especially after the well-off wealthy and resourceful groom fulfills all the young beautiful bride's demands.

However, polygamy involves jealousy amongst wives. The government already has the first wife and the mother of its kids; the historical and conventional pro-government bloc in parliament. Naturally enough, the first wife

will feel jealous whenever a new wife shares the bounties 'she' used to enjoy solely. It might, however, accept the status quo but it will always keep nagging and demanding.

It will also try to create problems between her 'man' and the newcomer. Well, through long experience, no matter how detached the government may seem on having new wives, this will always remain temporary and might end due to slightest dispute, especially since political 'marriages' are based on certain vanities that would soon come to an end.

This is not the first time the government has made a political deal with a bloc or parliamentary figures to pass certain bills or get off the hock in certain political dilemmas before it usually disintegrates with them. History is full of such temporary tactical alliances as the government will make allies with tribes while it also makes allies with liberals.

Either way, the first wife will always remain the most faithful one and the one that maintains her marriage by protecting her own interests through rubber-stamping and approving whatever the government wants. In addition, the political formula of this 'first wife' includes all Kuwaiti sects and the government that will eventually have to please the mother of its kids regardless of the headaches she will cause for a while with the result of leaving all other wives' kids, the people, at a loss without getting enough care or concern for their future as long as different wives co-exist peacefully. — Translated by Kuwait Times

الجريدة

Al-Jarida

OUR NATION'S FORGOTTEN MEMORY

By Salah Al-Sayer

Once more, Kuwait Bay witnesses the same old story of fish dying in its waters. Wind and currents have washed dead fish to the shores, creating a sort of public panic surrounded with rumors and lies. Some spoke about threats from sewage water drainage, passing ship wastes or low oxygen levels in the water. Others spoke about marine life-killing pollutants resulting from the desalination plants and, as usual, the truth is lost in between.

Kuwait Bay is more like a small gulf. Gulfs are usually linked to seas with straits or creeks. Some people call a bay as Sharm; like in the case of Sharm Al-Shaikh, Egypt. Kuwait was the creation of this bay and was born at its shores. In the past, Kuwait emerged and developed thanks to its port located on the southern shore of the bay; which acted as a safe haven or shelter for ships and for Kuwaiti creativity in building a great fleet of wooden dhows on tree-less shores that have no woods for the process.

It was through this shallow bay and the Arabian Gulf that Kuwait fleets mastered by glorious Kuwaiti skippers and captains sailed through deep seas, fought with violent storms and reached distant ports in Asia and Africa to import goods and foodstuff to re-export them to various regional countries, yes, indeed. Kuwait Bay is this nation's forgotten memory. — Translated by Kuwait Times



GULF BANK OFFERS CUSTOMERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO WIN CASH PRIZES THROUGH IT SUMMER CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced the launch of an exclusive summer campaign for its credit and debit cardholders, starting from May 15 to September 15, 2017. All Gulf Bank's credit and debit cardholders who use their cards locally and internationally will automatically be enrolled into a raffle draw for a chance to win one of several valuable cash prizes.

During the campaign period, customers will be getting one chance to enter the raffle draw for every KD 10 spent locally using their credit cards; while they will get three chances to enter the raffle draw for every KD 10 spent internationally using their Gulf Bank credit or debit cards.

The raffle draw is planned to take place on September 28, 2017, with 50 winners to be selected to receive the campaign's cash prizes. Forty seven winners will be receiving KD 1,000 each, one winner will be receiving KD 5,000, one winner will be receiving KD 10,000, and one lucky winner will take away the Grand Prize of KD 25,000. Gulf Bank is committed to providing its customers with best financial solutions, products and services, as well as the most exciting offers and promotions.

DREAMS COME TRUE FOR AL-MULLA EXCHANGE CUSTOMERS



KUWAIT: Al-Mulla Exchange Company has successfully concluded its unique one-of-a-kind marketing promotion wherein customers sending remittances to India entered a draw for a ticket to the T20 finals in Hyderabad, India.

The promotion started on April 05th and ran in parallel to the Premier League matches that were happening in India. Anyone remitting money to India through any of Al-Mulla Exchange branches or via the company's online services automatically entered a draw to get two tickets for the T20 League finals. In addition to it, the winners were given airline tickets, accommodation and transportation in Hyderabad, India.

At a special ceremony on May 19, 2017 in Murgab, the winners were given the prizes. The winners were ecstatic on receiving the tickets and for many of them it was a dream come true to be a live spectator at one of the most watched tournaments in the world.

The winners of the promotion who decided to travel for the finals were Flextur Valiyaparambil, Vajeed Baig Mogal, Munna Ahmed Abdullah Ahmed, Dawood Ali, Turaiikkano Mutthuramalingam, Liyakath Ali Valvakkad Kizhakke and Rajewate Mohsin Ibrahim.

Speaking at the prize distribution ceremony, one of the winners, Dawood Ali, said that winning the tickets for the final match was really unexpected and thanked Al-Mulla Exchange for the surprise. He said being able to witness the finals from the stadium will be a mind-boggling experience.

Al-Mulla Exchange with 71 branches in Kuwait continues to give customers out-of-the box marketing promotions all year around and is also planning for a new marketing promotion during the Holy Month of Ramadan.



KIB LAUNCHES RAMADAN HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVE 'AL-MASHLA'

KUWAIT: As part of its religious duty and commitment towards promoting humanitarian initiatives during the Holy Month of Ramadan, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) launched its initiative to distribute food packages amongst families in need across Kuwait, known locally as 'Al-Mashla'. The distribution of the packages is set to take place throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

This initiative comes as part of the bank's leading social responsibility program, whereby KIB continuously seeks to organize and support a variety of different humanitarian initiatives and programs, particularly during Ramadan, the month of giving. The Ramadan care packages to be distributed by the Bank will provide essential food supplies that families need most during the Holy Month.

Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, said: "We are always keen on organizing humanitarian initiatives that embrace the spirit and traditions of Ramadan. For that reason, KIB launched 'Al-Mashla', an initiative that supports needy families, and seeks to strengthen the values of social solidarity and generosity within the local community." Najia further lauded the collective efforts of all KIB volunteers who supported this humanitarian initiative by assisting in the preparation of the Ramadan food packages.





Three given death sentence over Hamas commander assassination Page 8

GERMAN, AFGHAN GUARD KILLED IN KABUL GUEST HOUSE

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N KOREA FIRES ANOTHER BALLISTIC MISSILE

US STRESS 'IRONCLAD COMMITMENT' TO DEFEND ALLIES

SEOUL: North Korea yesterday test-fired a ballistic missile, the latest in a series of launches which have sparked international condemnation and threats of tougher UN sanctions. South Korea described the launch, the second in a week and the eighth this year, as "reckless and irresponsible" while the US military stressed "ironclad commitment" to defend its allies in the region.

The missile, described by Washington as a medium-range one, was fired from Pukchang in South Pyongan province and travelled about 500 kilometers according to the South's armed forces. Our military is closely monitoring signs for additional provocation by the North Korean military and we are keeping a full military readiness," said a statement from the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The launch came just one week after the North fired a Hwasong-12 intermediate-range missile, which according to Pyongyang flew almost 800 km and was capable of carrying a "heavy" nuclear warhead. Analysts said the Hwasong travelled further than any previous ballistic missile launched by the North. The May 14 launch was seen as a significant step forward as the North accelerates efforts to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of delivering a nuclear warhead to the continental United States.

The launches, and a threatened sixth nuclear test, have fuelled tension with the administration of US President Donald Trump, who has vowed that such an ICBM launch "won't happen". A White House official visiting Saudi Arabia with Trump appeared to play down yesterday's firing. "We are aware that North Korea launched an MRBM (medium-range ballistic missile). This system, last tested in February, has a shorter range than the missiles launched in North Korea's three most recent tests," the official said on condition of anonymity.

But the South's foreign ministry slammed the "reckless and irresponsible" firing as "throwing cold water on the hope and longing of the new government and

the international community" for denuclearization and peace on the Korean peninsula. Seoul's incoming left-leaning government has taken a more conciliatory line with Pyongyang than its conservative predecessors, but reacted strongly to the latest two missile tests.

The US Pacific Command said it tracked the missile until it landed in the Sea of Japan (East Sea). "US Pacific Command stands behind our ironclad commitment to the security of our allies in the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and Japan," it added in a statement. Pyongyang has long had missiles that can reach targets across South Korea and Japan. With an imputed range of 4,500 kilometers the Hwasong-12 also puts US bases on the Pacific island of Guam within reach.

'Many more' missiles

The UN Security Council met behind closed doors last Tuesday to discuss tightening sanctions on North Korea after its May 14 launch. US ambassador Nikki Haley said the United States was working with China, Pyongyang's main ally, on a new sanctions resolution and warned that all countries must step up action against North Korea or face measures themselves.

"We all have to send a sign to North Korea, and that is: 'No more. This is not playtime. This is serious. These threats are not welcome,'" Haley told reporters ahead of the meeting. "If you are a country that is supplying or supporting North Korea, we will call you out on it," Haley said. The North says it needs missiles and nuclear weapons to deter any attack by the United States. State newspaper Minju Joson Sunday threatened more launches.

"If the US persists in confrontation with the DPRK (North Korea), the latter will show how the crime-woven history of the US is put to an end," it said. "Many more 'Juche weapons' capable of striking the US will be launched from this land. This is the DPRK's answer to the Trump administration," it said, referring to the national philosophy of "Juche" or self-reliance. —AFP



NORTH KOREA: This file image made from video of an undated still image broadcast in a news bulletin by North Korea's KRT shows leader Kim Jong Un at what was said to be a missile test site at an undisclosed location in North Korea.

HAFTAR FORCES BOMBARD RIVAL AFTER LIBYA AIRBASE ATTACK

BENHAZI, Libya: Forces loyal to Libyan military strongman Khalifa Haftar have bombed rival forces in retaliation for a deadly attack on an airbase in the south of the country, media reported yesterday. "Warplanes launched air strikes overnight Saturday as part of the Martyrs of Brak al-Shati operation," the LANA news agency said in reference to the airbase where at least 141 people, mostly forces loyal to Haftar, were killed on Thursday.

LANA, which is loyal to authorities based in eastern Libya, said MIG-23 jets carried out seven air strikes, targeting "terrorists in Hun and Jufra", two areas in southern Libya. The agency, quoting Colonel Mohammad al-Manfour of the pro-Haftar Benina airbase in Benghazi, said

"several weapons depots, vehicles and centers of operations" were destroyed. On Thursday, members of the Third Force militia loyal to the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli attacked the base used by Haftar's self-proclaimed Libyan National Army (LNA).

Pro-Haftar forces said on Friday the victims included civilians who worked at the Brak al-Shati airbase or were in the nearby area, adding that summary executions took place. LNA spokesman Ahmad al-Mesmari said the soldiers were returning from a military parade unarmed, and that most of them were executed. Yesterday, Human Rights Watch said in a statement forces aligned with the GNA "allegedly executed at least 30 captured soldiers". —AFP



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CONDOLENCES

The Management, Staff & Students of **INDIAN LEARNERS OWN ACADEMY** express heart-felt condolences on the demise of our Guide, Mentor and Godfather



MR. M. MATHEWS

who left for heavenly abode on 20th May 2017.

May the Lord Almighty strengthen and console the family members to bear the irreparable loss. *May his soul rest in peace.*

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WHAT TO EXPECT FROM TRUMP'S VISIT TO ISRAEL, PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

JERUSALEM: US President Donald Trump's visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories today and tomorrow will be closely scrutinized as he seeks ways to restart peace efforts. Here are key issues:

What is the current state of the conflict?

Nearly 70 years after the creation of Israel, peace with the Palestinians remains a long way off. This year marks 50 years since the Six-Day War and the beginning of Israel's occupation. Peace efforts have been at a standstill since a US-led initiative collapsed in 2014. Meanwhile, Israel and Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas, which runs the Gaza Strip, have fought three wars since 2008.

Does Trump have a plan?

Trump has talked up his business experience in saying he wants to reach the "ultimate deal": Israeli-Palestinian peace. However, a detailed plan is not expected only four months after taking

office. Trump is instead expected to seek ways to move the two sides closer together and build confidence, though there is widespread skepticism. "Triggering the start of a process does not mean taking it until the end," said Palestinian political scientist Ali al-Jarbawi.

Can he bring the two sides together?

Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have not had substantive direct talks since 2010. Abbas says he is ready to meet Netanyahu under Trump's peace efforts, and there has been speculation the US president could seek to arrange a meeting while in the region. Many analysts see the prospect as unlikely.

Will he commit to the two-state solution?

Trump sparked concern when he backed away from the long US commitment to a two-state solution to the con-

flict, saying he could support one state if it meant peace. An independent Palestinian state alongside Israel remains the focus of international peace efforts. National Security Advisor HR McMaster said Trump will "express his desire for dignity and self-determination for the Palestinians".

What role can Arab states play?

Trump arrives after a visit to Saudi Arabia, seen as essential to any peace efforts. Trump's White House has spoken of reviving the idea of a regional peace process, pulling in other Arab countries. Analyst Ghaith al-Omari said the idea seemed to involve "key Arab States—Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and other US allies—into a regional process that would create, as Trump called it, a 'bigger canvas' for reaching peace."

What position will he take on settlements?

Trump has been receptive to Israel's

position that Palestinian leaders must do more to stop incitement to violence, including by stopping payments to the families of those who have carried out attacks and were killed or are currently in jail. But what will his position be on Israeli settlement building? Trump has called on Israel to hold back on settlement construction, but his ambassador to Israel David Friedman has said "we have no demand for a settlement freeze". A firm demand would put Netanyahu under pressure from his right-wing base. Israeli right-wingers rejoiced in Trump's election, believing it would allow them to move ahead with unrestrained settlement building and, for some, to move toward their goal of annexing most of the West Bank.

Will the US embassy move to Jerusalem?

Trump vowed during his election campaign to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and to recog-

nize the disputed city as Israel's capital. Such a move would break with decades of precedent. He has since backed away, saying the move was still being looked at, but there has also been speculation over whether he will make an announcement on the subject while visiting.

Who will visit the Western Wall with Trump?

Trump is expected to become the first sitting US president to visit the Western Wall, the holiest site where Jews can pray. It is located in east Jerusalem, which Israel occupied in 1967 and later annexed in a move never recognized by the international community. Preparations for the visit have led to criticism from Israeli right-wingers after US officials declined to say whether the Western Wall was part of Israel. Trump is currently planning to visit without being accompanied by any Israeli officials, though there has been speculation over whether that could change.—AFP

THREE GIVEN DEATH SENTENCE OVER HAMAS COMMANDER ASSASSINATION

ASSASSINATION RAISES POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE

GAZA CITY: A court in the Gaza strip yesterday sentenced three men to death over the assassination of a Hamas military commander that the Islamist movement accused Israel of masterminding. After a trial that lasted four days, two of the accused were sentenced to be hanged and one to be shot, the military court announced. The assassination of Muzan Faqha in the middle of the Hamas-run Gaza Strip on March 24 shocked the Islamist movement and raised the possibility of a new round of violence with Israel. Hamas immediately blamed its arch-enemy,

with which it has fought three wars since 2008, and implemented strict border restrictions on those seeking to leave the Palestinian enclave. Israel has not confirmed or denied the accusations. In yesterday's court ruling, the chief suspect, Ashraf Abu Leila, 38, was sentenced to hang after being convicted of murder. The others were identified only as Hisham A., 44, who was also sentenced to hang, and Abdallah N., who was to face the firing squad.

They were convicted of collaborating with Israel. Faqha had been in charge of forming cells

for Hamas's military wing in the occupied West Bank. He had spent years in an Israeli jail before being released as part of a 2011 prisoner exchange deal. Last week, Hamas released what it said was a recording of the confessions of the accused. Images allegedly showed three men, presented as the murderer and his two accomplices, confessing to their roles, although their faces did not appear.

No independent bodies had access to the suspects, and the images and recordings were impossible to verify. "Widespread coercion, torture and routine deprivation of detainees' rights by Hamas security services in Gaza call into question whether these confessions were in fact voluntary or may have been extracted under duress," Omar Shakir, Human Rights Watch director for Israel and the Palestinian territories, said last week.

Death penalty criticism

Shortly after Faqha's killing, the security services launched a campaign against so-called collaborators. On April 6, Hamas hanged three men accused of collaborating with Israel in cases unrelated to Faqha's death. Executions in the Gaza Strip have drawn intense international criticism, though Hamas has pressed ahead. Hamas says Faqha played an important role in major assaults, including a suicide attack in the Israeli settlement neighborhood of Gilgo in east Jerusalem in 2002 that killed 19 people.

They were part of a wave of suicide attacks that killed hundreds of Israelis during the second intifada, or uprising, between 2000 and 2005. Israel sentenced him to nine life sentences plus 50 years, but he was released in a 2011 deal for Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier Hamas had held for five years. The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli blockade for a decade, while Egypt's crossing with the enclave has also remained largely closed in recent years.—AFP



GAZA CITY: Head of the Military court, Nasser Suleiman, speaks to the press in Gaza City.—AFP

BAHRAIN CLERIC GETS SUSPENDED JAIL TERM

DUBAI: A Bahraini court yesterday sentenced revered Shiite cleric Isa Qassim to a suspended one-year jail term for illegal fundraising and money laundering, a judicial source said. The criminal court handed down the same verdict to two of the cleric's aides, Sheikh Hussein Mahrus and Mirza Al-Obaidli, the source said, adding the sentences were suspended for three years.

The prosecution also announced the sentences without naming Qassim, adding they were each fined 100,000 dinars (\$265,140) and that the court ordered the confiscation of the funds they raised. It said in a statement carried by the BNA state news agency that it was considering appealing the sentence. Qassim, 76, remains at his residence in the village of Diraz, outside

Manama, where supporters have held a sit-in since June when he was stripped of his citizenship. At the time, authorities accused him of abusing his position as a cleric to "serve foreign interests and promote sectarianism and violence." Hundreds of Shiites protested on Saturday in villages near the capital, brandishing posters of Qassim ahead of the verdict, witnesses said. The cleric, who is considered the spiritual leader of the Shiite majority community of Bahrain, went on trial in July.

The attorney general said at the time that he had deposited more than \$10 million in his private bank account. He allegedly kept other amounts in cash to avoid legal controls, the attorney general said, accusing Qassim also of purchasing properties worth more than one million dinars (\$2.65 million) in an attempt to legitimize the funds.

The two other defendants are Sheikh Hussein Mahrus and Mirza Al-Obaidli. Bahrain has been shaken by unrest since security forces crushed Shiite-led protests demanding a constitutional monarchy and an elected prime minister in 2011.

Despite repeated calls from their Western allies, Bahrain's rulers have made no concessions to the Shiite opposition and have intensified a crackdown on critics. The strategic Gulf kingdom is a key regional ally of the United States and serves as home for its Fifth Fleet.—AFP

ERDOGAN, RETURN TO TURKEY'S RULING PARTY AS ITS CHAIRMAN

ISTANBUL: Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party yesterday kicked off a congress to re-elect President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as its chairman after last month's referendum. Erdogan will return to lead the party he co-founded after Sunday's extraordinary congress in Ankara, since last month's referendum removed a constitutional requirement that presidents be neutral and cut ties with their political parties.

Erdogan welcomed the tens of thousands of people outside the arena. "My dear fellow travelers ... we were separated but today we are together once again," he said. Erdogan and the AKP won a narrow victory on the April 16 referendum that will transform Turkey's parliamentary governing system to an executive presidency. Critics said the vote, which took place under a state of emergency imposed in the wake of last year's failed coup, was marred by allegations of election fraud.

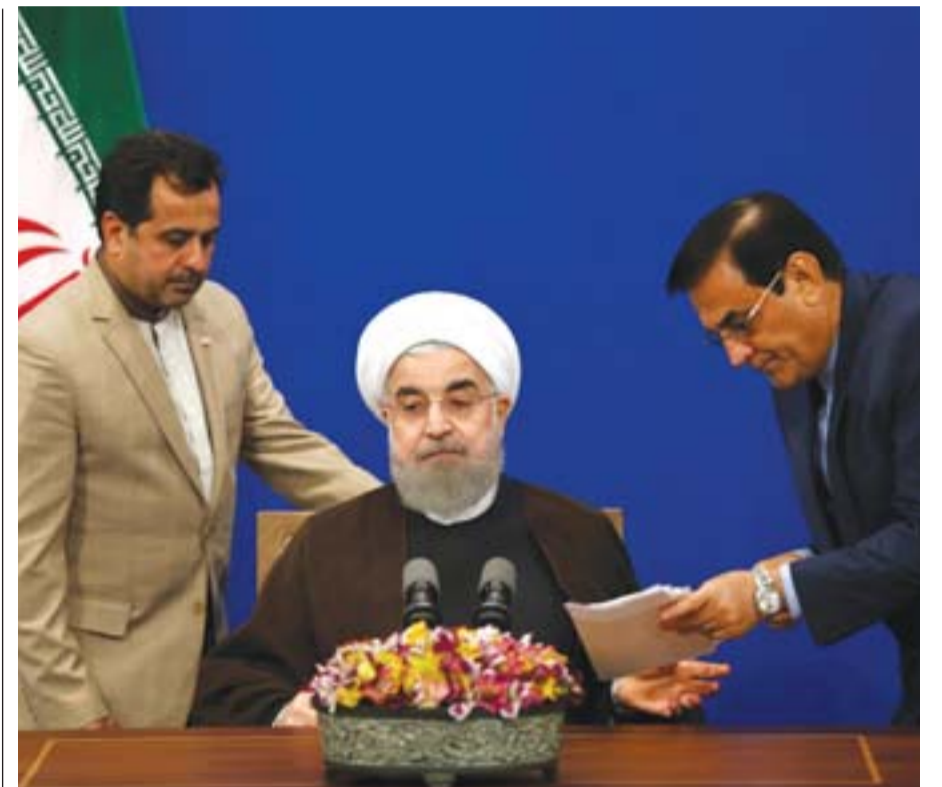
Most of the constitutional changes won't take effect until after the next presidential and parliamentary elections, slated for Nov 3, 2019. Three amendments, however, have automatically come into effect, including one that allows Erdogan to return to his party. Others are the repeal of military courts and a restructuring of Turkey's board of judges and prosecutors.

Erdogan was forced to cut his formal ties to the AKP when he became the country's first directly elected president in 2014 - but he still rallied for the party anyway. AKP officials and supporters from across the country were at the congress, waving flags to songs about Erdogan and the AKP.

Banners read "the leader of change, the nation's leader." The congress will last all day, with speeches by the current party chairman, Prime Minister Binali Yildirim and Erdogan, to be followed with the voting.—AP



ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, accompanied by his wife Emine Erdogan, right, greets members of his party during the Extraordinary Congress of the ruling AK Party (AKP) in



TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani prepares before a televised speech after he won the election, in Tehran, Iran.—AP

ROUHANI, A MAN OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION, OPENS IRAN TO WEST

DUBAI: As Iran's chief nuclear envoy, Hassan Rouhani earned the nickname "diplomat sheikh" when negotiators in 2004 reached a deal that saw the Islamic Republic halt all its enrichment of uranium. Over 10 years later, it would be Rouhani as president who would strike a bargain with world powers to again limit Iran's atomic program, showing once more the cleric's pragmatism in slowly engaging with the West. But Iran's contested nuclear program represents only one part of the identity of the 68 year old, who decisively won a second term on Saturday.

He opposed the reign of Iran's shah in the entourage of the Islamic Republic's founder Ruhollah Khomeini, held sensitive defense posts during the country's long 1980s war with Iraq and allegedly served on a committee that targeted government opponents abroad for assassination. Rouhani, while opening Iran to the world, remains firmly a part of its small, clerically ruled power structure. And yet while not promising widespread changes, he increasingly has criticized hard-liners, showing a deft touch for balancing the various competing powers within Iran.

"I said it is good for centrifuges to operate, but it is also important that the country operates as well and the wheels of industry are turning," Rouhani said during his first presidential campaign in 2013. Born in Nov. 12, 1948, Rouhani grew up in Sorkheh, a small town in Iran's northern Semnan province. His father, who supported the Shiite family with profits from a small spice shop, was one of the first in their town to perform the hajj, a religious pilgrimage to holy sites in Saudi Arabia required of every able-bodied Muslim once in their life.

Rouhani joined the seminary and soon fell under the sway of Khomeini. At 16, he became a spokesman for the exiled cleric. Rouhani would become a law school student at the University of Tehran and lived for a time in London before returning to Iran, then in the grips of Khomeini's Islamic Revolution. Rouhani soon had many roles in the new Islamic government, including serving as a lawmaker, reorganizing the military and overseeing Iran's state broadcaster, a valued mouthpiece for Khomeini.

After Iraq started the 1980s war with Iran, Rouhani held several defense positions, including serving as the head of Iran's National Air Defense Command. He later joined the Supreme National Security Council, a powerful body overseeing defense and security issues, reporting directly to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. He also served as a national security adviser to then-President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, whose realist attitude toward the world Rouhani later would emulate.

Axis of evil

During this time, rights groups allege Rouhani served on an extraconstitutional committee that planned the assassination of opponents and exiles abroad. Rouhani during this time also reportedly told an Iranian newspaper that the country "will not hesitate to destroy the activities of counterrevolutionary groups

abroad." Rouhani has not addressed the allegations. In 2002, after then-US President George W Bush described Iran as being in the "axis of evil," details of Iran's nuclear program were revealed by the Iranian exile group Mujahedeen-e-Khalq.

Rouhani soon became Iran's chief nuclear negotiator and reached a deal with European nations to suspend uranium enrichment. But the election of hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad threw those negotiations into disarray. After heated arguments with Ahmadinejad, Rouhani resigned as negotiator. Ahmadinejad resumed the program, leading to a series of crippling international sanctions. After authorities stopped Rafsanjani from running for president in 2013, Rouhani became his standard-bearer.

He squeaked out a first-round victory. He entered office at an auspicious moment, as US President Barack Obama earlier had agreed to secret talks with Iranian officials in Oman to see if negotiations were possible. Rouhani seized the opportunity. In September 2013, he and Obama spoke by telephone, the highest-level exchange between the two countries since the 1979 US Embassy takeover and hostage crisis in Tehran. By 2015, the deal with world powers was struck.

Speaking later that year at the United Nations, Rouhani said he viewed the deal as "not the final objective but a development which can and should be the basis of further achievements to come." "I say to all nations and governments: We will not forget the past, but we do not wish to live in the past," Rouhani said. "We will not forget war and sanctions, but we look to peace and development." The nuclear deal led to Airbus and Chicago-based Boeing Co. signing multi-billion-dollar deals with Iran for airplanes and sent Iranian crude back into many markets. But Iran's weak economy and high unemployment stubbornly remained, in part over foreign firms' trepidation about entering Iran.

Meanwhile, hard-liners and the Revolutionary Guard continued to detain dual nationals, as well as artists and journalists in a crackdown on dissent. The Guard also launched ballistic missiles, including two that had "Israel must be wiped out" written on them in Hebrew. During his re-election campaign, Rouhani began criticizing hard-liners more stridently than he had in his first four-year term. His rallies also saw people chant for detained leaders of the 2009 Green Movement, which challenged Ahmadinejad's disputed 2009 re-election. Freeing those men had been

a promise from his first campaign, one that remains unfulfilled. But for Rouhani, pragmatism has long been a way of life. Rouhani served as a military conscript under the shah though opposing him. He also recounted in his memoir sneaking into Iraq at age 18 to visit Khomeini in exile. A smuggler demanded he be low profile and take off his turban, something other clerics may have refused. Rouhani didn't hesitate in removing it. "We arrived safely and that is what mattered," Rouhani recounted.—AP

WEEKLY VOWS TO KEEP PROBING MEXICO CARTELS

CULIACAN, Mexico: Despite the threats and the murder of colleague Javier Valdez, the weekly Riodoce plans to continue its role as a leader in investigating drug trafficking in Mexico. The office is austere, with fewer than a dozen computers spread around the small rented apartment. Safety measures seem conspicuously absent here. The entrance of the building, in the center of Culiacan, in western Sinaloa state, is always open. There are no surveillance cameras. And the door into the green-walled apartment that is home to Riodoce is not reinforced. Yellowing newspapers pile up in the hallways. The office of Valdez, who was murdered on Monday at the age of 50, is tiny: a simple table, file boxes on the floor, a telephone, a printer, a framed photograph, some Post-its on the wall along with a few

Riodoce front-pages. Valdez, who was also an AFP freelancer and a correspondent for La Jornada newspaper, had a love for "this combination of investigative journalism and prose," said Ismael Bojorquez, a founder of Riodoce along with Valdez. "Mala Yerba," Valdez's weekly column since 2003, reflected those dual loves. Riodoce was "overwhelmed" by drug cartel violence, and felt obliged to go "all out" to cover the trafficking scene. "We mark certain lines (not to cross) and certain precautions to take," Bojorquez said. "We couldn't not cover the issue in a state like Sinaloa. Either you do it or you make a fool of yourself."

A line crossed, but where?
Riodoce faces many challenges, not least its

financing. Forty percent of its income comes from sales. A copy sells for 10 pesos (about 50 cents), while the digital version is free. About 8,000 copies are sold each week. It has nonetheless managed to establish itself as a respected investigative reporting platform, with a wide network of contacts, in a country where the threat of violence means self-censorship is the rule.

The courage of its journalists earned Riodoce the 2011 Maria Moors Cabot award from Columbia University in New York. The citation noted that the paper's journalists "heroically struggle" in one of "the most dangerous places in the world to practice journalism." In a display of both its courage and its connections, Riodoce on February 19 published a cover story by Valdez on his interview with Damaso Lopez, nick-

named "The Graduate," the one-time right-hand man of Sinaloa cartel leader Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman. Lopez was arrested May 2 at an apartment in an upscale Mexico City neighborhood. In Valdez's interview, he denied having attacked the sons of "El Chapo," despite their claims to the contrary, and said he was a friend of Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada, another close collaborator of "El Chapo." But the interview provoked "considerable annoyance" between Guzman's sons and Lopez's faction, Bojorquez acknowledged. The day it was published, several men followed the newspaper's distributors around to try to buy up all the copies. "I do not know which line we crossed," but "the context in which Javier was killed was foreshadowed" by the publication of the interview. — Reuters



CARACAS: Opposition activists clash with riot police during a protest against the government of President Nicolas Maduro in Caracas.—AFP

UP TO 200,000 PROTESTERS MARCH AGAINST VENEZUELA'S MADURO

SEVEN WEEKS OF PROTESTS LEAVE 47 DEAD

CARACAS: More than 200,000 protesters took to the streets of Venezuela on Saturday, day 50 of an angry and sometimes deadly showdown with the unpopular President Nicolas Maduro. As with many of the previous marches in the crisis-hit country, police fired tear gas at protesters in the capital suffering from dire shortages of the most basic of goods. The opposition blames Maduro for the economic mess in oil-rich Venezuela, demanding early elections to replace the socialist who took over from the late Hugo Chavez. Seven weeks of street protests have left 47 people dead.

In Caracas alone, some 160,000 marched through the city trying to reach the Interior Ministry in the city center, said Edinson Ferrer, spokesman for the opposition coalition MUD, citing a preliminary estimate. Police firing tear gas broke up the demonstration and protesters responded by throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails. At least 46 people were injured in the eastern district of Chacao, the authorities said, including a woman hit by a vehicle.

Riots were taking place on the city's outskirts overnight. In the western city of San Cristobal in Tachira state, an estimated 40,000-plus took to the streets. Maduro ordered 2,600 soldiers to Tachira this week to quell street violence and looting. In Caracas, demonstrators carried signs that read "#We are millions against the dictatorship" and "#No more dictatorship!" The protesters blame Maduro for shortages of food, medicine and such basics as soap and even toilet paper, saying he is maneuvering to dodge calls for early elections.

"It's been 50 days of protests. I'm here with my two children, I can't get any milk, I can't get any food," said Mariangel, a 24-year-old businesswoman. The red, blue and yellow colors of the Venezuelan flag were painted on her face. Young men wearing hoods and gas masks carried makeshift shields of wood and metal. "This has been a massacre against the people," opposition leader Henrique Capriles said before the march got underway. "Still, the more repression there is, the more we will resist and fight for Venezuela," he added.

One of Capriles's lawyers delivered a report on the Venezuelan crisis to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Friday after Venezuelan officials "canceled" the opposition leader's passport, preventing him from flying to New York. The turnout for Saturday's demonstrations came close to the biggest rally during seven weeks of protests, when several hundred thousand people came out on April 19. The demonstrations have degenerated into violence that, besides the 47 dead, has left hundreds injured, 2,200 detained and some 161 imprisoned by military tribunals.

On the other side of town, some 2,000 pro-government workers sang and danced as they staged a rival march to show their support for the president's controversial plan to elect a constitutional assembly to rewrite the constitution. Maduro had been scheduled to welcome the workers at the Miraflores presidential palace, but the marchers did not end up seeing the president. Venezuela is bitterly divided as locals bridle under all the shortages, soaring inflation-prices could rise by 720 percent this year, the IMF estimates—and some of the world's highest crime rates.

Increasing violence

As protests have turned violent, an increasing number of gunshot wounds have been reported. Federal prosecutors said they are investigating the role of police and military personnel in the incidents. Some of the shootings took place in Tachira state, near the border with Colombia, where Maduro deployed soldiers this week after riots and looting. Protests have swelled since Maduro called for convening a "popular" assembly to rewrite the Venezuelan constitution, with half its mem-

bers coming from sectors loyal to him. The opposition says the assembly would allow Maduro to avoid elections. He denies that and has "guaranteed" that presidential elections will be held next year, as required by law. Maduro insisted Friday that the "popular" assembly would provide a "path to peace, dialogue and consensus," while the opposition, he said, was offering only "violence and death."

Loyal military

Analysts say the opposition's biggest challenge will be to keep their marches peaceful. Protests succeed only when they are massive and persistent, said Luis Vicente Leon, who heads the Datanalysis polling firm. He warned that when demonstrations turn violent, they "lose impact."

Seven in 10 Venezuelans reject Maduro's leadership, according to private surveys, amid widespread economic devastation aggravated by the drop in the prices of oil-Venezuela's chief revenue source in 2014. That has left Maduro heavily dependent on military support. Opposition protests grew after the country's Supreme Court on March 30 assumed some of the functions of the National Assembly.—AFP

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LEARN THINK BECOME

POLL LEAD FALLS, BRITISH PM MAY TO STICK WITH ELDERLY-CARE CUTS

LONDON: British Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative Party said yesterday it would not ditch proposals to reduce support for elderly voters, as opinion polls showing their lead ahead of the June 8 national election falling. Polls published late on Saturday showed the Conservative lead over the centre-left Labor Party has narrowed after both parties set out their policy offerings last week—the first real sign that an expected victory for May could be less emphatic than many had predicted.

May has faced criticism from political rivals and pressure groups over her planned social care reforms, which include a making elderly homeowners—a core voter group for the Conservatives—pay more towards their old-age care. The criticism, including within the Sunday editions of usually friendly right-leaning newspapers, prompted senior ministers to defend the reform package in a series of television interviews. "This is necessary ... we have to do something about the huge costs of social care," Foreign

Secretary Boris Johnson told ITV's Peston yesterday show.

The growing cost of caring for the elderly as the population ages is a problem that has bedeviled successive governments, with the current system widely seen as inadequate. "I do understand people's reservations and the questions that some people are asking about the detail of all this, but the broad thrust is right," Johnson said. Asked in a separate interview on the BBC Damian Green, pensions minister and a close May ally was asked whether

the government would reconsider the planned changes. He said: "No".

Lead halved

One poll showed Labor had halved the Conservatives' lead to 9 percentage points; the first single-figure gap since May called the snap election hoping for a resounding victory that would strengthen her mandate to negotiate Britain's exit from the European Union. Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn, whose manifesto launch set out plans for higher state investment and nationalization of

some services, said the Conservatives were betraying Britain's elderly.

"Theresa May and the Conservatives won't stand up for pensioners, their only concern is their billionaire friends," he said. The Conservatives have framed their election campaign as a personality battle between May and Corbyn by asking voters who they trust more to get a good Brexit deal, banking on May's image as a tough negotiator to sway wavering voters. Their campaign portrays Corbyn as an out-of-touch left-winger.—Reuters



MADRID: Supporters of left-wing party Podemos hold banners and flags during a demonstration in Madrid calling for vote of no confidence against Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy. —AFP

SPAIN'S DIVIDED SOCIALISTS TO CHOOSE NEW LEADER

RISK OF SNAP ELECTIONS TO INCREASE

MADRID: Spain's bitterly divided Socialist party choose a new leader yesterday in a party primary that may determine whether or not conservative Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's minority government will last. The contest is widely seen as a two-way race between Susana Diaz, the president of the southern region of Andalusia, and former party leader Pedro Sanchez who was ousted in a bitter internal rebellion.

Diaz, 42, is the establishment favorite and is seen as more amenable to striking deals with the government if she wins the primary while Sanchez, 45, promises a more adversarial approach. Rajoy's minority Popular Party (PP) government has relied on the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), the main opposition party, to pass key measures in parliament since it was sworn in for a second term in October 2016.

But Sanchez would have "a more fraught relationship" with the government and the risk of snap elections would increase with him in charge of the Socialists, Eurasia Group analyst Federico Santi said. "At a minimum, therefore, a Sanchez-led PSOE would make parliamentary politics more challenging, and reduce the already limited space for economic reform," he added. Nearly 190,000 card-carrying members of the PSOE are eligible to vote in the leader-

ship primary with the results expected after 9 pm (1900 GMT).

Sanchez, a former economics professor, was forced to resign in October over his staunch refusal to allow Rajoy to form a minority government following two inconclusive national elections. The architects of the messy rebellion argued it was best to let a conservative PP government through rather than go to the third elections in a year and risk losing even more votes. Sanchez has called this a huge mistake, deeply critical of corruption scandals impacting Rajoy's PP and of their severe austerity measures.

He argues the Socialists must move further to the left to have any hope of winning back voters who have drifted to new far-left party Podemos. He has not ruled out tabling a no confidence motion in Rajoy if he wins the leadership race.

Slump in polls

By contrast Diaz, a plumber's daughter and career politician who was one of the leaders of the rebellion against Sanchez, talks of providing "constructive opposition" to the PP. After an inconclusive local election in Andalusia in 2015, she made a pact with centre-right Ciudadanos-Rajoy's allies at the national level to reach a parliamentary majority and form a government.

Diaz was widely tipped as the favorite but Sanchez has done better than many expected, gathering around 53,000 signatures for party members in favor of his candidacy, just 7,000 less than his rival.

A third candidate in the race, Patxi Lopez, the former president of the northern Basque Country, trailed the two by a wide margin. Whoever wins the leadership faces a tough job ahead. Like other Socialist parties across Europe, the PSOE has seen its support slump in recent years as voters flock to new formations like Podemos. The party has lost the past three general elections, winning fewer seats in parliament each time.

The PSOE won just 85 of the 350 seats in parliament in last year's general election, its worst showing since Spain returned to democracy following the death of longtime dictator Francisco Franco in 1975. While the Socialists were busy with their primary vote, Podemos staged a large protest against corruption in Madrid on Saturday, a day after it filed a motion of no confidence against Rajoy, citing graft scandals affecting his ruling PP. The motion lacks enough support from other parties to pass but could boost its appeal to voters angry at the government who would otherwise back the Socialists.—AFP

SWISS VOTE FOR GRADUAL NUCLEAR PHASEOUT: PRELIMINARY RESULTS

GENEVA: The Swiss appeared yesterday to have voted in favor of a massive overhaul of the country's energy system by gradually replacing the power from its ageing nuclear reactors with renewable sources. According to preliminary results ticking in shortly after voting stations closed at noon (1000 GMT), a majority of Swiss voters supported the shift in yesterday's referendum. Initial results indicated a 58 percent vote in favor, according to the gfs.bern institute.

Final results were expected in by late afternoon, but backers of the change were already celebrating. "This is a historic day for the country," Green Party parliamentarian Adele Thorens Goumaz told public broadcaster RTS. "Switzerland will finally enter into the 21st century when it comes to energy." The move has been in the making since shortly after Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant was destroyed in the March 2011 tsunami disaster, when the Swiss government decided to gradually close its nuclear plants.

Instead, it aims to increase reliance on hydraulic power as well as renewables like solar, wind, geothermal and biomass. Early polls had indicated broad support for the plan, but in the weeks ahead of the vote, suspense mounted as the "no" side gained significant ground in the polls. Most Swiss voters cast their ballots by post in the weeks leading up to referendums, which are a staple of the country's celebrated system of direct democracy.

Tallies of such early votes indicated that nearly 72 percent of voters in the canton of Geneva had voted for the plan, as had 62.1 percent in Bale-Town and nearly 60 percent in Zurich. Shortly after voting closed, only three of Switzerland's 26 cantons appeared to have rejected the new energy plan—Glarus, Argau and Schwyz, German-speaking cantons in the country's centre.

The government's 2050 energy strategy aims to decommission Switzerland's five ageing reactors, which today produce around a third of the country's electricity, as they reach the end of their safe operational lifespan. But since all of Switzerland's nuclear plants have open-

ended operating licenses, there is no clear cut-off date determining when they should be shut down. Last November, Swiss voters rejected a call to speed up the phaseout of the plants by limiting their operational lifespan to 45 years, a move that would have seen three of the five reactors close this year.

Cold shower?

While the new energy plan does not contain a clear timetable for the nuclear phaseout, it does contain ambitious targets for reducing energy consumption and for improving energy efficacy. Compared to levels seen in 2000, it aims to cut average energy consumption per person per year by 16 percent by 2020 and by 43 percent by 2035. It also calls for a rapid increase in the use of renewable power sources. The Swiss parliament supports the new law, with the exception of the country's largest political party, the populist Swiss People's Party (SVP), which requested yesterday's referendum.

"I'm very worried about the future," SVP parliamentarian Celine Amdruz told RTS as the referendum results ticked in. SVP maintains the energy shift will be too expensive, would threaten Switzerland's energy supply and would "disfigure" the country's pristine natural landscape with more wind turbines and solar panels. The party has campaigned heavily against the plan, maintaining that it would cost around 200 billion Swiss francs (\$205 billion, 179 billion euros) to implement until 2050.

This, it claims in campaign posters plastered around the country, would amount to 3,200 Swiss francs per four-person household per year in additional energy costs and taxes, with no guarantee of hot water. "Who wants to pay 3,200 francs more... for a cold shower?" the posters ask. The government has rejected that claim, maintaining that the additional cost per household would be about 40 Swiss francs per year compared to today's prices. And it says the cost could easily be offset by improving energy efficiency in buildings, which reduces heating costs.—AFP



SWITZERLAND: This file photo shows the Goesgen Nuclear Power Plant near Daeniken, Northern Switzerland.—AFP

CYPRIOIS CLING TO HOPE IN PEACE TALKS

NICOSIA: As a new showdown looms over troubled Cyprus reunification talks, peace activists are clinging to the last vestiges of hope that a deal can be done ending decades of division on the ethnically split island. Every Saturday for more than a decade, people from rival sides have met over coffee at a medieval inn on the Turkish Cypriot side of Nicosia to discuss their vision of a united country.

But for the past two months, their chats have had to deal with a marked slowdown in momentum at formal talks on reunification between Nicos Anastasiades and Mustafa Akinci, the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders. These formal peace talks-billed by diplomats as the best chance in decades to end the Cyprus conflict-are stuck as the two sides disagree on the way forward.

Last week a UN envoy launched shuttle diplomacy to avoid the prospect of collapse, and concerns are mounting that the process could be sidelined by Greek Cypriot elections next year. Those at the coffee talks are concerned. "We are very anxious, but that makes us all the more determined for a solution," says Andreas Paralikis, a Greek Cypriot economist who was among the first to start mingling with Turkish Cypriots after checkpoint controls were eased to allow the crossing of people in 2003.

He belongs to a generation traumatized by war. He was a teenager when Turkey launched an invasion of Cyprus in 1974, carving the island into two after a brief Greek-inspired coup. Now, with other Cypriots of all ages, he sits at the Buyuk Han to debate a conflict which has been omnipresent all their lives. Over time, the group has become close friends.

From optimism to disappointment

At the inn, retired journalist Suleyman Erguclu, a Turkish Cypriot, said the island should not give up hope. A seasoned veteran in covering what is locally known as the "Cyprob", he experienced conflict first hand, witnessing intercommunal violence at the age of 9 in 1963. By the age of 15 he took up arms, becoming a "soldier at night, a student in the daytime", and fought a war in 1974. "I don't want my grandsons, or Mikis's grandsons to go through the same experience," he said.

Greek Cypriot and biologist Mikis Hadjineophytou, 67, worries that failure this time could be permanent.

"We have been here before. Elevated hopes, being almost there, then disappointment, depression," he said. "I don't think we will get another chance. Maybe we will, but it will be a much worse scenario." Formally, the two leaders have for months been trying to forge a deal which would reunite the divided island under a federal umbrella. But talks are stuck on the agenda of a conference in Geneva which will discuss the role of Britain, Greece and Turkey in a post-settlement Cyprus.

Though officially the process is open ended, they are taking place against the backdrop of plans by Greek Cypriots to push forward with exploration for natural gas offshore, an endeavor Turkey says is illegal, but that Cyprus says is its sovereign right. French oil major Total plans its first exploratory drill in July. Erguclu reckons the energy issue could be a catalyst for a solution, provided everyone cooperates. It should work for both sides, he said, surrounded by coffee-drinkers yearning for a reunited country.—Reuters

CUBA DISMISSES TRUMP CRITICISM AS 'RIDICULOUS'

HAVANA: Cuban state television responded to a statement by US President Donald Trump on Saturday-railing against "cruel despotism" in the Caribbean country and advocating democracy by calling it "ridiculous." Trump's words came in a tribute on Cuban Independence Day, which marks victory against the Spanish colonial authorities 115 years ago, calling for economic freedoms and respect for human rights in Cuba.

"Cruel despotism cannot extinguish the flame of freedom in the hearts of Cubans, and... unjust persecution cannot tamper Cubans' dreams for their children to live free from oppression," he said in a statement. Cuban television broadcast its response late in the evening, describing Trump as "the ill-advised US president" and his statement as "controversial and ridiculous." "Even the US government itself is aware of the contradictory and clumsy pronouncements of the billionaire tycoon-turned-president on both foreign and domestic policy," it said.

The broadcast did not say whether the Cuban statement constituted an official response, nor did it directly address Trump's criticisms. One-party communist Cuba has been ruled by President Raul Castro for 12 years since he took over from his ailing brother Fidel, the revolutionary leader who died in November having defied the United States during a half-century of iron-fisted rule.—AFP

NIGERIAN TROOPS BATTLE BOKO HARAM IN LAKE CHAD AREA

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria: Nigerian troops fought Boko Haram in the Lake Chad area on Saturday, killing 13 of the Islamic extremists and arresting 10 others, including 6 women believed to have helped smuggle supplies to the insurgents, said an army spokesman. Soldiers of the of 8 Task Force Battalion spent 72 hours clearing the location where the Boko Haram fighters were hiding, said battalion spokesman Col. Timothy Antigha. Many other Boko Haram fighters were wounded by gunfire, he said.

The troops, operating in the Chikun Gudu, Tumbama Karami and Tumbama Baba areas recovered three AK 47 rifles and one pump-action rifle, assorted rifle magazines and 306 rounds of ammunition, a tool box, a freezer and a Toyota truck, he said. In a related development, army troops, acting on a tip off, rounded up 10 suspected Boko Haram smugglers, he said. The suspects, six females and four males, are being investigated to determine the extent of their involve-

ment with Boko Haram, he said.

Since the army regained control of most of the Sambisa Forest area in northeastern Nigeria from Boko Haram in December 2016, Nigerian troops have pursued the extremist fighters in areas where they have fled. Boko Haram's violent campaign to seize Nigerian territory to enforce strict Islamic Shariah rule is responsible for the deaths of thousands and has displaced about 3 million people, mostly women and children, since 2009.

Thousands have been kidnapped by Boko Haram, including nearly 300 schoolgirls in Chibok in 2015. Joyous scenes occurred in the capital, Abuja, Saturday when 82 newly freed Chibok schoolgirls were reunited with their families. Nigeria's government negotiated with Boko Haram, with help from Swiss officials and the International Committee of the Red Cross, to secure the freedom of the young women from Chibok in return for the release of five extremist commanders.—AP

AMERICAN CLIMBER DIES ON EVEREST, INDIAN MISSING

KATHMANDU: An American climber on Mount Everest died yesterday, officials said, the third death on the world's highest mountain in the past month and raising safety concerns for climbers. Roland Yearwood, 50, from Alabama, perished at an altitude of about 8,400 meters in an area called "death zone" which is known for thin air, Murari Sharma of the Everest Parivas trekking company that sponsored his climb said.

"We have confirmation of his death but no other details are known," Sharma told Reuters in Kathmandu. "It is also unclear if he was on his way up or down from the summit," he said. Yearwood was part of a 16-member team led by American climber Dan Mazur that is climbing the normal Southeast Ridge route from the Nepali side of the mountain.

Yearwood's death comes a day after 26-

year-old Indian climber Ravi Kumar went missing in the same area during his descent from the peak. Kumar got separated from his guide near a place called Balcony on Saturday, Thupden Sherpa of the Arun Treks and Expedition company that sponsored Kumar's team said in Kathmandu yesterday. "Three sherpa rescuers have been sent to search for Kumar," Thupden said, adding the climber had been out of contact.

On April 30, a famed Swiss climber fell to his death near Mount Everest during preparations to climb the world's highest mountain, while an 85-year-old Nepali man died at the base camp earlier this month while trying to set a record for the oldest climber. Nepal has cleared 371 mountaineers to climb Mount Everest during the current season ending this month.—Reuters



KABUL: A policeman center, sits near the gate of a foreign guesthouse in Kabul, Afghanistan. —AP

FRENCH PROSECUTORS INVESTIGATE DCNS SUBMARINES SALE TO BRAZIL

PARIS: French financial prosecutors have launched an investigation into a 6.7 billion euro (\$7.5 billion) 2008 contract between naval supplier DCNS and Brazil that included the sale of five submarines, French daily Le Parisien said yesterday. The investigation, started in October last year, concerns potential "corruption of foreign officials" and is linked to a Brazilian inquiry dubbed Lava Jato, or Car Wash, that was initiated in 2015 to investigate alleged bribery involving hundreds of politicians and public figures, the paper said without citing sources.

DCNS said it could not confirm that a French inquiry had been opened and it denied being involved in the Brazilian investigation. "We have nothing to do with the Lava Jato case. DCNS scrupulously respects the rules of law around

the world," a spokesman told Reuters. The French financial prosecutors' office did not respond immediately to a Reuters request for comment. On its Twitter account on May 12, it said that prosecutors had spoken to the head of Brazil's Supreme Court and visited Brazil's central office against corruption but made no reference to the investigation reported by Le Parisien.

Newspaper Folha de S. Paulo reported in 2015 that Brazilian federal police were investigating potential irregularities in the military program to build a nuclear-powered submarine in partnership with France by 2023. The paper did not say if DCNS, which is 62 percent owned by the French state and 35 percent by French defense electronics group Thales SA, was being investigated.—Reuters

GERMAN, AFGHAN GUARD KILLED IN KABUL GUEST HOUSE ATTACK

FINNISH WOMAN KIDNAPPED

KABUL: A German aid worker and an Afghan guard were killed as gunmen stormed an international guest house in central Kabul, officials said yesterday, as insecurity rises in the war-torn country. A Finnish woman was also kidnapped from the guest house run by Swedish charity Operation Mercy, with no group so far claiming responsibility for the attack late Saturday.

In a further sign of violence roiling the country, 20 Afghan policemen were killed early yesterday when Taliban fighters stormed their outposts in the southern province of Zabul, as the insurgents escalate their annual spring offensive. The country's interior ministry confirmed the brazen Kabul attack, the latest in a series of assaults on aid workers in Afghanistan. "A Finnish lady was kidnapped from police district (three) last night at 11.30. A German lady and an Afghan guard were killed," interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish said on Twitter.

The foreign ministry in Stockholm confirmed that a Finnish citizen has been kidnapped, adding that they were investigating the incident in coordination with their counterparts in Kabul. "At the moment, the identity of the kidnapers is not known. Finland urges immediate release of the kidnapped person," the Finnish ministry said in a statement. Operation Mercy's director Scott

Breslin told local news agency TT that he was holding a crisis meeting over the incident. "We know that she's missing, we will send out a press release later," Breslin said in a brief statement.

Operation Mercy is known to work with local Afghan communities in areas such as reducing infant mortality and women's empowerment. The kidnapping of foreigners has been on the rise, but the threat of abductions is even greater among Afghans. Kabul is plagued by organized criminal gangs who stage abductions for ransom, often targeting foreigners and wealthy locals, and sometimes handing them over to insurgent groups.

Indian rescued

The violence underscores the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, which is in the grip of an insurgency waged by the Taliban and other groups. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the coordinated attack in Zabul's Shah Joy district, which marks another stinging blow to NATO-backed Afghan forces. Local officials made desperate calls to Afghan television stations to seek attention as they were unable to get hold of senior authorities for help, highlighting the disarray in security ranks.

"This morning, a group of Taliban fighters

armed with heavy and light weapons launched coordinated attacks on several police checkpoints, killing 20 policemen," provincial governor Bismillah Afghanmal told AFP. A district official told AFP that at least 15 others were wounded in the fighting. The raid, the latest in a series of brazen Taliban assaults, underscores the insurgents' growing strength more than 15 years since they were ousted from power by the US invasion of 2001.

Taliban militants launched their annual "spring offensive" in late April, heralding a surge in fighting as the US tries to craft a new Afghan strategy and NATO considers sending more troops to break the stalemate against the resurgent militants. Aid workers in particular have increasingly been casualties of a surge in violence in recent years.

Judith D'Souza, a 40-year-old Indian employee of the Aga Khan Foundation, a prominent NGO that has long worked in Afghanistan, was rescued last July nearly a month after she was abducted near her residence in central Kabul. D'Souza's abduction came after Katherine Jane Wilson, a well-known Australian NGO worker, was kidnapped in April last year in the city of Jalalabad, close to the border with Pakistan. Wilson was released in March this year. —AFP

GUNMEN KILL FOUR POLICE IN PAKISTAN

PESHAWAR: Unidentified gunmen have shot dead four policemen in Pakistan's northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, officials said yesterday. The gunmen opened fire on the duty officers late Saturday in a village in Kohat district, some 80 kilometers southwest of Peshawar. "Gunmen opened fire on their official vehicle from both sides of the road, all the four policemen died on the spot," Javed Iqbal, a

district police officer in Kohat, told AFP. A second police officer in Kohat said the attackers fled during the darkness. No group has yet claimed responsibility. Violence across Pakistan has declined in recent years following a series of military offensives against insurgents in the northwestern border areas. But the remnants of militant groups are still able to carry out periodic bloody attacks, particularly in the northwest.



LAHORE: In this photograph, a private security guard escorts Christian priests in the congested neighborhood of Youhanabad in Lahore. —AFP

PAKISTAN CENSUS SOURCE OF FEAR FOR MINORITIES

RABWAH: Marginalized, attacked and frequently hit by blasphemy charges, Pakistan's religious minorities are hoping the country's first census since 1998 will be a step towards greater political representation and rights. In the congested Lahore district of Youhanabad, the largest Christian neighborhood in Pakistan, activist Sajid Christopher says his community looks forward to standing up and being counted. "The census will benefit us in two ways. Firstly we will be able to know about our exact population as so far there has been only guesswork," he said.

"Secondly, our representation in parliament will be according to our population as our present representation in the democratic system is based on the census of 1981," he added. Fast-growing Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world, with an estimated 200 million people, but has not held a census for nearly two decades, despite a constitutional requirement for one every decade. The count was delayed for years by politicians squabbling over the potential implications.

Estimates are approximate and disputed, ranging from two to 10 million for Christians, and 2.5 to 4.5 million for Hindus. Christopher's views were echoed by Nancy Stiegler, an advisor for the UN Population Fund who called the census a "powerful tool for planning" not only for minorities, "but all the population of Pakistan". This desire for more accurate data goes to

the heart of the controversy surrounding the census: that it will redraw political boundaries and force a redistribution of resources.

Fear of being ousted

The process is not without complications and not all religious minorities are eager to make themselves known. Pakistan's Ahmadis, a minority Islamic sect declared non-Muslims by law for their belief in a prophet after Muhammed (PBUH), number an estimated 500,000 and are victims of persecution and violence. Banned from even calling themselves Muslim, they find themselves in a dangerous position when census officials arrive asking them to declare their religion.

When a Balochistan resident identified himself as Ahmadi to Pakistani census officials, they chased him out of the mosque where they had gathered families to be counted, Saleemuddin, a spokesman for the community, said, without identifying the man for safety reasons. In other cases, he said, census officials simply assume the Ahmadis are Muslim because their names are indistinguishable from the general population and tick that box on their behalf. It is a potentially dangerous move under Pakistan's laws, "If I declare myself as a Muslim, I can be imprisoned for three years," Saleemuddin said.

Low expectations

Even those groups keen for recognition are wary, their suspicion fuelled

by bitter experiences that run deep among Pakistan's minorities. Citizens can declare themselves to be Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Ahmadi or "other". But Hindu rights activist Kapil Dev accused the government of divisiveness by having a caste option in the census, when the community believes it should be recorded as one entity, while the Sikh faith failed to make it onto the survey altogether.

Radesh Singh Tony went to court in the northwestern city of Peshawar because there was no mention of Sikhism on the form. The court ruled in the activist's favor, ordering the government to include Sikhs but the count had already begun, and Radesh was not optimistic. "The government has a record of ignoring court orders," he said. And though Christopher was confident, many of his fellow Christians argued even if they are accurately counted it will change nothing until Pakistan's attitude towards non-Muslims improves.

"Muslims can't see a Christian progress, get a good education and a good job, this is a fact," said Pervaiz Jazbi, a 37-year-old Christian shopkeeper in Islamabad. "The element of discrimination is always there," agreed Christian student Sania Nishtar. Saleemuddin said the Ahmadi man who fled the Balochistan mosque became the target of a hate campaign, barred even from buying food. "He fled with his family," Saleemuddin said. "He has been living in hiding ever since." —AFP

CONDOLENCES



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INDONESIAN SLUM REJUVENATED INTO RAINBOW VILLAGE

SEMARANG: A slum area on Indonesia's Java Island has become an unlikely tourist attraction, as well as a social media hit, after its homes were painted vivid colors to transform the district into what is now being called "Kampung Pelangi" ("Rainbow Village"). The poor hill-side area received a month-long facelift costing 300 million rupiah (\$22,500) and paid for by the local government in a bid to rejuvenate this part of Semarang,

a town 450 km (280 miles) east of the capital Jakarta. Visitors have been flocking to the village to take photographs and pose for "selfies" next to the brightly colored homes.

"It's because of the unique look of the village. We know this area used to be a slum district but now it looks so beautiful after the colorful makeover. I used to pass this area without any interest but now the colors change everything,"

said one visitor, Nihayatun Naqiyah. The multi-colored paint job for the village is the brainchild of Slamet Widodo, a 54-year-old high-school teacher. "In the future it will bring benefits to our community, especially economic empowerment.

The project will be supported by the activity and creativity (of the people) in the village so the local community has a sense of belonging," said Widodo, who was inspired by similar projects in

other parts Indonesia. Residents already say their livelihoods have improved since the makeover, as they can now give tours and sell souvenirs. "Obviously this condition is very influential, before we were only the residents of what I can say was a quiet village but now we can call it a dynamic village, because women are empowered and are able to increase their family's income," resident Amanah Suyitno said.—Reuters



SYDNEY: Sydney's morning papers sit on display at a news kiosk.—AFP

'FOREIGN INVADERS' THREATEN STRUGGLING AUSTRALIAN MEDIA

WORLD'S BIGGEST NEWS BRANDS SPREAD THEIR WINGS

SYDNEY: Australia's role as a testing ground for global media giants such as the New York Times, Daily Mail and the Guardian could hasten the decline of embattled local players as they fight for eyeballs and advertising dollars, analysts warn. With traditional sources of circulation and advertising revenues drying up, the world's biggest news brands are spreading their wings to grow digital audiences.

One of the first places they have set up, producing local content for the domestic market, is Australia—already home to some of their largest foreign audiences, and with a ready population of early technology adopters and keen news consumers. But with the market near-saturated, analysts say the foreign outlets, with their deep pockets and mostly free content, are eating into struggling local media's revenues.

This has helped accelerate job cuts and belt-tightening at some of the country's main publishers—Fairfax (Sydney Morning Herald, The Age) and News Corp Australia (The Australian, Sydney Daily Telegraph). The foreign publishers "don't require a subscription, don't have a paywall and the problem is that's weakening and disrupting all the existing players," media analyst Steve Allen of Fusion Strategy said, dubbing them "foreign invaders." "So it's a nasty convergence of new entrants taking eyeballs away from the traditional mastheads and eroding their revenue base."

Rivers of gold drying up
Advertising revenues are already under siege

from Google and Facebook, with Morgan Stanley estimating last year they would suck up 35-40 percent of the total pool of Aus\$13.9 billion (US\$10.3 billion) in Australia. "The size of the (ad spend) cake is staying the same and growing by inflation at best. So for a new entrant to come in and take money, they take it off an existing player," media analyst Peter Cox said.

"So that's what Google and Facebook have done... therefore there's not much cake left for firstly the newspapers, but now increasingly television stations as well." Local providers can no longer count on the "rivers of gold" print classifieds to boost income, with digital advertising not yet able to bridge the gap. Fairfax, a takeover target of US private equity giant TPG Capital and investment firm Hellman & Friedman, said last month it was axing a quarter of its newsroom to save Aus\$30 million annually in the latest round of redundancies.

News has also announced severe cost-cutting, while the country's third-ranked commercial broadcaster the Ten Network is on the ropes after posting dire half-year losses, citing poor advertising spend. A battle is also taking place to win readers. Fairfax, News and ABC are the most-read news websites in Australia, but Britain's Daily Mail, Guardian and the BBC—which all have bureaus in Sydney—are making inroads. The British titans were the fifth, sixth and seventh-most read according to March data from audience measuring service Nielsen.

Rich benefactor

RMIT University's Alexandra Wake, a former journalist, cautioned that although the foreigners have produced award-winning work, they could not comprehensively cover Australia because of their smaller footprint. The local media cuts meant they too would struggle to cover the country with the same depth and breathe as they had in the past, she said. "The problem is of course, they (foreign media) have very different interests to Australian interests.

"If we want a system of democracy as we currently do in Australia where people are required to be informed to make a decision, we need a variety of Australian voices actually telling us what's going on." Her plea to support public interest journalism is reflected in Canberra. Opposition politicians this month pushed for a probe into the role of government and laws in ensuring independent and diverse media.

Other avenues of funding—from philanthropists or non-profit organizations—have opened up in the United States, where publishers are also struggling, but are less prevalent in Australia. One rare example is internet entrepreneur Graeme Wood, who helped the Guardian launch in Australia in 2013. "If (newspaper publishers) are to survive 10 to 15 years from now, basically they won't be publicly listed and they'll have a rich benefactor," Allen said. "News Limited have one (Rupert Murdoch) currently, Seven West Media (chairman Kerry Stokes) have one currently, but they won't last forever."—AFP

THREE YEARS AFTER COUP, JUNTA DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN THAI LIFE

BANGKOK: On Friday evenings in Thailand, sandwiched between the evening news and a popular soap opera, is a prime-time program that has been running for three years, or ever since the military took power in a May 22, 2014 coup. Called "Sustainable Development from a Royal Philosophy" it stars junta leader and former army chief Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha speaking on a range of topics, from the virtues of modesty to the state of the economy.

The military has always played a prominent role in Thai life. But Prayuth's show is just one of many examples of how embedded the junta has become in Thai society. Thailand's military government has acknowledged it wants to weaken political parties and maintain permanent influence over future elected governments, partly through a new constitution approved by Thailand's king last month.

But data compiled by Reuters shows the military is not just trying to influence Thailand's political life. It is leaving an imprint on nearly every institution of Thai society, with brass hats far more entrenched in senior positions than under previous military governments.

Entwined with monarchy

The military now controls 143 out of 250 parliamentary seats. Under the previous junta after the 2006 coup, the military held 67 out of 242 seats. The cabinet is stacked with soldiers. Out of the 36 cabinet members, 12 have a military background. In 2006, only four military officers were among the 37 cabinet members. The military is also entwined with the powerful monarchy—the name of Prayuth's show is derived from the philosophy of the late king Bhumibol Adulyadej, who died last October after seven decades on the throne.

More than half of the 13 members of the Privy Council, the body that advises new King Maha Vajiralongkorn—himself a former soldier—are military men. It was just under half in the previous Council. Cinema and television stations are increasingly showing pro-military themes and the school curriculum features military slogans.

"The military coup of 2014 offered the armed forces the chance to put in place a wider footprint and they are doing so," Paul Chambers, a professor at Naresuan University and an expert on the Thai military, told Reuters in an e-mail. "A younger generation of retired military officers are, since the end of 2016, sitting on the Privy Council," he noted. The public does not appear too concerned. The government says military recruitment numbers dou-

bled in 2017 from the previous year and attribute that to public approval of their hard-line tactics in breaking a political impasse that had persisted for years. Polls backed by the military government show Thais are content with military rule, although no such polls have been published in recent months.

Peace and order

Perhaps more revealing than a military government stacked full of military men is the number of orders issued by the junta: 358 in total since 2014. The orders aimed to impose discipline on every aspect of Thai public life. They ranged from making seatbelts mandatory for passengers in the backseats of cars to holding parents accountable for student fights. The junta has also launched disciplinary initiatives such as a hotline to deal with misbehaving Buddhist monks and so-called "attitude adjustment" programs for drunk drivers.

The campaign has covered everything from a crackdown on taxi gangs at airports to a clean-up of street food stalls, the latter with mostly mixed results. Army spokesman Winthai Suvaree said those efforts by the junta, formally known as the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), have improved Thailand. "Overall, people are satisfied with concrete changes in the society," Winthai told Reuters. He did not specifically address the militarization of Thai society.

Thailand has been bitterly divided since a 2006 coup against then Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, a billionaire businessman turned politician who gained the adoration of rural voters through populist schemes but made many enemies among the military-royalist elite. After the restoration of democracy, the military again intervened in 2014 to topple a civilian government led by Thaksin's sister Yingluck Shinawatra. Thailand's military has staged 12 coups since the end of direct rule by kings in 1932.

The 2014 coup was partly the military's way of trying to make right what it viewed as the mistakes of the 2006 coup, including a failure to get rid of Thaksin's allies and subdue his supporters, political analysts say. Prayuth, then a major-general, was part of the junta that seized control of the government in 2006. He led the 2014 putsch as army chief, saying the military needed to restore order following a cycle of mass protests and violence. The junta has been under pressure from some Western countries to return to democracy after repeated delays to the general election, now scheduled for some time next year.—Reuters

AUSTRALIA DECLARES GAME UP FOR 'FAKE REFUGEES'

SYDNEY: Australia yesterday gave 7,500 boatpeople until October to file a claim proving they are genuine refugees or be kicked out, declaring the "game is up" for illegal arrivals ripping off taxpayers. Before the conservatives took power and adopted a tough line on the

issue in 2013, an estimated 50,000 asylum-seekers flooded into Australia on more than 800 boats over the previous five years. Hundreds more, many from war-torn Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and the Middle East, died at sea during the treacherous journey.

Of those arrivals, the old Labor government processed nearly 20,000, leaving 30,500 to the current administration. Some 7,500 of them have yet to present their cases for asylum or are refusing to answer questions about their identity, while claiming welfare benefits, casting doubt on whether they really need protection. Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said that if they fail to lodge a claim by October 1, they will be removed from the country and banned from re-entering.

"This is a very serious situation and it's costing Australian taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars a year," he said. "So if people think that they can rip the Australian taxpayer off, if people think they can con the Australian taxpayer, then I'm sorry, the game's up. "We are prepared to support people who are legitimate refugees, but we aren't going to support people who are just accessing welfare ... and then refusing to provide any information in relation to their protection claim."

Refugee advocates reacted furiously, saying the government had sunk to "an impossible new low." "For years, these men, women and children have been waiting patiently to go through the proper process to be assessed as refugees, and find permanent safety in Australia," said Shen Narayanasamy, human rights

director of campaigners GetUp. "Asylum claims are extremely complex, and involve hours of poring over legal documents and paperwork.

"Legal services are pushed to the limit forcing hundreds to forgo legal advice and interpreters, making their claims impossibly difficult to complete." Dutton said the cost of processing and supporting the 50,000 boatpeople amounted to Aus\$1.9 billion (US\$1.4 billion) a year. Of the 30,500 left to the current government to deal with, 23,000 have applied for protection. So far, 3,000 have been assessed as not genuine refugees.

"Australians have every right to question why an estimated 80 percent of illegal maritime arrivals arrived without any identity documents," said Dutton.

Under its current Operation Sovereign Borders, which has managed to halt the flood of boat arrivals, Canberra sends asylum-seekers who try to reach Australia to remote camps in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

They are blocked from resettling in Australia even if found to be refugees. The camps have been widely criticized by rights groups but the government has defended its position, which includes turning boats back, as necessary to stem the waves of migration that characterized previous administrations.—AFP



SEOUL: A man plays a saxophone beneath a bridge spanning the Han river in Seoul.—AFP



VATICAN: In this file photo, Pope Francis meets Bishop of Stockholm, Anders Arborelius, on the occasion of the canonization ceremony of two new Saints, Stanislaus of Jesus and Maria Elizabeth Hesselblad, at the Vatican.—AP

POPE SAYS TO CREATE FIVE NEW CARDINALS

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis said yesterday he plans to create five new cardinals from five different countries at a special ceremony next month, all of them under the age of 80. The new cardinals—from El Salvador, Laos, Mali, Spain and Sweden—will form part of an elite group within the Church. The ceremony to elevate the five, known as a consistory, will take place on June 28, the pontiff said after prayers at the Vatican. All those selected were born in the 1940s.

Cardinals over the age of 80 are not able to take part in the conclaves that elect new

popes. The five are Archbishop Jean Zerbato of Bamako; Archbishop of Barcelona Juan Jose Omella; the Bishop of Stockholm Anders Arborelius; Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhanekhou, apostolic vicar of Paksé in Laos and Gregorio Rosa Chavez, auxiliary bishop of San Salvador.

Last November, Francis created 17 new "princes of the Church", 13 of whom are under 80 and therefore eligible to take part in the next secret conclave to elect or become the head of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics.—AFP



RIYADH: US President Donald Trump and Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz pose for a group photo with members of various delegations during the inauguration of the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology yesterday. — AFP

AMIR SAYS ARAB-ISLAMIC-US SUMMIT BOOSTS...

Continued from Page 1

He said it is worth mentioning that Kuwait hosted Yemeni peace consultations for more than three months, but unfortunately they did not produce any positive results, but things became more complicated as a result of external interventions.

"The deteriorating situations in Syria force us to move as quickly as possible to end this disaster. We believe that the United States of America has a great role in putting an end to this conflict while at the same time we appreciate its efforts in this regard," the Amir pointed out. With regards to the Middle East peace process, its stalemate underscores the need for a breakthrough in this issue, as this alleviates tension in the region, which is the cause of all the negative repercussions in the region, the Amir said.

Sheikh Sabah noted that in this regard, "we call on the United States, being the only country capable of exerting pressure on the Palestinian and Israeli sides, to find a just and comprehensive solution". "We believe that the relations between states of the region must be based on the basic rules of international law, foremost of which is respect for the sovereignty and systems of states and non-interference in their internal affairs under any pretext and the deepening of good-neighbourliness," he said.

"In this context, we seek to achieve full commitment to these bases on Gulf-Iranian relations, and we hope that the new Iranian presidency will embody these foundations in order to achieve security and

stability in the region," HH the Amir affirmed. He said that "while we appreciate what our alliance is doing in the face of terrorism, we are still being called upon to exert more effort and cooperation to eliminate Daesh (IS) as a priority for the world to enjoy security and peace."

"The achievements of the coalition countries and the US-led forces to liberate Mosul and the city of Raqqa reflect this cooperation and coordination," he added, pointing out that in this context, "we stress that the elimination of Daesh, its ideologies and policies in the region necessitates the continuation of the collective international confrontation and eliminate the economic and social environment that feeds it, and that will only be achieved by providing sustainable development and improving social justice". "With this new era, we look forward to working together to strengthen our strategic partnership in all its dimensions, so that together we can face the challenges that surround our region and our world", the Amir concluded.

HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah also paid a visit yesterday to Trump in his residence in the Saudi capital. The Amir congratulated Trump on winning the US presidency, saying he looks forward to taking his country's ties with the US to new heights. Moreover, the Amir underscored the US president's historic visit to Saudi Arabia, thanking Trump for his eagerness to meet with leaders of Arab and Islamic nations. On a related note, the Amir extended an invitation to the US president to visit Kuwait. — KUNA

SAUDI KING SLAMS IRAN AS 'SPEARHEAD'...

Continued from Page 1

made no mention of human rights during his visit so far. "We are not here to lecture - we are not here to tell other people how to live... or how to worship. Instead, we are here to offer partnership - based on shared interests and values," Trump said.

Some 35 heads of state and government from Muslim-majority countries were in Riyadh for the Arab Islamic American Summit, mainly from states friendly to Saudi Arabia. Much of the focus during the summit was on countering what Gulf states see as the threat from Iran, which opposes Saudi Arabia in a range of regional conflicts from Syria to Yemen. Trump's speech was touted as a major event - along the lines of a landmark address to the Islamic world by Obama in Cairo in 2009.

Trump earlier held talks with leaders of the oil-rich

Gulf monarchies, a day after Washington told their arch rival Iran to dismantle its "network of terrorism". Leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council posed for a photo with Trump before they walked into their meeting. In the meeting, GCC leaders and Trump agreed on a memorandum of understanding to establish a center to combat the financing of terrorism, Saudi official news agency SPA reported. The GCC groups Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, all of which are traditional allies of Washington.

Most GCC monarchies accuse Tehran of meddling in their internal affairs and want Washington to be tougher with Iran, which secured a landmark nuclear deal with world powers when Trump's predecessor Barack Obama was in office. They consider Tehran to be a destabilizing factor in the region. — Agencies

MELANIA HAILS 'EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN'...

Continued from Page 1

"Saudi Arabia's progress, especially in recent years, is very encouraging," Trump's eldest daughter told a group of Saudi women she met in Riyadh while accompanying her father on a visit to the Muslim kingdom. "But there's still a lot of work to be done and freedoms and opportunities to continue to fight for," added Ivanka, who serves as an advisor to her father.

"Around the world women continue to achieve unprecedented levels of rights and freedoms. Today you all stand on the frontlines of the fight for gender equality," she told a roundtable of women led by Princess Reema

bint Bandar, deputy president of the Women's Sports Authority. "The stories of Saudi women, such as yourselves, catalyzing change, inspire me to believe in the possibility of global women's empowerment," said Ivanka.

Saudi Arabia is well known as the world's most gender-segregated nation, where women live under the supervision of a male guardian and need his permission to travel, study and get some health treatments. Since the late King Abdullah declared in 2011 that women could join the government advisory Shura Council, the situation for women has gradually started to change in line with moves to diversify the economy, employ more women and cut reliance on oil. — Agencies

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 ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
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Washington Watch

HARDLINERS IN US, IRAN STAND IN WAY OF ROUHANI REFORMS

After his re-election triumph, President Hassan Rouhani must now grapple with a fiercely hostile United States and hardliners at home as he struggles to build a more moderate and connected Iran. Iran's entrenched conservative establishment - particularly in the judiciary and elite Revolutionary Guards - remain deeply suspicious of Rouhani's talk of civil liberties and building ties with the West. "The non-elected institutions will try to prevent Rouhani from applying his reform agenda," said Clement Therme, Iran analyst for the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "So he will focus on the economic side. If the daily lives of the population improve, he will be in a stronger position to push for structural reforms on civil rights."

Fixing the economy will not be easy. Despite a nuclear deal with world powers, Washington still maintains a raft of sanctions that are scaring off global banks and foreign investors. US President Donald Trump has gone further, threatening to tear up the nuclear deal and visiting Iran's bitter regional rival Saudi Arabia this weekend, where he signed a \$110 billion arms deal described as targeting "malign Iranian influence" in the region.

Nonetheless, European and Asian governments are determined to keep the nuclear deal alive and take full advantage of the lucrative investment opportunities in Iran. They are cheered by Rouhani's victory over hardliner Ebrahim Raisi, who had threatened a tougher, more insular approach to foreign relations. "A lot of investors I hadn't heard from for three months were suddenly phoning me this morning. Some are already booking their tickets," said Farid Dehdilani, international adviser for the Iranian Privatization Organization after results were announced on Saturday. "Dr Rouhani will more aggressively pursue his economic agenda - investing in factories, production and absorbing foreign capital. I think he'll make his cabinet younger and more agile," he said.

'A smarter politician'

Challenging the security forces, which control large swathes of the economy and need Iran's resources as a source of patronage, will be tough. And Rouhani notably failed to win the release of jailed opposition leaders or prevent the arrest of several dual nationals by intelligence services outside his control. Many fear his second term could mirror that of reformist president Mohammad Khatami in the early 2000s, when every attempt at reform was frustrated by the hardline establishment.

But Rouhani, a long-time regime insider, may be better placed than his predecessors, said politics professor Foad Izadi, of Tehran University. "Rouhani has shown himself to be a smarter politician than Khatami was," said Izadi. "He's been part of the system long enough to know how to navigate it. Khatami was more ideological which reduced his ability to get things done." Crucially, Rouhani's technocratic approach has allowed him to co-opt key conservatives such as parliament speaker Ali Larijani. "The alliance with Larijani has been very helpful to Rouhani in getting his ministers and policies approved. That will continue to be crucial in his second term," said Izadi.

Next supreme leader?

The big long-term question is whether Rouhani can influence the rise of the next supreme leader after the death of the ageing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Raisi, touted as a possible successor, is now out of the running, said Izadi. "Maybe he will come back in four years, but with this type of showing we can rest assured that Raisi will not be the next supreme leader. The leader must show popular support."

But with hardliners firmly in control of the Assembly of Experts that will choose the next leader, Rouhani and his allies have little influence over the succession. Nonetheless, this weekend's election has given a clear indication that Iran's youthful population supports his vision for the country's future. "Iranian people no longer believe in economic populism and radical change," said Ali Vaez of the International Crisis Group. "They have the maturity to understand that the solution to their country's predicaments are in competent management of the economy and moderation in international relations." — AFP



VENEZUELA

BRAZIL LEFT WITH LAME DUCK PRESIDENT

Brazilian President Michel Temer's refusal to resign in the face of a Supreme Court investigation raises the prospect of a drawn-out fight for survival by an unpopular leader that would stall reforms, deter investors and leave Latin America's largest economy adrift. Legal experts and some of Temer's political allies said his determination to fight corruption allegations could prolong a political crisis for months. That could halt congressional passage of measures needed to pull Brazil from its worst-ever recession, including moves to ease labor regulations and raise the pension age.

The prospect of Brazil tumbling back into political paralysis just a year after the impeachment of former President Dilma Rousseff sent the benchmark Bovespa stock index toppling 9 percent on Thursday, its biggest daily decline since the 2008 financial crisis. Details of a plea bargain deal by executives of the world's largest meatpacking company JBS released on Friday showed Temer is accused of attempts to obstruct a sweeping corruption investigation and of receiving \$4.6 million in bribes - shocking even Brazilians inured to three years of the graft probe.

In a strongly worded televised address on Saturday, a defiant Temer said a secret recording by JBS Chairman Joesley Batista had been edited to deliberately incriminate him. He asked the Supreme Court to suspend its investigation until the recording's integrity could be verified. "Brazil will not be derailed. I will continue to lead the government," Temer said from the podium in the presidential palace, denouncing Batista as a 'criminal' who fled to New York before the storm surrounding his plea deal broke. Batista was not available for comment.

In addition to the Supreme Court investigation, Temer faces growing calls for his impeachment and a legal battle over the alleged illegal funding of his 2014 campaign, when he ran as the vice presidential candidate to Rousseff. Protests in several Brazilian cities this week were relatively small. But analysts said the possibility of an increasingly isolated, lame-duck president clinging to power could bring hundreds of thousands of angry Brazilians onto the streets, as was the case last year.

With more than 14 million Brazilians unemployed and

many frustrated by the government's austerity agenda, Temer's popularity is languishing near single figures. Some allies have already abandoned his coalition and the coming days will determine whether he has enough support in Congress to weather the storm. "Temer should only stay on if he is able to get his coalition to approve the reforms. If not, he has to step down," said Jose Anibal, a leading member of the Brazilian Social Democrat Party (PSDB), the president's main ally.

Opponents seeking Temer's ouster filed eight separate impeachment requests on Thursday. Any impeachment would take at least six months, generating further uncertainty that could smother an incipient recovery in Brazil's \$2 trillion economy, according to economists, government officials and lawmakers. Temer and his most trusted aides, including Finance Minister Henrique Meirelles, worked the phones furiously over the last two days to convince politicians and investors to back him amid what some analysts are calling the worst crisis since Brazil returned to democracy in 1985.

"We need to convince the political class that there is no better option for Brazil at this moment," said a presidential aide who asked for anonymity to speak freely. "This is not about Temer but is about investment, generating new jobs and improving the lives of Brazilians."

Protracted Fight

Temer's critics argue he is not fit to govern after meeting in the presidential residence with Batista and allegedly endorsing - or at least not reporting - his efforts to derail the Operation Car Wash investigation into political kickbacks and bribery at state-run companies, particularly oil firm Petrobras. Batista handed a recording of the conversation to prosecutors as part of a plea bargain deal. Testimony by JBS executives released on Friday also accused former Presidents Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Rousseff of accepting tens of millions of dollars in bribes and named scores of other politicians. Lawyers for Lula said he was innocent. Rousseff denied any wrongdoing in a statement.

Brazil's securities regulator is probing JBS and other

companies controlled by the Batista family for possible insider trading of foreign exchange futures and shares ahead of the announcement. JBS said in a statement the trades were part of its dollar hedging strategy. The Supreme Court investigation would normally take months if not years but given the political climate, justices are expected to expedite a decision on whether Temer should be tried. Legal experts said the evidence in the case appeared to be strong.

"The Supreme Court investigation could take a long time, but it starts off with strong evidence, the recording of the Batista meeting and a series of other videos," said Rafael Mafei, a law professor at the University of Sao Paulo. "This would be the quickest way out of this crisis." If the Supreme Court accepts charges of obstruction of justice and corruption against Temer, the lower house of Congress would have to authorize his trial. That, like impeachment, would require approval by two-thirds of the chamber.

The president would be suspended immediately pending trial and may be forced to quit. The fate of his presidency could also be sealed by Brazil's Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) if it decides to annul the Rousseff-Temer ticket's victory in the 2014 election because it received illegal campaign donations. The case, due to open on June 6, was expected to last months, but the crisis will speed up proceedings. However, Temer can appeal any adverse ruling.

If Temer is removed, the speaker of the lower house would take over for up to 30 days while Congress picks a new president to serve the rest of the presidential term until the end of 2018. Potential candidates floated by politicians include Temer's economic chief, Meirelles - a favorite of investors - and the head of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Carmen Lucia Rocha. Any leader picked by lawmakers, however, would likely lack the legitimacy to pursue the unpopular pension and labor reforms before the general elections in late 2018.

"That leader would be weak given how discredited this Congress is," said Senator Ronaldo Caiado, a member of Temer's alliance who has called for his resignation. "Only someone with the backing of the ballot could carry out the reforms we need." — Reuters

HOW MALTA ROLLED DICE ON ONLINE GAMBLING

Malta let online gambling firms operate from the island across the European Union between at least 2012-2014 while failing to enforce its own rules on monitoring their computer servers, according to a former employee at Malta's gaming regulator. Malta has over the years attracted many foreign companies with low tax rates. In particular, the tiny Mediterranean country has become a hub for the thriving European online gambling industry, which includes online sports betting, web-based casinos, poker and other games.

Of the \$38 billion of revenues generated worldwide in the sector in 2015, Europe alone accounted for 48 percent, industry data show. Malta has awarded around 500 online gaming licenses, the highest number in Europe. That means many international gaming companies use Malta-based servers to operate services across the EU - making the role of the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) in overseeing the industry important not just locally but across Europe.

The MGA is charged with vetting applicants for gaming licenses and ensuring against money-laundering and other suspicious transactions. An operating license awarded in Malta allows an online gaming company to operate across the 28-country EU. MGA monitors companies in part by telling its employees to attach stickers onto the computer servers used to run the gambling websites. Those stickers mark them with an ID number that must match the equipment registered with the MGA by the online operator.

This practice doesn't modify the machine internally, but it enables the regulator to know which hardware a company is using for its online transactions, facilitating checks on that hardware if ever it suspected fraud or other illicit activity. Such physical markers are a precondition for any gaming company to obtain a license and be legally entitled to start operations, MGA

rules state. Yet three separate internal email exchanges shown to Reuters by Valery Atanasov, a former employee of the watchdog, showed representatives of three companies themselves referring to situations that were in breach of that system of markers, known as "seals".

In at least a dozen other cases, Atanasov reported discrepancies at company sites to his managers at the MGA, which at the time was called the Lotteries and Gaming Authority (LGA), other emails showed. Lax supervision "creates conditions that allow suspicious financial operations, money laundering and other criminal practices," Atanasov said, providing no specifics. The Bulgarian national was fired by the LGA in 2015 and is fighting his dismissal in the Maltese courts.

The regulator rejects Atanasov's accusations, saying it adheres to international standards in the fight against money-laundering and terror financing. MGA chairman Joseph Cuschieri told Reuters the watchdog had additional mechanisms in place to supervise tax compliance and money-laundering which "provide far more comprehensive protection than any physical sealing." He did not elaborate. Reuters has no evidence that any online gaming company engaged in wrongdoing and could not verify the assertions made by the participants in the email exchanges.

White and Yellow Stickers

In one email 2012 exchange with an MGA official on which Atanasov was copied, Robert Zammit, a consultant working for Swedish online gambling group Betsson said that most of the gambling servers used and registered by the firm's Maltese units had not been sealed for years. "The majority of the servers were never sealed in the first place once installed," Robert Zammit, wrote in an email dated Feb. 1, 2012 to Jason Farrugia, an

official at the-then LGA. Betsson had been operating in Malta since 2008. Zammit nonetheless wanted the computers to be sealed to make sure that Betsson could get a new 5-year licence, the exchange on regulatory requirements showed.

Cuschieri - Farrugia's manager - denied that Zammit's email exposed a shortcoming. "All companies operating in and out of Malta undergo a rigorous licensing process and ongoing monitoring and supervision. Any claims to the contrary are simply unfounded," he told Reuters. Zammit, senior associate at Maltese law firm WH Partners, said when contacted that he could not disclose information about the matter, citing Maltese law and client confidentiality. Betsson Vice-President for Corporate Communication Pia Rosin told Reuters any allegations of non-compliance by the firm with Maltese rules had "no substance," and declined further comment.

In a separate exchange of emails dated March 13, 2013 of which Atanasov was one of the recipients, Angelo Dalli, director of Mr Green, an online casino whose parent company is Swedish, told Farrugia some of its equipment remained unsealed. "I would like to set an appointment for equipment sealing for Mr Green - we have recently installed additional server equipment to improve our disaster recovery capabilities. Additionally there has been some equipment that has been unsealed for a long time as we had asked for a sealing appointment a long time (more than a year) ago but never got such an appointment."

Reuters made three attempts to contact Dalli via his work email and his LinkedIn account but received no reply from him. According to the MGA's website, any company setting up an online gaming operation must submit a diagram of its computer network to the MGA. Once approved by the MGA and the computers installed, an MGA official goes to the site to tag the hardware

and check it corresponds to what was listed on the diagram.

The process involves placing a yellow inventory sticker on each piece of equipment and white stickers binding the hardware to the racks on which it is mounted. In the event of a broken sticker - which could point to an attempt to remove or replace the hardware in order to hide its transactions from supervision - a detailed incident report has to be filed with the MGA.

Even as some companies sought the stickers so they would be operating legally, Atanasov said he refused to put them on equipment on sites where there were discrepancies between the numbers of computers in operation and what was included on the diagram approved by the MGA. He says he feared that by ignoring such irregularities and sealing them anyway, he would be contributing to lax supervision.

Sacked for Insubordination

His refusal, however, drew complaints from licensed companies and their consultants. One such complaint was made by Anthony Axisa, a consultant working on behalf of the iGame gambling firm, in an email dated Jan. 18, 2013. "It has come to my attention that for the umpteenth time you went to seal equipment belonging to a client and left without sealing on the pretext that there was a discrepancy between the diagram presented and the equipment on location," Axisa wrote to Atanasov, accusing him of going beyond his remit.

"I cannot be expected to keep track of the version of diagram that you turn up with on the day," said Axisa, who was chief regulatory officer for the LGA until 2007. Atanasov said he found 11 servers that had not been sealed since March 2012 when iGame started its online betting. He refused to seal them because he said those servers did not match what iGame had declared for registration to obtain its licence. — Reuters

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DHONI, SMITH COMMUNICATION OUTSTANDING: COACH FLEMING

HYDERABAD: Rising Pune Supergiant coach Stephen Fleming has sought to dispel rumors of a rift between stalwarts Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Steve Smith. Fleming said the duo's "outstanding" relationship was key to the Supergiant's success this season, despite persistent grumblings of disunity between the pair. "Between the two of them it has been outstanding," Fleming told reporters on Saturday in Hyderabad, where the final will be battled out. "Much (has been) made of the relationship. Certainly sitting with them, it has been influential for the youngsters, beneficial for the senior players, and it has been helpful for me. "So it has been (a) great dynamic to be part of." Dhoni, an Indian batting legend and the IPL's most successful ever captain, led Pune in their debut season last year but was replaced this edition by Australian captain Smith. Rumored difficulties between the pair were blamed for the Supergiant's hot and cold form early in the season, but the chatter petered out as the side came into their own later on. Fleming, a former New Zealand captain, also defended Dhoni this season, despite his renowned finishing power appearing subdued. — AFP



CRAWFORD STAYS UNBEATEN WITH 10-ROUND DIAZ ROUT

NEW YORK: Terence Crawford remained unbeaten when Felix Diaz's corner stopped the fight after the 10th round of the 140-pound fight Saturday night. Crawford had dominated after a couple close early rounds and Diaz's left eye appeared swollen shut, making him helpless to spot Crawford's lightning-fast combinations. Crawford (31-0, 22 KOs) toyed with Diaz in the 10th, backing him into the corner and then, rather than throw any punches, patting him on the head. He then unloaded a couple hard shots toward the end of the round, prompting trainer Joel Diaz to tell referee Steve Willis his fighter could no longer continue. Crawford successfully defended his WBC and WBO titles and now could seek a matchup with Manny Pacquiao if he elects to move up to 147 pounds. Promoter Bob Arum said Crawford would return this summer and they could look to unify the titles against Julius Indongo, who holds the WBA and IBF 14-pound titles. Diaz (19-2, 9 KOs), lost for the first time at 140 pounds and was stopped for the first time. Crawford said this week he would move up "soon" to 147 pounds, and he also mentioned Keith Thurman along with longtime superstar Pacquiao in the ring after the fight.—AP

NBA'S KANTER HEADING HOME AFTER DETAINED IN ROMANIA

OKLAHOMA CITY: Oklahoma City Thunder center Enes Kanter is returning to the United States after being detained in a Romanian airport. Romanian Border Police spokesman Fabian Badila confirmed to The Associated Press that the player left Romania for the United States via London. Kanter, who is Turkish, said in a video Saturday morning on his Twitter account that the Turkish embassy canceled his passport and he'd been detained for several hours at a Romanian airport. He later tweeted "All good baby!" and said he'd hold a news conference in New York yesterday. Kanter said he believed he was held because of his political views. He's been a critic of Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Kanter supports Turkish cleric Fethullah Gulen, who opposes Erdogan. He was traveling in Europe and Indonesia with his Enes Kanter Light Foundation when he arrived in the Romanian capital of Bucharest. Kanter posted photos of himself with officers in the airport on Saturday, his 25th birthday. In the video, he called Erdogan a "bad, bad man" and a "dictator."



DETROIT: Catcher James McCann #34 of the Detroit Tigers makes the catch on a foul ball hit by Joey Gallo of the Texas Rangers during the seventh inning at Comerica Park. —AFP

TIGERS BEAT RANGERS 9-3 TO END STREAK

DETROIT: Alex Avila, Miguel Cabrera and JD Martinez hit consecutive home runs in the first inning as the Detroit Tigers beat Texas 9-3 on Saturday night, ending the Rangers' 10-game winning streak. Nicholas Castellanos added a three-run homer in the third and Justin Verlander (4-3) pitched seven solid innings for the Tigers. The Rangers were on their longest winning streak since a 12-game run in 2011, but it ended emphatically against Detroit. Cabrera homered in his first at-bat after missing three games with a strained oblique as AJ Griffin (4-1) allowed nine runs and nine hits in 3 1/3 innings. Jonathan Lucroy homered for the Rangers.

INDIANS 3, ASTROS 0

Mike Clevinger pitched no-hit ball into the seventh inning, and Andrew Miller and Cody Allen completed the three-hitter to pitch the Cleveland Indians past the Houston Astros. Clevinger (2-1) yielded two hits and struck out a career-high eight in 7-plus innings, the longest outing of his career. Houston didn't get its first hit until Jose Altuve's sharp grounder down the left-field line for a single with no outs in the seventh inning. Clevinger was lifted after Evan Gattis singled with no outs in the eighth. Miller struck out two in the eighth and Allen allowed one hit in the ninth to convert his 12th save in as many

opportunities and give him 21 straight dating to Aug 18. Lonnie Chisenhall had two hits and homered for the second straight day with a solo shot off Mike Fiers (1-2) in the fourth inning to help the Indians take their second straight from Houston.

METS 7, ANGELS 5

Jose Reyes had three instrumental hits, including the 2,000th of his career, as the New York Mets held off the Los Angeles Angels. New York gave up three runs in a nervous ninth inning before fill-in closer Addison Reed struck out pinch-hitter Danny Espinosa on a full-count fastball with the bases loaded for his sixth save. Terry Collins became the longest-tenured manager in team history, passing Davey Johnson (1984-90) by reaching 1,013 games with the Mets. The oldest skipper in the majors, seven days shy of his 68th birthday, he massaged an unreliable bullpen through four innings after starter Zack Wheeler (3-2) unraveled in the sixth. Angels rookie Alex Meyer (2-2) allowed four runs - three earned - and three hits in four-plus innings.

ORIOLES 7, BLUE JAYS 5

Welington Castillo hit a go-ahead home run for the second consecutive game to lead the Baltimore Orioles past the Toronto Blue

Jays at sold-out Camden Yards. The Orioles improved to 15-3 at home - the best mark in the majors - and can complete a three-game sweep Sunday. Baltimore took over first place in the American League East by a half-game over the New York Yankees, who lost to Tampa Bay earlier Saturday. Jose Bautista had given Toronto a 5-4 lead with a three-run homer off winning pitcher Mychal Givens (5-0) in the seventh. Baltimore responded in the bottom half when Chris Davis and Mark Trumbo hit one-out singles. Castillo followed with the biggest blow when he hit an 0-2 pitch from Danny Barnes (0-2) over the fence in left.

BRAVES 5, NATIONALS 2

Rio Ruiz, Matt Kemp and Tyler Flowers hit home runs as the Atlanta Braves again relied on their bullpen for a victory over Max Scherzer and Washington, the Nationals' fourth straight loss. After Bartolo Colon allowed two runs, one earned, in 4 1/3 innings, five relievers combined for 4 2/3 hitless innings. Ian Krol (1-1) recorded the final two outs in the fifth. Jim Johnson pitched the ninth for his eighth save. Ruiz and Kemp hit homers off Scherzer (4-3). The shot by Ruiz in the second was his first career homer and first hit of the season.

PIRATES 6, PHILLIES 3

Ivan Nova pitched into the eighth inning for his first win in four starts since April 29, leading the Pittsburgh Pirates past the Philadelphia Phillies. Nova (4-3) allowed three runs and nine hits in 7 1/3 innings. The NL Pitcher of the Month in April struck out three and walked none. Francisco Cervelli and Adam Frazier hit two-run singles during a four-run sixth inning that extended the Pirates' lead to 6-1. David Freese's leadoff home run, his fourth, in the fourth inning broke a 1-1 tie.

ATHLETICS 8, RED SOX 3

Chad Pinder hit a monster home run while Khris Davis and Mark Canha also connected in the fifth inning as the Oakland Athletics cleared the fences four times in all to beat the Boston Red Sox for their third straight win. Hanley Ramirez homered for Boston, which has lost three in a row. Jed Lowrie had a solo shot in the sixth for Oakland, which leads the AL with 63 home runs. A's manager Bob Melvin didn't see any of them in person after being ejected in the second inning. While no official records are kept, the A's said Pinder's

deep drive into the plaza reserved section is believed to be just the fourth home run to reach the second-deck seating level since it was built in 1996.

RAYS 9, YANKEES 5

Corey Dickerson homered twice as the Tampa Bay Rays won their season-high fourth in a row, beating the New York Yankees in a game that included three hit batters, three ejections and one animated argument. Yankees rookie Aaron Judge hit his 15th home run, most in the majors. He also doubled and has a career-best eight-game hitting streak. New York manager Joe Girardi used his hands to cover the plate with dirt after being tossed by umpire Scott Barry in the fifth inning. That came right after pitching coach Larry Rothschild was ejected by Barry during a mound visit. Rays starter Matt Andriese hit Matt Holliday after giving up a home run to Gary Sanchez in the fifth. In the bottom half, Yankees reliever Tommy Layne plunked Dickerson, who had hit two home runs off Masahiro Tanaka. Andriese (4-1) hit Judge with a pitch leading off the sixth and was thrown out.

GIANTS 3, CARDINALS 1

Christian Arroyo's two-run double broke a scoreless tie as the San Francisco Giants outlasted the St. Louis Cardinals. Arroyo's double off the wall in left field scored Buster Posey and Brandon Crawford and came on the 12th pitch he saw from Cardinals reliever Kevin Siegrist (0-1). Posey, Crawford and Eduardo Nunez singled to load the bases, giving the Giants their first runners in scoring position in the game. Giants starter Jeff Samardzija threw eight innings, scattering five hits and striking out eight. Hunter Strickland (1-1), Derek Law and Josh Osich pitched in relief for the Giants, who won for the seventh time in eight games. Mark Melancon earned his eighth save.

REDS 12, ROCKIES 8

Scott Schebler's homer completed Cincinnati's comeback from a five-run deficit as the Reds ended a seven-game losing streak - their longest in a year - with a victory over the Colorado Rockies. Colorado rookie Antonio Senzatela was in line for an NL-leading seventh win before the Rockies' bullpen let the big lead slip away. Senzatela had a bases-loaded single during a six-run fifth inning that put the Rockies ahead 8-3. Devin Mesoraco hit a solo homer to start the Reds'

sixth against Chad Qualls, who faced only four batters. Schebler's three-run shot off Mike Dunn (2-1) finished a six-run rally.

WHITE SOX 16, MARINERS 1

Avisail Garcia homered in his first two at-bats and had a career-high six RBIs, and the Chicago White Sox battered Seattle's depleted pitching staff. The White Sox knocked around Seattle starter Yovani Gallardo (2-4) and no one provided more shots than Garcia. He hit a three-run homer in the first inning, added a solo shot in the third and greeted reliever Dillon Overton with a two-run double in the fourth. The four hits were a career high. Garcia wasn't alone in pounding Seattle's pitching staff. Matt Davidson hit a two-run homer, Willy Garcia hit the first home run of his career and the 16 runs were the most scored by the White Sox since April 20, 2014, at Texas when they also scored 16. Mike Pelfrey (1-4) allowed just one run and four hits in six innings.

MARLINS 10, DODGERS 6

Giancarlo Stanton hit three doubles in a game for the first time in his career while Dan Straily didn't allow a hit until the fifth inning as the Miami Marlins snapped a five-game losing streak. JT Riddle had three hits, including a home run, and four RBIs for the Marlins, who had lost 10 of their previous 11 games. The first hit allowed by Straily (2-3) was Kike Hernandez's home run with two outs in the fifth. Straily pitched 5 2/3 innings, allowing three runs on four hits. Corey Seager and Cody Bellinger hit back-to-back homers in the seventh to cut the deficit to 10-6. Bellinger also became the fastest to hit nine home runs (24 games) in Dodgers history.

DIAMONDBACKS 9, PADRES 1

Robbie Ray took a shutout into the eighth inning and David Peralta had four hits as the Arizona Diamondbacks beat the San Diego Padres for their fifth straight win. Ray (3-3) limited the Padres to just two hits and three walks while striking out six in 7 2/3 innings. Tom Wilhelmson struck out Wil Myers with the bases loaded in the eighth, and JJ Hoover allowed the Padres' lone run on an infield single by Allen Cordoba in the ninth. Paul Goldschmidt had a two-run single in the Diamondbacks' five-run first inning as the first four batters got hits against Luis Perdomo (0-1). Jake Lamb had an RBI double and Chris Herrmann added a two-run homer in the inning. —AP

MLB results/standings

Arizona 9, San Diego 1; Chicago White Sox 16, Seattle 1; Miami 10, LA Dodgers 6; Baltimore 7, Toronto 5; NY Mets 7, LA Angels 5; San Francisco 3, St. Louis 1 (13 innings); Detroit 9, Texas 3; Cleveland 3, Houston 0; Cincinnati 12, Colorado 8; Tampa Bay 9, NY Yankees 5; Atlanta 5, Washington 2; Oakland 8, Boston 3; Pittsburgh 6, Philadelphia 3.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division			
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	25	17	.595
Baltimore	25	16	.610	Atlanta	18	22	.450
NY Yankees	24	16	.600	NY Mets	18	23	.439
Tampa Bay	23	22	.511	Philadelphia	15	25	.375
Boston	21	21	.500	Miami	15	27	.357
Toronto	18	26	.409	8.5			
Central Division				Central Division			
Minnesota	21	17	.553	Milwaukee	25	18	.581
Cleveland	22	19	.537	St. Louis	21	19	.525
Detroit	21	20	.512	Chicago Cubs	21	20	.512
Chicago White Sox	19	22	.463	Cincinnati	20	22	.476
Kansas City	17	24	.415	Pittsburgh	19	24	.442
Western Division				Western Division			
Houston	29	14	.674	Colorado	27	17	.614
Texas	23	21	.523	Arizona	26	18	.591
LA Angels	22	23	.489	LA Dodgers	25	19	.568
Oakland	20	23	.465	San Francisco	19	25	.432
Seattle	20	24	.455	San Diego	15	30	.333



LE MANS: France's rider Johann Zarco on his Monster Yamaha TECH 3 MOTOGP N°5 competes ahead Spanish's rider Maverick Vinales on his Movistar Yamaha MOTOGP N°25 and Italy's rider Valentino Rossi on his Movistar Yamaha MOTOGP N°46 during the French motorcycling Grand Prix Race.— AFP

VINALES WINS THRILLING FRENCH MOTOGP, ROSSI FALLS OFF BIKE

LE MANS: Italian veteran Valentino Rossi made a braking error on the last lap and fell off his bike moments later, allowing his Movistar Yamaha teammate Maverick Vinales to win a thrilling French Moto Grand Prix yesterday. The win put Vinales top of the standings, while pre-race championship leader Rossi dropped down to third behind Dani Pedrosa. The 38-year-old Rossi was leading Vinales with the finish line in sight, but the Spaniard sneaked past him with a handful of turns remaining. Rossi then tried a risky move

to overtake Vinales but - with just two turns left - he pushed too hard on the inside and slipped off his bike and span across the track. "Incredible, I gave my best in the last laps," Vinales said. "Le Mans is always a very good track for me." Rossi's mistake allowed French rookie Johann Zarco to finish in second place for a first-ever podium, while Pedrosa took third. "I felt great from the start and really wanted to attack," said Zarco, who rides a Monster Yamaha. "I thought about Yamaha's 500th victory and I thought 'Why not me?' But

it's already special to get on the podium." The distraught Rossi picked his bike back up and slumped over the handlebars as he contemplated the wasted points - especially considering defending champion Marc Marquez of Spain had earlier crashed. After five races, Vinales has 85 points, Pedrosa has 68, Rossi 62 and Marquez 58. The next race is the Italian MotoGP in Mugello in two weeks' time. The 22-year-old Vinales took pole position ahead of Rossi and Zarco. But Zarco made a flying start on the softer tire and

held the lead for several laps until Vinales overtook him. Rossi was in third place with Marquez chasing behind him. With 11 laps to go, Marquez crashed after turning on the inside of his bike. Marquez, who had already come off his Honda during qualifying, appeared unharmed and got straight back up. Up ahead, Zarco continued to pressure Vinales, while Rossi was picking up pace. Rossi used all his experience to pull up to Zarco and pass him with six laps left. Boosted by a lap record time on the 4.2-kilo-

meter (2.6-mile) Le Mans circuit, the seven-time MotoGP champion then went after Vinales. With three laps remaining, he surged past on the inside and then held him off brilliantly on the next corner. Victory looked certain. But Rossi, who won his last title in 2009, then lost concentration with a poor braking move. "I saw Valentino make a mistake and I took my chance," Vinales said. Rather than accept second place, Rossi's pride kicked in and he preferred to take a risk - ending up with nothing. —AP



BALTIMORE: Cloud Computing #2 ridden by Javier Castellano (L) beats Classic Empire #5 ridden by Julien Lejaroux to win the 142nd running of the Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Race Course.—AFP

FAREWELL TRIPLE CROWN: ALWAYS DREAMING FADES IN PREAKNESS

BALTIMORE: For Always Dreaming, the first half of the Preakness went exactly as planned. Locked in a battle with Classic Empire, the Kentucky Derby winner reached the midpoint of Saturday's race with a narrow lead. And then, quite unexpectedly, Always Dreaming simply ran out of energy. As the weary dark bay colt faded into the middle of the pack, so did his chances of capturing the Triple Crown. Jockey John Velazquez knew he was in trouble as the horses turned for home in the 1 3/16-mile race.

"You could see he just got beat," Velazquez said. "I didn't have it. That's it. Not much to say." Running a mere two weeks after romping to victory at Churchill Downs, Always Dreaming hit the stretch in sixth place and huffed and puffed to the finish line in eighth. "We were in a position we expected to be," trainer Todd Pletcher said. "I think he just turned around and was a little too quick. He ran so hard in the Derby, and today just wasn't his day." Almost immediately after the Derby, Pletcher spoke about how impressively his horse rebounded from the difficult race. He maintained that tune each day, and even joked about how rambunctious Always Dreaming was during a spirited workout at Pimlico. Then, on the day before the race, Pletcher declared: "The way he's moving, the way he's acting, the way he's getting over the track, we feel really blessed that he's coming into the race this way."

QUICK TURNAROUND
Turns out, Always Dreaming really

wasn't ready for such a quick turnaround. "He didn't seem to relish the track, but I don't really think that was it," Pletcher said. "Just put too much into the Derby. It wasn't meant to be today." The loss left Pletcher 0 for 9 at the Preakness. The winner of the race, Cloud Computing, skipped the Kentucky Derby. He was far fresher than Always Dreaming, and trainer Chad Brown acknowledged that was one big reason for the upset victory.

"Certainly, I'm not going to dispute the fact that I brought in a fresh horse as part of our strategy," Brown said. "Classic Empire and Always Dreaming are two outstanding horses; our strategy was, if we are ever going to beat them, let's take them on two weeks rest when we have six. And it worked." Classic Empire ran a solid race, hanging with the front-running Always Dreaming before taking the lead in the stretch. But when Cloud Computing made a charge, Classic Empire had nothing left to give. "He probably went pretty ambitiously at us and maybe cost himself the race," Pletcher said. "But we didn't have an excuse."

Always Dreaming won his previous four races and was unbeaten before this surprising loss. The Belmont is coming up next month, and to put the horse through that lengthy race so soon might be a lot to ask. "I don't like to make any decisions immediately after the race," Pletcher said. "You've got to let the dust settle a little bit and not let your emotions get involved. We'll see. Initially it looks like he came back well. We'll savor the Derby victory." — AP

BOWYER, BLANEY, SUAREZ ROUND OUT ALL-STAR FIELD

CONCORD: Daniel Suarez is thrilled to be competing in the NASCAR All-Star race after struggling in his rookie season. The 25-year-old Mexican driver raced his way into the \$1 million race Saturday night along with Ryan Blaney and Clint Bowyer by winning stages of the qualifying race at Charlotte Motor Speedway. They'll be joined in the 20-car field by Chase Elliott, the winner of a fan vote.

"Now we go with the big guys, so it's going to be fun," Suarez said. "I felt like we learned quite a bit in the first 50 laps. Definitely we have to make some adjustments to be strong, but the race track is going to change a lot (at night). We'll see, let's see what we got." The final 10-lap segment was the most competitive and provided the most drama. With Suarez and Elliott battling for the lead, Erik Jones came from behind and tried to pass low with

three laps to go but ran out of room. He ended up in the grass, drawing damage to the bottom of his car causing his engine to erupt in smoke. "I got a good run and tried to go to the top and there wasn't any room on the top so I went to the bottom and couldn't really see behind the 24 (Elliott) where the grass began," Jones said. "So I just hoped there was enough pavement down there to make a move and get clear, but unfortunately there wasn't and that was the end of our day." Suarez got the lead on the restart and pulled away for the victory. Bowyer started the qualifying race from the pole and dominated the first stage by leading all 20 laps and winning by 3.6 seconds to reach his eighth All-Star race. Blaney duplicated the feat in stage two, leading all 20 laps to punch his ticket to the \$1 million exhibition race. Bowyer was glad to put the qualifying race behind him.—AP

ABERG'S GOAL PUTS PREDATORS PAST DUCKS 3-1 IN GAME 5

ANAHEIM: Pontus Aberg spent most of the season in the minors and had a part-time depth role for the Nashville Predators in these Stanley Cup playoffs until injuries thrust him into a key role in Game 5 of the Western Conference finals. And now the unassuming Swede has another new role for Nashville: He's the hero of the latest clutch victory in the Predators' increasingly irresistible Stanley Cup push.

Aberg scored his first career playoff goal with 8:59 to play as the Predators moved to the brink of their first Stanley Cup Final with a 3-1 victory over the Anaheim Ducks to take a 3-2 series lead Saturday night. Aberg had to send himself flying across the crease to swat home a rebound of Filip Forsberg's shot for the Predators, epitomizing Nashville's persistent effort through a defensive victory.

A moment before he scored the biggest goal of his life, Aberg was upended during a scramble. He had to be taken off the ice for medical evaluation immediately after his celebration but his teammates hung on to move one win away from playing for hockey's ultimate prize. "I face-planted there and lost my tooth, but it didn't hurt my head," Aberg said with a smile. Not much seems to wound these resilient Predators, who overcame the injury absence of top scorer Ryan Johansen and captain Mike Fisher. Nashville leaned heavily on stalwart goalie Pekka Rinne and got barely enough offense to survive, with Colin Wilson scoring the tying goal late in the second period and Austin Watson adding an empty-netter.

SMOOTH SAILING

"We knew coming into tonight that we've just got to come together, play well defensively and grind it out," Rinne said. "I thought that's what we did. We showed a lot of character. For us, the first couple of rounds was fairly smooth sailing. Things were going our way. You deal with adversity, but right now, it's something that every team is going to face, and I feel like we handled it really well." Game 6 is Monday night in Nashville. Aberg, who also has one career NHL regular-season goal, was only in position to win it because the Predators were on a counterattack after a prolonged scramble in front of Nashville's net. Rinne, who made 32 saves, ended that frantic sequence prone in the starfish pose, frustrating the Ducks for the umpteenth time and earning his fifth victory in Nashville's seven playoff games at Honda Center over the past two seasons. Chris Wagner scored the only goal on a frustrating day for the Ducks, who began the game without injured 30-goal scorers Rickard Rakell and Patrick Eaves before losing starting goalie John Gibson to a lower-body injury during the first intermission. Anaheim's collection of veteran stars and up-and-coming talent will have to win back-to-back elimination games to avoid crashing out in the conference finals for the second time in three years.

DOOM AND GLOOM

"I thought we had energy coming out, and it deteriorated throughout the game," captain Ryan Getzlaf said. "We've got to do a better job maintaining what we want to do with our game plan, because they played hard tonight." Jonathan Bernier took over for Gibson and stopped 16 shots in his first appearance in nearly two weeks for the Ducks, calling it a "weird situation." Ducks coach Randy Carlyle said Gibson wants to play in Game 6, but will be re-evaluated. "We have a lot of areas of concern over our performance tonight," Carlyle said. "We're not going to hang our head with doom and gloom. We'll get ourselves ready. We'll re-energize our group, and we'll look forward to playing a better game. We've won in that building before, so it doesn't really matter where we go." The Predators still haven't lost back-to-back games at any point in what's looking like a charmed playoff run for an 18-season-old franchise that's finally one game from playing for the Stanley Cup.

Aberg and several other role players all came up big in the Predators' first game of the season without Johansen, their top-line center and



ANAHEIM: Pontus Aberg #46 of the Nashville Predators reacts from the ice after scoring a goal in the third period of Game Five of the Western Conference Final during the 2017 Stanley Cup Playoffs at Honda Center.— AFP

leading postseason scorer. Johansen had emergency surgery shortly after Game 4 and was ruled out for the rest of the playoffs. Fisher missed his first game of his scoreless postseason with an undisclosed injury after taking a hit to

the head in Game 4. The Ducks also were hurting without Rakell, a surprise omission due to a lower-body injury, and Eaves, who missed his ninth straight game. The duo combined for 65 regular-season goals. — AP

PHELPS: HE HAS NO PLANS TO RETURN TO COMPETITION

CHICAGO: Michael Phelps pumped his right fist upon completing the final leg for the winning relay team ahead of Australian great Grant Hackett on Saturday. It was another golden moment for the winningest Olympic athlete in history, though don't expect to see him competing on the world's biggest stage again. Phelps all but slammed the door on another return after leaving it ever-so slightly ajar in an interview with the Associated Press last month.

"I'm happy," he said. "I think four years ago, I wasn't. I think being able to come back and being able to finish how I did and being able to get back to where I wanted to get to - for me, at this point in my life and in my career, that's all I can ask for. Right?" he said. "I wanted to have a chance to kind of shut out the 'what if' 20 years down the road. Now, I think 20 years down the road I think I'll be able to look back and say I'm really happy that I took that opportunity to come back and swim in one more (Olympics)."

Phelps was considering a comeback when he attended the 2013 world championships in Barcelona. By the time it ended, there was no doubt in his mind he would be competing in his fifth Olympics. In Rio de Janeiro last summer, he got the closure he needed. And if that's it for him, he sure went out in style. At age 31, Phelps captured five more gold medals, bringing his total to 23, along with a silver. He swam the second leg in the 4x100-meter freestyle relay in his final race and put the United States out front for good against a powerful field that included defending champion France, Australia and Russia. The stakes weren't quite as high on Saturday.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Phelps was in Chicago to announce a partnership between his foundation and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission to promote safety in the pool. Phelps and fellow

Olympians Allison Schmitt and Hackett gave members of the Special Olympics Chicago Aquatics team and children from the Boys & Girls Club of Chicago swimming lessons, and the three also swam final legs of a relay race with the Special Olympians.

He also addressed the participants and fielded questions from them before signing autographs and taking a big group selfie. Retirement, he insisted, is suiting him just fine. "I'm retiring because it's time to move on," Phelps said. "I spent most of my life in the swimming pool. ... I have some other goals that I want to accomplish outside of the pool. It's not the end of my swimming career, it's the start of something else. I'll always be around the pool. I'll always be around the sport. I'm ready to move on. Sometimes, it just happens."

He's enjoying spending more time with his wife Nicole and their 1-year-old son Boomer. He has a new sponsorship deal with Colgate in which he's promoting water conservation and he travels frequently for his various business interests and causes. "I have no desire to swim 14,000 to 15,000 yards in a day," Phelps said, referring to his training regimen. "That just doesn't sound fun to me. I went to swim meets and I was just like, 'I'm really happy I'm watching and not competing.'"

Phelps said he swam 300 yards on Friday. It was his first time in the pool in about a month. Compare that to a training regimen of swimming about 40 to 60 miles a week. "For 15 years, that's a long time," he said. "I want to have my body when Boomer's 10. I'd like to be able to have shoulders that work; they're not all banged up from all the training. It's just time for me to move on and spend more time with the family - but also be able to work more directly with the foundation. Working more with mental health. Being able to do all these things that I'm so passionate about, that can change or help somebody's life." — AP

HAHN LEADS BYRON NELSON BY ONE AS DAY CHARGES

DALLAS: James Hahn fired his second bogey-free 64 of the week on Saturday while Australia's Jason Day charged into contention entering the final round of the US PGA Byron Nelson tournament. World number three Day blasted a seven-under par 63 in the third round at the TPC Las Colinas course just outside Dallas, but was two strokes off the pace as Hahn grabbed the lead on 12-under 198.

"I played well out there. Overall it was a

good day," said Hahn, the 18-hole co-leader. "It is really close. One putt here or there. You need good breaks to happen to keep the momentum going and I did that today." Fellow American Billy Horschel was second on 199 after a 66 that included birdies on his last three holes. Hahn said he won't worry while sleeping on the lead, even though there were a dozen players within five strokes.

"Tell me what my tee time is tomorrow

and I'll just show up," he said. "There's a lot on the line but I feel like when I'm on the golf course there's a different animal that comes out and I get very competitive." Day had eight birdies to move into a share of third with second-round leader Jason Kokrak, who shot 72. American Cameron Tringale was fifth at 201 after a 67.

Day made an incredible 60-foot birdie putt on the par-3 17th to move into a share of the lead at one stage. Reigning

Masters champion Sergio Garcia of Spain fired a 64 to finish on 202 and share sixth with former Byron Nelson champion Jason Dufner (65) and Bud Cauley (68). Defending champion Garcia shot 29 on the back nine Saturday, the same score he posted on the front nine in the opening round when he won in 2016.

Americans Scott Brown (65), Scott Piercy (66), Grayson Murray (68), Chad Campbell (68) and South Korea's An

Byeong-Hun (69) were on 203. World number one Dustin Johnson shared 19th after carding a one-over 71 Saturday, snapping a streak of 14 consecutive par-or-better rounds at the Byron Nelson for Johnson, who is seven shots behind Hahn. "Mentally and physically I'm fine," Johnson said. "I'm not as sharp as I was, obviously, before the Masters and it's going to take a little time to get back in that kind of rhythm but I'm seeing good signs." —AFP

INT'L FOOTBALL RETURNS TO IRAQ

BAGHDAD: After a years-long absence predominantly due to security concerns, international football will return to Iraq when the country hosts a second-round match of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Cup. Defending Cup champions Air Force Club and Al-Zawraa-both Iraqi teams-will face off at Franso Hariri Stadium in the autonomous Kurdish region's capital Arbil on Monday night for the first international match to be held in the country since 2013.

"I think this is an opportunity for us as fans and athletes to prove to the world that we deserve to hold matches on our soil," Al-Zawraa coach Essam Hamad told journalists in Arbil. Basim Qasim, the Air Force Club's coach, also called for "completely lifting the ban on Iraqi football". Iraqis' passion for football cuts across the deep religious and political divisions that have fuelled horrific violence in the country for years, and the country's national teams have brought people together amid some of the worst of the unrest.

PERIODIC BANS

But world football's governing body FIFA and the AFC have periodically banned Iraq from hosting international matches, most recently in 2013 after a coach was killed by security forces. Violence was rising, part of a multi-year crescendo of bloodshed that culminated in the Islamic State group's takeover of large areas north and west of Baghdad the following summer. Among the targets of frequent jihadist attacks in 2013 were football pitches where Iraqi children played the sport and cafes broadcasting matches. FIFA, which had just lifted a ban on Iraq hosting international friendlies a few months before, reimposed

it and left it in place for nearly four years. But FIFA again lifted the ban on international friendlies in Iraq earlier this month, while the AFC agreed to allow Iraq to host the match between Air Force and Al-Zawraa.

THREE-MONTH TRIAL

Iraq will now go through a three-month trial period to see if it can host and organise matches according to international standards. Security has not been the only problem for Iraqi football: issues such as inadequate electricity and fans going onto the football pitch have also been sources of concern. Over the past two years, Iraqi forces have made major gains against jihadists, retaking three of the country's four cities that IS had seized.

Arbil has largely been spared the violence that has ravaged other parts of the country, but getting fans of the two Baghdad-based clubs to Arbil does pose a potential challenge. Iraq's Kurdish region subjects citizens from other areas-most of them members of the country's Arab majority-to strict security screening that many of them consider discriminatory.

Iraq's Ministry of Youth and Sports announced that it would cover travel expenses for 1,000 fans from each of the two clubs, which have hired buses to transport supporters to see the match. "Staging the two matches between Al-Zawraa and Air Force in Iraqi stadiums will be important in proving Iraq's capability to organise and host international matches with efficiency and safety," said Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al-Khalifa, the head of the AFC. "We are sure that this step will have a positive impact on the future of the game in the country." —AFP

SVITOLINA SURGES TO NO 1 IN RACE WITH ITALIAN OPEN TITLE

ROME: Elina Svitolina surged to No 1 in the season-long rankings race by winning the Italian Open on Sunday with a 4-6, 7-5, 6-1 victory over Simona Halep. It was a tour-best fourth title this year for Svitolina and the most prestigious trophy of her career so far. The 22-year-old Ukrainian also leads the tour with 31 match wins this season, putting her among the favorites for the French Open, which starts next Sunday.

"Every day I'm just trying to work on my mental part, my physical, my tennis," Svitolina said. "Everything just came together and I'm very happy that it's happened in such a big tournament." The fourth-ranked Halep was in full control and serving for the first set at 5-2 when she rolled her right ankle while sliding over what appeared to be a small hole in the Foro Italico stadium court. While Halep was able to eventually win the opening set, she required treatment to her ankle from a trainer twice and was late getting to shots as the match wore on.

"Sorry guys for third set," Halep told the crowd. "It was a little tough for me to get through but Elina played great." Halep was playing in her second clay-court final in two weeks after winning the title in Madrid last Sunday. Svitolina also required medical treatment from a trainer midway through the second set, for an apparent problem with her left leg.

"Hopefully we'll recover, me and Simona, because we're struggling a bit physically," Svitolina said. During the post-match presentation, Svitolina dropped the cover of the silver trophy on to the red clay court, prompting her to say, "Oops." The first two sets featured long, nervous baseline rallies in which both players waited for their opponent to commit errors. "It was very tough first two sets and I'm really happy that it's all finished," Svitolina said. In the men's final, four-time champion Novak Djokovic was facing 20-year-old Alexander Zverev. —AFP



ROME: Elina Svitolina of Ukraine kisses the trophy after winning the WTA Tennis Open final against Simona Halep of Romania, on May 21, 2017 at the Foro Italico. —AFP

RUGBYU: CRUSADERS REMAIN UNBEATEN KIWIS DOMINATE

SYDNEY: The Canterbury Crusaders vanquished another title rival this weekend as New Zealand teams tightened their grip on Super Rugby ahead of next month's British and Irish Lions tour. The seven-time champion Crusaders extended their unconquered run to 12 games with a 31-24 win over the Waikato Chiefs in Suva to stretch their lead to 11 points in the powerful New Zealand conference.

Four of the five Kiwi outfits are currently in the eight-team play-off positions, underlining New Zealand's supremacy in this season's southern hemisphere club competition. Defending champions Wellington Hurricanes lashed the hapless South African Central Cheetahs in a club record 61-7 at home to join the Chiefs in second spot in the Kiwi conference. Meanwhile in Perth, the Otago Highlanders swamped the

threatened Western Force 55-6 in their biggest win in Super Rugby and also racked up the most points they have scored outside of New Zealand.

The Golden Lions loom as the only threat to a Kiwi team capturing this season's title with their 11th win of the season in a 51-14 drubbing of the Northern Bulls in the South African derby in Johannesburg. The Crusaders only scored three tries to four against the Chiefs but fly-half Richie Mo'unga's two conversions and four penalties gave them the win, a week after they knocked over the Hurricanes.

"The whole year we've had the balance right between forwards and backs," skipper Sam Whitehead said. "Either unit can step up when they need to, that's awesome as a captain." —AFP



ROME: Alexander Zverev of Germany (R) poses with the trophy after winning the ATP Tennis Open final against Novak Djokovic (L) of Serbia on May 21, 2017, at the Foro Italico. —AFP photos

DJOKOVIC NAMES AGASSI AS NEW COACH AT FRENCH OPEN

ROME: Novak Djokovic revealed yesterday that American great Andre Agassi would be his new coach, but said they did not yet have a "long-term commitment". "I spoke to Andre the last couple weeks on the phone, and we decided to get together in Paris. So he's gonna be there. We'll see what future brings. We are both excited to work together and see where it takes us," said Djokovic, beaten 6-4, 6-3 in the Rome Masters final yesterday by 20-year-old German Alexander Zverev. "We don't have any long-term commitment. It's just us trying to get to know each other in Paris a little bit."

Djokovic returns to Paris next weekend as the defending French Open champion but looking to improve his clay court game after an inconsistent spell. He parted with long-time coach Marian Vajda earlier this month, having also ended a three-year relationship with six-time Grand Slam champion Boris Becker at the end of last season, in a bid to get back to his brilliant best. Given his performances of late, he will be hoping 47-year-old Agassi, an eight-time Grand Slam champion, can make a positive contribution.

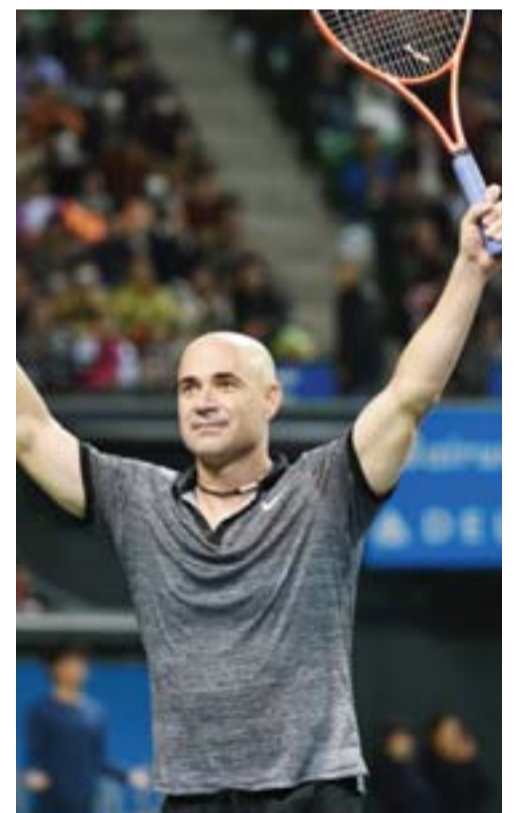
The Serbian was outplayed by Spanish nemesis Rafael Nadal on his way to defeat in the semi-finals of the Madrid Masters last week. And despite reaching the final in Rome on Sunday, Djokovic looked well below his clinical best before losing to German starlet Zverev in 1hr 21min. Next up is his defense of his title in the French capital, and Djokovic added: "He (Agassi) will not stay the whole tournament. He's gonna stay only to a certain time, and then we'll see after that what's gonna happen."

HUMBLE MAN

"Obviously, Andre is someone that I have tremendous respect for as a person and as a player. He has been through everything that I'm going through. "You know, on the court he understands the game amazingly well. I am enjoying every conversation that I have with him. But also, on the other hand, he's someone that nurtures the family values, philanthropy work. "He's a very humble man, is very educated in just-you know, he's a person that can contribute to my life on and off the court a lot. I'm very excited to see what is ahead of us."

Agassi, unlike television pundit Becker, has been away from the sport for a considerable time having retired in 2006. Djokovic said he managed to seduce Agassi, the 1999 French Open champion, smiling: "I persuaded him." He added: "He's someone that has been so successful in this sport, and he's a legend of our sport. He's made a mark in this sport forever. He's won everything there is to win in tennis."

"You know, he was a revolutionary player because he had this charisma, he had this, you know, approach to tennis and to life that was quite different from others. "That's why he was so interesting. Yes, he has been away from the tour for last 10, 15 years, but speaking with him, he's been definitely following up closely all the matches, the big matches, especially on the TV." "It was his call whether or not he wants to take that step and, you know, try to work with me. He has accepted it, and I'm very grateful for that. It's exciting, of course. I'm very happy about it." —AFP



TOKYO: This file photo taken on November 22, 2014 shows US tennis legend Andre Agassi reacts during an exhibition match with Japanese tennis player Kei Nishikori.

JUNGELS BREAKS GIRO DUCK AS DUMOULIN STAYS IN PINK

BERGAMO: Luxembourg's Bob Jungels claimed the first sprint win of his career on the 15th stage of the Giro d'Italia yesterday as race leader Tom Dumoulin retained the pink jersey. Jungels, who wore the pink jersey earlier in the 100th edition of the race, finished the 199 km ride from Valdenago to Bergamo just ahead of Colombia's race favourite Nairo Quintana after finding himself in the rare position of a bunch sprint. With a host of fellow all-rounders and climbers for company, the Quick Step all-rounder took his chance 100 meters before the finish to claim his maiden win on the three-week Italian race.

"This is my first sprint victory. To do it at the Giro in front of these guys is wonderful. It's not easy to realise but I'm super happy with this victory," said Jungels, who finished sixth overall on his debut last year. "I knew I had good legs today as I felt good in the climbs. I tried my luck in the final climb but it was a bit longer than I expected. "In the downhill I was in a perfect position, on the wheel of (Domenico) Pozzovivo for sprinting." Sunweb team leader Dumoulin and the chasing peloton crossed the line six seconds later to allow the big Dutchman to maintain an overall lead of 2min 41sec on Movistar rival Quintana before the race's third and final rest day Monday. Dumoulin has been in the race lead since crushing the field to win the 10th stage time trial last Tuesday in Montefalco, a win that pushed Quintana into second overall at nearly three minutes behind.

Before the crucial third week takes the peloton into the high mountains, where Quintana is

expected to come into his own, the Colombian climbing specialist has been trying to chip away at his lead. A day after countering Quintana when he attacked on the climb to Oropa, where the Dutchman won his second stage of this edition to tighten his grip on the pink jersey, his Sunweb team were on tenterhooks all day.

"It was a hard day at a very high average speed. There were a lot of breakaways but always some teams weren't happy with it," said Dumoulin. "Eventually after 110km, a group

went. Then it was a very hard finale with a lot of favorites attacking. But we stayed calm and it was a good day for us." The race resumes Tuesday with a 222km 16th stage from Rovetta to Bormio which features two ascents of the Stelvio climb. After climbing 1854 meters to crest the Mortirolo, the peloton tackles the Stelvio from the Italian alps side to crest at 2758 meters, and then climb back up the Swiss side of the mountain for the first time before a long descent into Bormio. —AFP



BERGAMO: Luxembourg's Bob Jungels sprints during the 15th stage of the 100th Giro d'Italia, Tour of Italy, cycling race from Valdenago to Bergamo. —AFP

INVINCIBLE CELTIC: UNBEATEN SEASON

GLASGOW: Celtic became the first Scottish Premiership club to go unbeaten through a 38-game season when they defeated Hearts 2-0 yesterday to win the league by a mammoth 30 points. Second-half goals by Leigh Griffiths and Stuart Armstrong ensured they didn't slip up on the last day, as Celtic ended up with a record of played 38, won 34 and drew four. The unbeaten feat was last achieved in Scotland by arch-rivals Rangers in 1898-99, over an 18-game season, and Celtic join the likes of Arsenal (2003-04) and Juventus (2011-12) in being "invincible" during a domestic campaign.

Celtic plundered 106 goals and

under former Liverpool boss Brendan Rodgers can seal a domestic treble—their first since 2001 — next Saturday if they beat Aberdeen in the Scottish Cup final. Celtic, who were presented with the Premiership trophy for the sixth time in a row, set a new points record of 106 — their nearest "challengers" were Aberdeen, way back on 76. "It is a monumental achievement by the players. They have inscribed their names into the history of this incredible club now," said Rodgers. "We had to work hard and to beat the goals record and the wins record means it's a truly fantastic day."

Before the match an emotional trib-

ute was paid to Celtic's 1967 European Cup winning side affectionately known as the Lisbon Lions—and by kick-off the noise reverberating around Celtic Park was deafening. Celtic started brightly, Griffiths curling a free-kick into the side netting before a fierce effort from Kieran Tierney dipped just over the bar. However, it was Hearts who came closest to an opener midway through the half.

Jozo Simunovic's foul handed the visitors a free-kick on the edge of the box, which was rolled into the path of Alexandros Tziolis and his angled strike flew narrowly over. A Callum McGregor long-range strike drew a save from

Viktor Noring before the Hearts 'keeper made a superb stop to keep Dedryck Boyata's point-blank effort out after the defender connected with a Griffiths corner. Celtic had scored in every domestic fixture under Rodgers so it seemed inevitable they would eventually break Hearts' resolve.

The breakthrough came five minutes after the break. On-loan Manchester City star Patrick Roberts, unstoppable on the right wing, drifted past a couple of Hearts defenders before lofting a cross into the box, where Scottish striker Griffiths applied the finishing touch as he sent a downward header bouncing into the net.

The pair combined again moments later with Griffiths this time taking a pass from the English winger on the chest before firing into the side netting. Celtic set a new goal-scoring record in the 75th minute as Armstrong doubled their advantage. Griffiths' cross was cut out by the Hearts defence but it only went as far as Armstrong, who lifted his shot high into the net to put more gloss on a record-breaking season. On Saturday, Inverness Caledonian Thistle were relegated to the Championship despite their 3-2 win over Motherwell after Hamilton's 4-0 win over Dundee ensured they will face Dundee United in the play-off final. —AFP

CHAMPS MONACO SIGN OFF WITH RENNES WIN

PARIS: Monaco capped their French title-winning season with a record 12th consecutive victory after beating Rennes 3-2 on Saturday, while Bastia and Nancy were both relegated from Ligue 1. Fabinho tucked home a rebound to give Monaco a first-half lead at Roazhon Park, and defender Jemerson added a second from a corner shortly after the interval.

Brazilian full-back Jorge then netted his first Monaco goal in between a brace from Adama Diakhaby as Leonardo Jardim's side surpassed Bordeaux's single-season mark of 11 straight wins set during the 2008-09 campaign. Monaco finished the season on 95 points, just one shy of the French record set by Paris Saint-Germain a year ago.

Ronny Rodelin atoned for missing a second-half penalty against PSG by grabbing a stoppage-time equalizer in a 1-1 draw at the Parc des Princes to ensure Caen retained their top-flight status. Adrien Rabiot scored a 13th-minute opener and the visitors had looked to be heading towards a relegation play-off after Kevin Trapp kept out Rodelin's spot-kick. Alexandre Lacazette hit his 100th Ligue 1 goal in his final appearance for Lyon with a brace in a 3-3 home draw against Nice.

The France striker, who is leaving his boyhood club this summer with Atletico Madrid touted as a possible destination, netted twice in the second half to finish with a career-best 28 league goals. He was removed to a standing ovation before the finish, but Nice levelled at the death when Jean-Michael Seri converted a penalty deep into injury time at Parc OL. Bafetimbi Gomis headed Marseille to a 1-0 win over Bastia to secure a return to the Europa League for Rudi Garcia's men, while defeat

condemned Bastia to the drop.

'GOAL OF MY LIFE'

Nicolas de Preville struck a hat-trick as Lille romped to a 3-0 victory over Nantes, while Dijon were grateful to a missed penalty from Martin Braithwaite as a 0-0 draw at Toulouse handed them the point needed to remain in Ligue 1. Lorient will face Troyes, who finished third in the second division, in a two-legged play-off with their place in the top flight at stake following a 1-1 draw with Bordeaux. Nancy dealt Saint-Etienne a 3-1 loss in Christophe Galtier's final game in charge of Les Verts, but the result was not enough to spare them from joining Bastia in Ligue 2 next season.

Strasbourg, who were demoted to the fifth tier after entering liquidation in 2011, returned to the top flight on Friday after sealing the second-division title with a 2-1 victory over Bourg en Bresse. Amiens will play in Ligue 1 for the first time in the club's 116-year history after Emmanuel Bourgaud's 96th-minute winner at Reims bumped them up from sixth place to second.

"I see the ball coming, I shoot and it goes in. It's crazy, it's the goal of my career, the goal of my life," said man of the moment Bourgaud after his last-gasp heroics. "We pushed and we pushed hoping for something like that to happen. This goal is extraordinary, it propels us into Ligue 1!" beamed Amiens coach Christophe Pelissier. Third-place Troyes recovered from two goals down to beat Sochaux 3-2 but Bourgaud's goal with the final kick against Reims means they will face a play-off against Lorient. —AFP



TURIN: Juventus players celebrate winning an unprecedented sixth consecutive Italian title, at the end of the Serie A soccer match between Juventus and Crotona at the Juventus stadium. —AP

JUVENTUS CLINCHES RECORD 6TH STRAIGHT SERIE A TITLE

ROME: Juventus clinched a record sixth straight Serie A title with a 3-0 win over relegation-threatened Crotona in the penultimate round yesterday. Mario Mandzukic gave Juventus the lead 12 minutes in by redirecting a cross from Juan Cuadrado, Paulo Dybala scored with a precise free kick shortly before the break and Alex Sandro added another with a header near the end.

Juventus moved four points clear of second-placed Roma, which last Sunday handed the Bianconeri their first Serie A loss since January. Since Serie A was founded in 1929, no club had previously won more than five straight titles. Torino won five consecutive titles from 1943-49 (including a season that was canceled due to World War II), Inter Milan took five straight from 2006-10 and Juventus claimed a handful from 1931-35.

"We've written one of the greatest pages in the book of football history," said Juventus captain Gianluigi Buffon, who also won the 2002 and 2003 Serie A titles with Juventus. "Winning is never easy," Buffon added. "Beyond what people say, staying at the top is synonymous with sacrifice on everyone's part. ... If you want to always win matches, you've got to always have your head in focus and your legs prepared." It's the second title in five days for Juventus after a 2-0 win over Lazio in the Italian Cup final on Wednesday.

The Bianconeri has a chance to complete the treble with a victory over Real Madrid and Cristiano Ronaldo in the Champions League final on June 3. Juventus also added to its record number of Serie A titles, with its 33rd. Players dumped shaving cream over the head of manager Massimiliano Allegri at the final whistle, then put on celebratory T-shirts with a '6' on them.

RELEGATION BATTLE

Crotona remained third from the bottom, one point behind Empoli in the battle to avoid being the final club relegated. Empoli was beaten 1-0 at home by Atalanta, which got an early goal from Alejandro "Papu" Gomez. Genoa removed itself from the relegation chances with a 2-1 win over Torino, getting goals from Luca Rigoni and Giovanni Simeone - the son of Atletico Madrid manager Diego Simeone - before Adem Ljajic pulled one back for Torino. In the final round, Crotona hosts fourth-placed Lazio and Empoli visits already relegated Palermo. Last-placed Pescara, which has also already been relegated, hosts Palermo on Monday to conclude the penultimate round.

AC MILAN RETURNS TO EUROPE

AC Milan ended a run of three seasons without European play by beating Bologna 3-0 to secure sixth place and a spot in the Europa League playoffs. Gerard Deulofeu scored with a volley in the 69th, Keisuke Honda added a free kick four minutes later and Gianluca Lapadula redirected a cross from Mati Fernandez in added time. In other results, Sassuolo routed Cagliari 6-2 with goals from Francesco Magnanelli, Domenico Berardi, Matteo Politano, Stefano Sensi, Pietro Lemmello (penalty) and Alessandro Matri. Also, Udinese drew 1-1 with Sampdoria. —AP

TORRES SCORES AS ATLETICO WAVES CALDERON FAREWELL

MADRID: Fernando Torres was the fitting match winner as Atletico Madrid waved goodbye to their Vicente Calderon stadium by beating Athletic Bilbao 3-1 yesterday. Atletico were playing their final competitive match at their home for the past 50 years before moving to the new 67,000 capacity Wanda Metropolitano stadium on the other side of Madrid next season.

And fans' favourite Torres ensured Atletico got three points to go along with a carnival atmosphere with a double inside the opening 11 minutes. Torres, 33, volleyed home Antoine Griezmann's cushioned header to open the scoring before kissing the Atletico badge. Three minutes later Griezmann was again involved as this time his pass was headed into Torres' path by Koke for an acrobatic finish.

Torres, who is in his second spell at the club having broken into the first team as a teenager back in 2001, could yet leave Atletico this summer with his contract set to expire in June. And he was denied potentially the perfect send-off when a spectacular goal-line clearance from Aymeric Laporte prevented Torres from completing his hat-trick. Torres was replaced moments later to a standing ovation before the visitors threatened to spoil the party when Inaki Williams rounded off a fine team move 20 minutes from time.

However, Angel Correa added a third for Atletico a minute from time. Atletico had already secured third place in La Liga for a third straight season, but defeat in what is expected to be coach Ernesto Valverde's final game before taking over at

Barcelona next season means Bilbao miss out on qualifying for the Europa League. Real Sociedad leapfrogged their Basque rivals into sixth thanks to Juanmi's 93rd minute equalizer in a 2-2 draw at Celta Vigo. Villarreal sealed fifth place with a 3-1 win at Valencia.

SEVILLA SIGN-OFF WITH FIVE-GOAL FLOURISH

Vitolo and Franco Vazquez each scored twice as Sevilla ended their season with a 5-0 thrashing of Osasuna in what is expected to be Jorge Sampaoli's last game in charge. Sampaoli has publicly recognised his desire to take the vacant role as Argentina boss to aid the two-time world champion's faltering World Cup qualification campaign. "There's a clear intention from my country to have me as coach and, since I was young, it's something that has appealed to me," Sampaoli said on Friday.

Despite a disappointing dip in form in recent months, Sevilla have overall had a successful season in finishing fourth under Sampaoli and gave their campaign a final flourish by sweeping aside already relegated Osasuna. Vitolo tapped home the opener after just 10 minutes when Salvatore Sirigu could only parry Joaquin Correa's shot. Vazquez then slotted home his first from Sergio Escudero's cross before Steven Jovetic rifled in a third before half-time. Mariano's teasing cross was blasted home by Vazquez on the hour mark and Vitolo rounded off the scoring with the sort of fine solo run and finish that has seen him become a transfer target for Atletico Madrid. — Agencies



MADRID: Atletico de Madrid's forward Fernando Torres (L) scores his second goal during the Spanish league football match Club Atletico de Madrid vs Athletic Club Bilbao at the Vicente Calderon stadium. —AFP

KANE SEALS GOLDEN BOOT WITH ANOTHER HAT-TRICK

 Hull City	1
 Tottenham	7

KINGSTON UPON HULL: Harry Kane helped himself to a second hat-trick in four days as ruthless Tottenham Hotspur smashed relegated Hull City to end the Premier League season in style. England striker Kane finishes with 29 league goals, winning the Golden Boot ahead of Everton's Romelu Lukaku and Arsenal's Alexis Sanchez. Dele Alli, Victor Wanyama, Ben Davies and Toby Alderweireld were also on target for the visitors, who were already guaranteed to finish second to champions Chelsea, while Sam Clucas's second-half strike was a rare highlight for the home fans.

Kane is only the fifth player to win the Premier League's Golden Boot in successive seasons, following Alan Shearer, Michael Owen, Thierry Henry and Robin van Persie. Kane had gone top of the scoring chart with four goals against Leicester on Thursday and showed no sign of easing up in his last outing of the season. The 23-year-old added to his impressive tally with two goals in less than three minutes.

The first was a fierce left-foot drive from 20 yards after Christian Eriksen's square pass and the second, two minutes and 39 seconds later, capped a lovely passing move. Eric Dier's long pass from the halfway line was perfect for Kieran Trippier to cushion into the six-yard

box, where Kane was waiting to apply a first-time finish.

The Tottenham supporters went through their songbook, even chanting support for Hull's ex-Spurs players, Tom Huddlestone, Michael Dawson and Ryan Mason, who is recovering after suffering a fractured skull in January. Hull fans voiced support for Marco Silva, their popular head coach. "We want you to stay," they sang.

Relegation was confirmed at Crystal Palace last week and Hull had the look of a weary outfit, while Spurs were energetic. The visitors added their third in first-half stoppage time. Kane was again involved, threading the ball through to Son Heung-Min. The South Korea international cut the ball back to Alli, who checked on to his right foot and fired his shot low under David Marshall. It was Alli's 18th Premier League goal of the season.

Silva responded by introducing winger Kamil Grosicki in place of defender Curtis Davies and, while Spurs arguably eased up, Hull improved after the break. Oumar Niasse's whipped low cross would surely have been converted by Clucas but for Alderweireld's brilliant intervention before Niasse sliced a shot high and wide from a difficult angle.

Grosicki was then instrumental as Hull pulled a goal back with 24 minutes remaining. His low cross found Niasse, who after having a shot blocked, rolled the ball back for Clucas to send a deflected shot into the bottom corner. Spurs restored their advantage as Wanyama seemingly from an offside position-headed in at the back post from Eriksen's free-kick before Kane completed his hat-trick. —AFP



HULL: Tottenham Hotspur's English striker Harry Kane celebrates his hat-trick after scoring his team's fifth goal during the English Premier League football match between Hull City and Tottenham Hotspur at the KCOM Stadium. —AFP

POGBA RETURNS TO SCORE EMOTIONALLY HEAVY GOAL

 Man United	2
 Crystal Palace	0

MANCHESTER: Paul Pogba proved his fitness, and scored a goal which he dedicated to his late father, as the youngest Manchester United line-up in Premier League history ended the season with a 2-0 win over Crystal Palace yesterday. Josh Harrop, one of four full league debutants in Jose Mourinho's side, opened the scoring although the manager was clearly more interested in safeguarding players ahead of Wednesday's Europa League Final against Ajax in Stockholm.

The 31-year-old Wayne Rooney was the only player older than 25 in a line-up that averaged 22 years and 284 days. And he was brought off in the 88th minute-receiving a massive ovation on what could be his last appearance for the club-to be replaced by 16-year-old Angel Gomes who became United's youngest player for 61 years. Pogba, who had not played for 10 days following the death of his father Fassou Antoine, was given a half of action by the United manager and responded not only with his goal but by setting up the opener.

SIMPLE FINISH

After just 14 minutes, 21-year-old midfielder Harrop, who had already enjoyed a couple of exciting forays down the left flank, raced onto a superb through ball from Pogba. Harrop still had work to do, as he entered the Palace area, but beat defender Martin Kelly easily and cut into a central position before placing a powerful

shot into the far corner. The youngster's delight was obvious, and understandable, and the early goal lifted the atmosphere at an Old Trafford with an unusually large number of empty seats and obviously in end-of-season mode.

They had more to cheer just four minutes later as Jesse Lingard raced half the length of the field and squared into a crowded area where Joel Ward should have been able to clear the danger. But the Palace defender succeeded only in stopping the ball, presenting Pogba with the simplest of finishes from a dozen yards. Rooney had already threatened before the goal flurry and, with United having failed to score more than two goals in a home league game since Boxing Day's win against Sunderland, United supporters clearly felt that run was about to end.

Palace had other ideas and Christian Benteke should have done better than glance a header wide from a Wilfried Zaha corner soon after. But that was rare relief for the visitors as United continued to press and Axel Tuanzebe picked out Harrop for another shooting opportunity which the youngster placed just wide. A good half for Mourinho ended in worrying fashion, however, when Eric Bailly—who is suspended for the Europa League final-made a full-blooded challenge on Zaha as he threatened the United goal and immediately fell to the ground clutching his knee.

The Ivory Coast defender was able to continue but, with Wednesday in mind, Mourinho brought off Pogba and Lingard in the final minutes of the half, a move he had promised to make to allow the pair to enjoy a standing ovation from supporters and rest for the final. Palace might have got back in the game as Zaha's cross was met by a towering header from Christian Benteke which struck the foot of Joel Pereira's post. —AFP



LONDON: The Chelsea team including captain John Terry, 26, celebrate after they won the league, following the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Sunderland at Stamford Bridge stadium. — AP

TERRY BOWS OUT OF IN STYLE AS CHELSEA CELEBRATE TITLE

LONDON: John Terry was given an emotional farewell by fans at Stamford Bridge yesterday as record-breaking Chelsea beat Sunderland 5-1, including two goals from substitute Michy Batshuayi, on the day they were presented with the Premier League trophy. The champions had to come from behind on the last day of the league campaign after Javier Manquillo put relegated Sunderland ahead, but they did so in style with Willian, Eden Hazard and Pedro also on the scoresheet.

This was Chelsea's 30th league victory of 2016/17 — the most ever achieved by a club in the English top flight in a 38-game season. That is a remarkable statistic when you consider this same team finished 10th in the table the previous campaign in a season where manager Jose Mourinho was sacked and the west London club missed out on European qualification. But Chelsea have been transformed under new manager Antonio Conte, ending in top place with 93 points, seven clear of runners-up Tottenham Hotspur.

No wonder there were constant chants of "Antonio, Antonio" echoing around Stamford Bridge; but this was also a huge day for Terry. The veteran centre-back, the "captain, leader,

legend" who has been at the heart of Chelsea's success for the best part of two decades, was played from the start by Conte in his last ever appearance at the ground he has graced since 1998.

'THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING'

However, in a pre-planned tribute, he was substituted and replaced by Gary Cahill in the 26th minute (reflecting his squad number) with team-mates forming a guard of honour as he left the pitch. Fans in the Shed End also unfurled a banner which said simply "Thank you for everything JT" and included images of the 15 major trophies Terry has won in a Chelsea shirt in a career that has spanned 717 games. For much of that time, and certainly since billionaire owner Roman Abramovich arrived, Terry has been the on-field figurehead for Chelsea Football Club, overcoming a series of off-field scandals to cement his place in the heart of every Blues fan.

However, at the age of 35, his opportunities to play have been limited this season—he has made only six Premier League starts — and he has opted to extend his career elsewhere. There was an early shock in store in the captain's farewell party, however, when Seb Larsson's free-

kick was deflected straight to Manquillo, who fired home to give the visitors a surprise lead after only three minutes.

Chelsea didn't take long to respond. Marcos Alonso had already hit the crossbar with a free-kick when Willian drilled in a low shot which Sunderland goalkeeper Jordan Pickford fumbled into his own net with only eight minutes on the clock. It took a long time for the inevitable second goal to arrive, but when Diego Costa put Hazard clean through on goal in the 61st minute he finished superbly to set the party going.

Pedro headed home number three following a mistake by Sunderland defender Joleon Lescott with 13 minutes to go and the icing on a memorable season was in place when Batshuayi, the man whose goal won the title at West Brom, flashed home number four in the 90th minute and added another fine finish right on the final whistle. Chelsea was presented with the Premier League trophy after full-time, the sixth league title in the club's history and their fifth of the Premier League era. Next season, however, they will have to cope without Terry, the man who lifted the trophy alongside defensive partner Cahill. It's a new era all round at Stamford Bridge. —AFP



LONDON: An Arsenal fan holds up a protest banner after the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Everton at The Emirates Stadium. — AP

ARSENAL'S 20 YEAR CHAMPIONS LEAGUE RUN COMES TO AN END

LONDON: Arsenal failed to qualify for the Champions League for the first time in 20 years to renew scrutiny of Arsene Wenger despite a 3-1 victory over Everton yesterday. Liverpool's victory over Middlesbrough condemned Arsenal and manager Wenger to a fifth-place finish, making this the first season since 1996-97 to conclude with the club having not secured a place in Europe's elite competition.

Wenger's side will look to next weekend's FA Cup final against Chelsea for consolation, but they will have to do without Laurent Koscielny, sent off for a recklessly early foul on Enner Valencia, and possibly Gabriel. Gabriel was stretched off in the second half at the Emirates with an apparent knee injury and with Shkodran Mustafi absent here due to illness, it leaves Wenger facing a selection crisis in defence. Arsenal prevailed courtesy of goals from Hector Bellerin, Alexis Sanchez and Aaron Ramsey, with Romelu Lukaku replying from the penalty spot for Everton to take his tally for the campaign to 25 goals.

Despite a seventh win in eight league games, it added up to a disappointing afternoon for Wenger, whose Arsenal future remains undecided pending a board meeting scheduled to take place after the cup final. It is thought failure to qualify for the Champions League will cost Arsenal around £50 million (\$65 million, 58 million euros).

The topic of Wenger's future divides Arsenal's fans, but they reserved their fiercest ire for American majority shareholder Stan Kroenke, dubbed "Silent Stan", chanting: "Stan Kroenke, get out of our club!" Arsenal had been quick to settle the home fans' nerves as they took the lead in the eighth minute, but it was no thanks to Danny Welbeck. Presented with an open goal by Mesut Ozil's low cross from the left, the former Manchester United striker somehow contrived to let the ball run underneath his foot, but Bellerin followed up to score. Arsenal was in complete control, only for Koscielny's moment of madness to give Everton hope.

Seeking to halt Valencia as he sped down the Everton right, the Frenchman launched himself into a full-bodied lunge that sent his opponent flying and yielded an immediate red card from referee Michael Oliver. Everton manager Ronald Koeman looked to exploit the situation by sending on Ross Barkley for Tom Davies, but it was Arsenal who struck next in the 27th minute.

Sanchez's shot from range was deflected into the path of Welbeck, who drew Everton goalkeeper Joel Robles from his line and, with the visiting defence statuesque, teed up Sanchez to tap in his 24th goal of the campaign. Sanchez also saw a free-kick parried by Robles, but as half-time neared, Everton's numerical advantage began to tell as Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech increasingly found himself in the firing line. He boxed away a deflected cross by Kevin Mirallas, turned away an Idrissa Gueye drive, athletically tipped over a Lukaku header and fielded a drilled effort from Valencia.

Lukaku, meanwhile, saw an effort diverted wide by Gabriel after being set up by Barkley. When Arsenal re-emerged for the second half, it was in the knowledge that Georginio Wijnaldum had put Liverpool ahead against Middlesbrough on the stroke of half-time at Anfield. They started brightly, Robles saving in quick succession from Welbeck and Ozil, only to lose a second centre-back of the afternoon when Gabriel was carried off after hurting himself in a challenge with Valencia. It meant Arsenal finished the game with club captain Per Mertesacker making his first appearance of the season and 21-year-old Rob Holding in central defence.

Lukaku halved the arrears in the 58th minute, steering a penalty into the bottom-left corner after Holding was adjudged to have handled Leighton Baines's cross. Everton, already assured of seventh place and a Europa League berth, finished strongly, but Ramsey had the last word, arcing a delightful shot into the top-right corner in the final minute. — AFP

 Watford	0
 Man City	5

RAMPANT CITY SEAL THIRD PLACE

WATFORD: Manchester City cruised into next season's Champions League as they took third place in the Premier League thanks to a 5-0 rout of woeful Watford yesterday. Needing a point to be certain of qualifying for the Champions League, Vincent Kompany put Pep Guardiola's side ahead after only five minutes at Vicarage Road. Sergio Aguero scored twice, Fernandinho made it four before half-time and Gabriel Jesus added a fifth in the second half.

City have ended the 2016-17 campaign with a flourish, scoring 15 goals in their final four games. But neither that nor automatic qualification for the Champions League group stage will disguise the fact they have under-achieved in Guardiola's first season in English football, finishing 15 points behind champions Chelsea. It was Watford's sixth successive defeat, their worst run for 44 years, and left them one place above the relegation places.



It was a miserable way for Walter Mazzarri, their head coach, to end his only season at Vicarage Road. It had been announced last week that the Italian would be parting company with the club, which is now looking for its ninth manager since the Pozzo family bought the club in June 2012. Injuries have been his main excuse and they were a factor again yesterday. Watford were without six defenders through injury and suspension and so short of fit players that Mazzarri named two goalkeepers among the substitutes. So it was no surprise that City dominated and might have been ahead after only 50 seconds when Leroy Sane's chip was chested off the line by Jose Holebas. But four minutes later they did take the lead when Kompany was left unmarked and unchallenged to head in Kevin de Bruyne's corner from the right. M'Baye Niang shot wide for Watford but City were doing most of the attacking, especially down their right, where Watford's 19-year-old left back, Brandon Mason, was having a difficult first Premier League start.

'GET OUT'

It could have been 2-0 to City after 15 minutes when Jesus passed to Aguero instead of shooting with only Heurelho Gomes to beat. But Watford's stand-in centre back Valon Behrami got across to prevent the City man steering the ball into the empty net. Then it was Gomes getting in the way of a shot by Aguero.

Watford could not hold out indefinitely and City doubled their lead after 22 minutes, Aguero collecting De Bruyne's pass through the stumbling Watford defense and shooting low past Gomes into the far corner. —AFP

LIVERPOOL SECURE CHAMPS LEAGUE

 Liverpool	3
 Middlesbrough	0

LIVERPOOL: Brilliant goals from Georginio Wijnaldum, Philippe Coutinho and Adam Lallana secured Liverpool a spot in next season's Champions League play-off round after a 3-0 win over relegated Middlesbrough yesterday. Due to Chelsea's dominance this term, the final weeks of the season have seen attention switch from who could win the Premier League to which teams might squeeze into the top four.

Going into the last round of fixtures, third and fourth place were both still up for grabs with third place the most sought after spot because that position allows a club direct qualification for the Champions League group stages. But Liverpool will be more than happy to settle for fourth in Jurgen Klopp's first full season at the club.

Liverpool made hard work of it early on but when Wijnaldum coolly finished on the stroke of half-time, that was the signal the Reds needed to run riot and further impressive goals from Coutinho and Lallana allowed the fans at Anfield to finally breathe easily. Liverpool went into this contest knowing that

they have struggled at home recently, picking up just two points from their previous three home games.

Anfield, then, was understandably nervy about whether or not they could get the job done - but at least they were playing a visiting team that have been woeful this season. Middlesbrough, relegated a fortnight ago after a defeat to Chelsea, opted to start with the muscular Rudy Gestege up front, a player who has caused Liverpool's defence problems in the past. Caretaker manager Steve Agnew left their two top scorers, Alvaro Negredo and Martin De Roon, on the bench alongside former Liverpool player Daniel Ayala.

Liverpool threw themselves into this match, perhaps conscious that they have been too sluggish too often in the opening stages of games recently. Liverpool remained entirely dominant as the first half progressed as Gestege blocked a Roberto Firmino effort inside the penalty area while Emre Can also flashed an effort wide. Middlesbrough offered little attacking threat although they were unlucky not to get a penalty when Patrick Bamford appeared to be clearly hauled down by Dejan Lovren but referee Martin Atkinson waved away Boro's frantic appeals. After 25 minutes, with Manchester City and Arsenal both winning-and thus finishing third and fourth if results stayed the same-the fans and the players became aware they needed a goal to leapfrog Arsene Wenger's side back into the Champions League places. —AFP



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Adam Lallana celebrates scoring against Middlesbrough during the English Premier League soccer match at Anfield. — AP

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Juve clinches record
6th straight
Serie A title

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Champs league run
comes to an end

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MALAGA: Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo scores during the Spanish league football match Malaga CF vs Real Madrid CF at La Rosaleda stadium yesterday. — AFP

RONALDO LEADS REAL TO 33RD LIGA TITLE

MADRID: Real Madrid won their 33rd La Liga title and first for five years as Cristiano Ronaldo's 40th goal of the season helped seal a 2-0 victory at Malaga yesterday. Ronaldo got Madrid off to the perfect start after just two minutes before Karim Benzema's close-range finish sealed the title 10 minutes into the second half. Madrid beat out Barcelona at the top of the table by three points as the Catalans' come-from-behind 4-2 victory over Eibar in out-going coach Luis Enrique's last home game in charge wasn't enough for a third straight title.

Real needed just a point to be assured of the title and any lingering nerves were dispelled within seconds. Isco latched upon a poor

clearance from Luis Hernandez and his sumptuous through ball freed Ronaldo to round Carlos Kameni and fire into an empty net. Madrid could have further built on a fast start as Benzema saw a goalbound effort deflected just wide. Malaga's attitude ahead of the game had been questioned after comments by their coach Michel that he would have preferred his former club had won the league before their visit to La Rosaleda to give them a guard of honor.

However, the hosts showed why they had taken 13 points from their previous five games as the first half wore on. Keylor Navas produced a stunning save to prevent Sandro Ramirez from doing former employers Barca a favour with a superb free-kick.

Sandro then saw another fierce effort deflect inches wide off Keko, who then had a great chance himself when he headed over unmarked from 10 yards out. However, Ronaldo should have had his second when Kameni got down low to his right to save from point-blank range. Benzema did make sure of the title early in the second half when he swept home the loose ball after Kameni had saved Sergio Ramos's first effort.

In Barcelona, Enrique was given a warm send-off at the Camp Nou as he was greeted with a giant banner reading "One of us forever". And Barca at least salvaged some pride by fighting back from 2-0 down to avoid a first ever defeat against Eibar. Japanese

midfielder Takashi Inui had the visitors dreaming as he hit a pair of sweetly struck half-volleys in off the underside of the crossbar either side of half-time.

However, David Junca turned into his own net after Neymar had hit the post to start Barca's revival 25 minutes from time. Yoel Rodriguez produced an incredible save to deny Lionel Messi from the penalty spot moments later. Barca weren't to be denied a sixth straight win to end the season though as Luis Suarez bundled home from close range before Messi made amends with his second penalty 15 minutes from time. And Messi rounded off the scoring with his 53rd goal of the season in stoppage time. — AFP

WARRIORS BEAT SPURS, TAKE 3-0 SERIES LEAD

SAN ANTONIO: The Spurs were injured but Golden State was expecting a fevered fight on the home floor of the five-time NBA champions. The Warriors' depth and talent settled things early. Kevin Durant had 33 points and 10 rebounds as Golden State beat injury-riddled San Antonio 120-108 on Saturday to take a 3-0 lead in the Western Conference Finals. "They were going to come out and hit us in the mouth," Durant said of what the Warriors anticipated entering the game. "I think we did a good job of taking that punch and just kept playing."

Golden State has a chance to complete its third straight series sweep in Game 4 at San Antonio on Monday night. The Warriors are the third team in NBA history to win their first 11 playoff games. Cleveland is 10-0, with a 2-0 lead over Boston in the Eastern Conference final.

"I'm not surprised," Golden State point



SAN ANTONIO: Golden State Warriors forward Andre Iguodala (9) drives for two points over San Antonio Spurs guard Manu Ginobili (20) and Spurs forward Jonathon Simmons (17) during the first half of Game 3 of the Western Conference finals on Saturday. — AP

guard Stephen Curry said of the lead. "Our goal is to win every game we play. We answered a lot of challenges throughout the course of the playoffs and learned a lot of lessons through winning. Against the Spurs, they challenge you no matter who's out there. You've got to play well to beat them." Curry added 21 points and became the franchise leader in postseason points, passing Hall of Famer Rick Barry.

Already without leading scorer Kawhi Leonard and starting point guard Tony Parker, the Spurs lost David Lee to a left knee injury in the opening quarter. "We have to fight with the soldiers we have," San Antonio veteran Manu Ginobili said. "Nobody is going to feel sorry for us. Lee left with 2:57 remaining in the first, unable to put any weight on his left leg after he landed awkwardly on it following a foul by Draymond Green. Joel Anthony had to take a free throw in place of Lee, who was taken to the locker room in a wheelchair. Lee's status is unknown."

San Antonio still managed to match a postseason high with 33 points in the opening quarter and lead by as many as six points in the first half. The Spurs played on emotion but eventually succumbed to the Warriors' firepower. "It's not easy. Even if we were healthy, they're a great team," San Antonio guard Danny Green said. "It wouldn't be easy, regardless. With the bodies going down, very much so an uphill battle." Durant had 19 points in the third quarter. "I feel I can make every shot I shoot because I shoot good ones and I try to get to my spot," Durant said. "So, when they called my number, I just tried to go out there and be aggressive."

Golden State shot 55 percent from the field and was 11 for 27 on 3-pointers. "Every time you look up, you're playing against four All-Stars," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said. Klay Thompson had 17 points, and Javale McGee added 11 points, including 11 in the opening quarter for the Warriors. Ginobili led the Spurs with 21 points, joining Hall of Famer Kareem Abdul-Jabbar as the only players 39 or older to score 20-plus points in a conference final. San Antonio has been outscored by 73 points since Leonard left Game 1 with 7:52 remaining and the Spurs leading 78-55. — AP



HYDERABAD, India: Mumbai Indians pose with trophy after winning the Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket final match against Rising Pune Supergiant yesterday. — AP

JOHNSON SEES MUMBAI TO THIRD IPL TITLE

HYDERABAD, India: Paceman Mitchell Johnson inspired Mumbai Indians to a landmark third Indian Premier League title with crucial wickets for a single run victory over Rising Pune Supergiant yesterday. Mumbai are the first team to win the IPL three times in its 10 year history and captain Rohit Sharma said it had been a "brilliant effort" to turn just 129-8 into a winning score in the tense final. "I couldn't ask for more. Whenever you're defending a total like that, the first thing you have to do is believe," said Sharma.

Johnson (3-26) and Jasprit Bumrah (2-26) got assistance from the pitch as they turned the screws on Pune with time running out. "When three overs were left, I had confidence in the bowlers. They've always done the job wherever they've played. It was about giving freedom to them because they're the masters and they've done it before. I just told them to do whatever they want and set the field accordingly," said Sharma.

Australian Johnson's three wickets included the prize scalp of Pune skipper Steve Smith in the final over. Bumrah's two strikes included the big wicket of former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni (10), playing in his seventh IPL final. Chasing 130, Pune batsmen faltered on a slow track to end on 128-6 at Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium. Smith's dogged

knock went in vain as Pune, who needed 11 in the final over, lost three wickets to Johnson's left-arm pace and some sharp fielding.

Daniel Christian was run out while going for the third run to tie the game. Mumbai erupted with joy after becoming the only team to win three titles after triumphs in 2013 and 2015. Pune, who ended seventh in the eight-team event last season, lost an early wicket but Ajinkya Rahane (44) played sensible cricket with a 54-run partnership with Smith.

NO FAIRY TALE

Pune seemed to be cruising at 98-2 in the 17th over with Smith and Dhoni at the crease but Mumbai had other ideas in their fourth appearance in an IPL final. "It's a hard one to swallow," said Smith who called the Mumbai target "below par". "It was a tough wicket to get runs, everyone could see that. We just couldn't get over the line," he added. "It's just disappointing to lose. It wasn't the fairy tale finish we wanted."

Pune pace spearhead Jaydev Unadkat took an impressive 2-19 to restrict Mumbai after they elected to bat first. Unadkat, 25, who has played one Test and seven one-day internationals for India, remained two wickets behind the highest wicket-taker in

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (26 wickets) of Sunrisers Hyderabad. Sharma broke the shackles with the first boundary of the innings on the opening delivery of the sixth over. Three more followed with paceman Lockie Ferguson at the receiving end.

But Sharma's four boundaries were the only bright spot in his 22-ball 24 before losing his wicket to leg-spinner Adam Zampa. Mumbai slipped to 79-7, but Krunal Pandya's heavy hitting 47 lifted the team to respectability. He put on a fighting 50-run eight-wicket partnership with Johnson (13 not out). Left-hander Pandya smashed three fours and two sixes during his 38-ball blitz to help Mumbai gather 48 in the last five overs. Leg-spinner Adam Zampa and fellow Australian Christian also took two wickets each.

Pune improved their tournament record but may have played their last game of the cash-rich league. Their two-year run along with the Gujarat Lions ended this season.

They were denied an extension by the league's governing council this month and both will have to place fresh bids in 2018. Pune and Gujarat got IPL places after Chennai Super Kings and Rajasthan Royals were banned for two years in 2015 for their role in a betting controversy. They can return for 2018. — AFP



SPAIN'S LABOR REFORM DELIVERS JOB BUT AT A COST



HANOI: Vietnam's Minister of Trade and Industry Tran Tuan Anh speaks during a press conference following the TPP meeting held on the sideline of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)'s 23rd meeting being held in Hanoi yesterday. — AFP photos

TRUMP REP RULES OUT US RETURN TO TPP
PACIFIC RIM NATIONS FIGHT TO SAVE TPP TRADE PACT

HANOI: Japan and other members of the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreed yesterday to pursue their trade deal without the United States, as the Trump administration's "America First" policy created tension at a meeting of Asia-Pacific countries.

Turmoil over global trade negotiations was laid bare at a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, which failed to agree on its usual joint statement after US opposition to wording on free trade and fighting protectionism.

The 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership covered 40 percent of the global economy before Trump abruptly abandoned it in January to meet a campaign pledge to save American jobs which he says have been sucked up overseas.

Japan, Australia and New Zealand are leading efforts by the so-called TPP 11 to resuscitate the agreement, convinced it will lock in future free trade and strengthen labor rights and environmental protections.

Trade representatives agreed to help the United States to rejoin the deal at any time, pinning hopes on a U-turn in American policy. The TPP was in part crafted as a counterweight to the burgeoning economic might of China. But Trump's newly-appointed trade chief Robert Lighthizer poured cold water on the prospect of a US return, saying Washington "pulled out of the TPP and it's not going to change that decision."

"The TPP 11 can make their own decisions, the United States makes its decisions, that's what sovereign nations do," Lighthizer told reporters, adding his nation will "stay engaged" in the area, albeit on a bilateral basis.

The meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam, was the biggest global trade gathering since US President Donald Trump upended the old order, arguing that multilateral free-trade agreements were costing American jobs and that he wanted to cut new deals. On the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific meeting, the 11 remaining countries of the TPP agreed to explore how they could move ahead without erstwhile leader the United States - partly in the hope that Washington would reconsider leaving.

New US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said there was no way back. "I believe at some point there will be a series of bilateral agreements with partners in this part of the world," the 69-year-old Reagan-era trade negotiator told a news conference. "Bilateral negotiations are better for the United States."

Although the TPP members kept the trade agreement alive, they fell short of a wholehearted commitment to advance immediately with a deal that members also see as a way to contain an increasingly dominant China. "We're focused on how we can move ahead with 11 countries," New Zealand Trade Minister Todd McClay said.

One of the biggest challenges is keeping on board Vietnam and Malaysia, which signed up for the deal and promised to make major reforms largely to get better US market access.

"We will need to ensure that our interests remain protected and the benefits derived from it still outweigh the costs," Malaysian Trade Minister Mustapa Mohamed said. The volume of trade between the remaining countries is barely a quarter of the level it would have been if the United States had remained in the TPP.



HANOI: US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer gestures while attending a joint press conference held on the sidelines of the APEC meeting in Hanoi yesterday.

Officials from TPP countries will meet again in Japan in July and bring proposals in November, McClay said.

Protectionism

Fears of protectionism have grown under the Trump presidency and the failure of the Asia-Pacific countries to agree on their usual joint statement did nothing to quell

them. The United States was against wording agreed to by the other 20 APEC countries that supported free trade and opposed protectionism, officials at the talks said.

A statement from the Vietnamese chairman of the talks gave a "commitment to promote trade and investment liberalization." But the only announcement from all the members was an "Actions Statement" that contained no such commitments. It mentioned topics such as sustainable growth, small businesses and technical cooperation.

The wrangling is similar to what has been seen at gatherings of Group of 20 and Group of Seven financial leaders, where statements were toned down to fit with the new US agenda.

Explaining US opposition to using the word protectionism, Lighthizer said the term was being confused with the steps that were really needed to promote free trade. "Our view is that we want free trade, we want fair trade, we want a system that leads to greater market efficiency throughout the world," he said.

On the sidelines of the APEC meeting, Lighthizer held a series of one-on-one meetings with key partners. Those included China as well as Canada and Mexico, members of the North American Free Trade Agreement which Trump seeks to renegotiate. China, putting itself forward as a global free trade champion in light of the US shift, is pushing an agreement to encompass the vast majority of Asian economies. The Asia trade deal it favors is called the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. — Agencies

INDIA'S 'NEW SILK ROAD' SNUB HIGHLIGHTS GULF WITH CHINA

NEW DELHI: China invited Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and six cabinet colleagues to its "new Silk Road" summit this month, even offering to rename a flagship Pakistani project running through disputed territory to persuade them to attend, a top official in Modi's ruling group and diplomats said.

But New Delhi rebuffed Beijing's diplomatic push, incensed that a key project in its massive initiative to open land and sea corridors linking China with the rest of Asia and beyond runs through Pakistani controlled Kashmir. The failure of China's efforts to bring India on board, details of which have not been previously reported, shows the depths to which relations between the two countries have fallen over territorial disputes and Beijing's support of Pakistan.

India's snub to the "Belt and Road" project was the strongest move yet by Modi to stand up to China. But it risks leaving India isolated at a time when it may no longer be able to count on the United States to back it as a counterweight to China's growing influence in Asia, Chinese commentators and some Indian experts have said.

Representatives of 60 countries, including the United States and Japan, travelled to Beijing for the May 14-15 summit on President Xi Jinping's signature project. But Ram Madhav, an influential leader of Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) involved in shaping foreign policy, said India could not sign up so long as the

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) - a large part of the "Belt and Road" enterprise - ran through parts of Pakistan-administered Kashmir that India considers its own territory.

"China routinely threatens countries when it finds issues even remotely connected to its own sovereignty question being violated," Madhav said. "No country compromises with its sovereignty for the sake of trade and commerce interests."

Economic potential

India, due to the size and pace of expansion of its economy, could potentially be the biggest recipient of Chinese investment from the plan to spur trade by building infrastructure linking Asia with Europe, the Middle East and Africa, according to a Credit Suisse report released before the summit. Chinese investments into India could be anything from \$84 billion to \$126 billion between 2017 to 2021, far higher than Russia, Indonesia and Pakistan, countries that have signed off on the initiative, it said.

China has not offered any specific projects to India, but many existing schemes, such as a Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor that has been planned for years, have now been wrapped into the Belt and Road enterprise. China is also conducting feasibility studies for high-speed rail networks linking Delhi with Chennai in southern India that would eventually connect to the modern day "Silk

Road" it is seeking to create. But if India continues to hold back from joining China's regional connectivity plans the commercial viability of those plans will be called into question, analysts say. China has held talks with Nepal to build an \$8 billion railway line from Tibet to Kathmandu, but it ultimately wants the network to reach the Indian border to allow goods to reach the huge Indian market.

Strategic fears

India has other worries over China's growing presence in the region, fearing strategic encirclement by a "string of pearls" around the India Ocean and on land as China builds ports, railways and power stations in country such as Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Ashok Kantha, who was India's ambassador to China until 2016, said India had repeatedly conveyed its concerns to China, especially about the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the need to have open discussions about it.

"Where is the economic rationale for CPEC?" he said. "There is no major economic driver, the drivers are essentially political and strategic in character."

Just a week before the summit, China's ambassador to India, Luo Zhaohui, offered to change the name of CPEC to placate New Delhi and ensure it didn't boycott the Beijing conference. Luo did not elaborate on the proposal, made during a speech at an Indian military think-tank, according to people who attended the meeting and

local media reports. A transcript released later by the Chinese embassy did not include a reference to changing the project's name. But Chinese officials in the past have suggested this could mean adding India to the name to make it the "China-Pakistan-India Economic Corridor".

A Chinese diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, suggested India could build infrastructure on its side of Kashmir which could eventually be linked to the roads and power lines China planned to build in Pakistani Kashmir. Indian experts said another proposal explored in meetings between former diplomats and academics from the two sides was renaming the project the "Indus Corridor" to overcome India's objection that the "China-Pakistan" name endorses Pakistan's claim to Kashmir. Pakistan and India have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir, which they both claim in full.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying did not comment directly on any offer to change the name of CPEC, but drew attention to President Xi's remarks during the summit that China would follow the principle of peaceful co-existence and that New Delhi need not worry. "I think the concerns from the India side should be able to be resolved," she said. Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman Gopal Baglay said New Delhi had not received any suggestions through proper channels and that India wanted a meaningful discussion with China on the whole project. — Reuters

SAUDI MINISTER CONFIDENT OF OIL CUT EXTENSION

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's energy minister expressed confidence yesterday of extending a global cut in oil production designed to boost prices. Khalid Al-Falih spoke ahead of a meeting on Thursday between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia, where they are expected to extend the production cut pact.

"We have full commitment from the Russian side, including President (Vladimir) Putin himself," Falih told reporters on the sidelines of summits between US President Donald Trump and Muslim leaders from around the world. Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, and Gulf members of OPEC are also fully behind an extension, while there is "strong" commitment from Iraq and others, Falih said.

With potential for "two or three more producers" to join, Falih was optimistic global supply and demand would balance by the first quarter of next year. "We will do whatever is necessary," he said, expressing an openness to "creative" solutions. At the end of November, OPEC's 13 members agreed to cut output by 1.2 million barrels per day from January 1, initially for a period of six months to reduce a supply glut. Then in December, non-OPEC producers led by Russia agreed to reduce their own output by 558,000 barrels per day.

Falih said Russia "ultimately delivered" its 300,000 bpd cut, though it took longer than hoped for. "We have patiently worked together but I think there is good faith, there is good cooperation, and going forward we intend to build on this relationship." Last week Russia and Saudi Arabia, the world's two biggest oil producers, jointly called for oil producers to extend their production cuts to March 31, 2018. Saudi Arabia currently produces close to 10 million bpd, Falih said. Oil prices are near \$50 per barrel after shedding around half of their value since mid-2014. — AFP



2018 NISSAN PATHFINDER UPS ADVENTURE-READY CREDENTIALS

DUBAI: Nissan has launched yesterday the new 2018 Nissan Pathfinder in the Middle East during an event set against the dramatic backdrop of the majestic Al-Hajar Mountains in Fujairah. The Nissan Pathfinder is reborn for the 2018 model year with more adventure capability, a freshened exterior look and enhanced safety and technology - pure Pathfinder taken to a higher level of performance and style.

The latest iteration of this popular, family-oriented four-wheel drive vehicle draws on Nissan's vast experience of building vehicles designed to operate in testing off-road conditions while remaining perfectly at home on the highway. As an SUV vehicle, the Pathfinder retains plenty of capability in off-road environments.

"Pathfinder has a logical and hugely practical place within the Nissan model line-up in this region," explained Fadi Ghosn, Chief Marketing Officer of Nissan Middle East. "For 2018, Pathfinder receives much more than a typical facelift. It now offers more power, improved driving dynamics and new available driver assistance features - more of what customers need for safe, comfortable every day and weekend family adventures."

"Most people with a family need to commute to work, drop the kids off at school and generally use their vehicles on paved surfaces. But at weekends it's great to have the Pathfinder's capacity to explore further afield, getting to special places that an ordinary family car cannot reach, be that in a desert, beach, wadi or mountain environment."

The refreshed Pathfinder benefits from changes both externally and internally. The revised 3.5-litre V6 engine has almost 7 percent more horse power and almost 4 percent more torque thanks to its new engine. These include new combustion chamber design, pistons, intake manifold, electromagnetic Valve Timing Control and a new Direct Injection Gasoline system.

Driving dynamics

The seven-seat vehicle offers enhanced driving dynamics such as more controlled ride and handling, less vibrations on turns and easier manoeuvring. This is due to many enhancements such as smaller strokes, less under-steer, improved roll balance and improved steering ratio.

The 2018 Pathfinder is offered in 2-wheel drive and 4-wheel drive configurations and a choice of three well-equipped grade levels: S, SV and SL.

Externally, Pathfinder now aligns more closely with Nissan's latest design language thanks to signature elements, including the new "V-Motion" grille and striking boomerang-shaped headlights with LED daytime running lights. Other new styling elements include a redesigned front bumper, fog lights, wing mirrors with integrated indicators and new 18-inch and 20-inch aluminium-alloy wheel designs. The rear taillight cluster and rear bumper have also been refreshed.

In terms of practicality, a Motion-Activated liftgate comes as standard on SV and SL grade. On sweeping a foot under the tailgate, it opens automatically and stops at the desired point.

Inside, the revamped Pathfinder offers stylish, comfortable seating for seven occupants who benefit from a variety of updated connectivity features. The latest Pathfinder adopts new-generation information technology with an Advanced Drive-Assist



Display located in the centre of the instrument binnacle providing supplementary infotainment and driver assistance displays compared to the previous model.

A standard 8.0-inch touch-screen monitor, situated in the middle of the instrument panel controls a wide variety of vehicle systems and settings including navigation and infotainment functions. Options such as Intelligent Emergency Braking, Intelligent Cruise Control, Blind Spot Warning (BSW), Forward Collision Warning and Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) are available on the SV and SL grades. The Intelligent Around View Monitor with Moving Object Detection is available as an option only on the SL grade.

The refreshed Pathfinder will be arriving to showrooms across the region in May. The 2-wheel drive is priced between \$32,450 and \$44,240, while the 4-wheel drive between \$34,360 and \$46,090.

Detailed Specifications A Powerful New Look

When the fourth-generation Pathfinder was introduced for the 2013 model year, its design represented a major step forward in refined styling and aerodynamic emphasis. For 2018, the refreshed exterior goes even farther, adding a stronger sense of adventure, character and presence and continued fine-tuning of aero efficiency.

The updated appearance incorporates the latest Nissan signature design elements introduced on the award-winning Maxima sport sedan and Murano crossover - including the new "V-Motion" grille and boomerang-shaped headlights with LED daytime running lights. New LED headlights are standard on the Pathfinder SL grade.

Other exterior enhancements include a new, more aggressive hood, front bumper and fog lights. The outside rearview mirrors now include standard integrated turn signals. In the rear, changes include new taillights and a stronger bumper design.

In addition, aerodynamic optimization efforts include a new grille design, which enhances cooling performance and negates the need for an active grille shutter, and a new front chin spoiler design that has been moved forward and directs air downward - without compromising the approach angle for off-road driving. These changes help optimize air flow around and below the exterior, with the coefficient of drag reduced to 0.326 (from the previous 0.34).

Another significant addition for 2018 is the available Motion-Activated liftgate. A simple wave of the foot under the center of the liftgate activates the power opening function. It is standard on SV and SL grade.

Other exterior details include recessed front windshield wipers, roof rails and chrome door handles. An available Dual Panorama Moonroof is standard from SV grade. It includes a sliding opening front panel and fixed rear glass panel, which extends over the 2nd and 3rd rows.

Also updated in the 2018 model is the design of the alloy wheels that are available as 18-inch in S grade and 20-inch in SV and SL grades.

Completing the exterior makeover is one new exterior color, which is Caspian Blue. Other available colors are, Silver, Gun Metallic, Magnetic Black, Pearl White.

A Roomy, Refined Interior

The enhancements to the Pathfinder interior for 2018 focus on convenience and connectivity. For example, the cupholders have been reshaped to accommodate mug handles and an illuminated front storage bin. There are now two USB ports inside the console versus the previous single port.

The biggest change, however, is the adoption of new-genera-

tion information technology. The standard Advanced Drive-Assist Display (ADAD), located in the center of the instrument display between the tachometer and speedometer, features additional infotainment and driver assistance displays (versus the previous Pathfinder design). Voice recognition has been enhanced with a new HD microphone.

As in previous years, the 2018 Pathfinder's 3-row/7-passenger interior combines comfortable seating with the cargo capacity that families need every day. It offers the benefits of a mid-size crossover with the comfort of a larger SUV, including a flat floor for enhanced interior packaging flexibility and ample space. Overall interior roominess is 173.8 cubic feet (passenger and cargo areas combined).

Every 2018 Pathfinder interior is anchored by Nissan's innovative EZ Flex Seating System with LATCH AND GLIDE, a 2nd row tilt and glide seat that allows easy 3rd row access with a child safety seat remaining securely in place in the 2nd row.

A wide range of seating and cargo carrying combinations are available with the 2nd row 60/40-split seat with manual slide/recline/flat and 3rd row 50/50-split seat with manual recline/flat fold. New cloth seat fabric is added for S grade, and leather-appointed with new wood finish interior on the SV and SL grades.

Pathfinder's quiet, comfortable interior also includes a wide range of available features, including two rows of rich leather-appointed seating surfaces, climate controlled front seats in SL grade, power tilt and telescoping steering wheel, Nissan Intelligent Key with Push Button Start, multiple user memory settings and an advanced Bose Audio System with 12 speakers.

Pathfinder also offers available class-exclusive Intelligent Around View Monitor (AVM) with Moving Object Detection (MOD). Other available technology includes Tri-Zone Automatic Climate Control, Bluetooth Hands-free Phone System and iPod integration. The tri-zone Family Entertainment system includes front seats head restraint-mounted DVD display screens. The rear displays are now 8-inch QHD designs (versus the previous 7-inch WVGA) and include auto brightness control and USB and HDMI rear source inputs. The rear display can be easily controlled from the front with a more user-friendly display.

An available remote engine start function allows the climate control system to warm up or cool down the interior prior to driving (standard on SV and SL).

The Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS), available with individual tire pressure display, comes with standard Easy-Fill Tire Alert that provides both visual and audible signals to help owners conveniently maintain correct tire pressures without the use of a gauge.

Revised 3.5-liter V6 Engine

In a major step up of its already highly capable adventure credentials, Pathfinder's new 3.5-liter V6 engine features more power and torque. It utilizes more than 50 percent new or new-to-Pathfinder engine parts and components - including combustion chamber design, pistons, intake manifold and e-VTC (fully electronic on intake).

The engine's new Direct Injection Gasoline (DIG) system, which is also utilized on the all-new flagship Nissan Patrol full-size SUV, provides better wide-open throttle performance and improved fuel economy and emissions performance (versus a non-direct-injection system). The switch to mirror bore cylinder coating reduces engine weight by around three pounds and reduces friction between the piston ring and the cylinder wall. The technology eliminates the need for a heavy cast iron cylinder liner.

All 2018 Pathfinder models are equipped with Nissan's third-generation Xtronic transmission (similar to that utilized in the

Refined styling & design, enhanced performance and advanced driving experience

■ Major redesign includes bold new front end with signature boomerang-shaped headlights with LED Daytime Running Lights and available LED headlights

■ New 3.5-liter V6 engine adds direct injection system, horsepower increases to 271, with towing capacity of 1,500 KG

■ Enhanced user friendliness features range from Motion-Activated liftgate to a new touch screen monitor to be added for the first time in the Nissan line-up in the Middle East

■ New advanced driver assistance technology includes Intelligent Emergency Braking, Intelligent Cruise Control, Blind Spot Warning, Forward Collision Warning and Intelligent Around View Monitor with Moving Object Detectio

sporty Nissan Maxima). The Xtronic transmission includes DStep Logic Control, which simulates shifts, giving a more natural acceleration feeling.

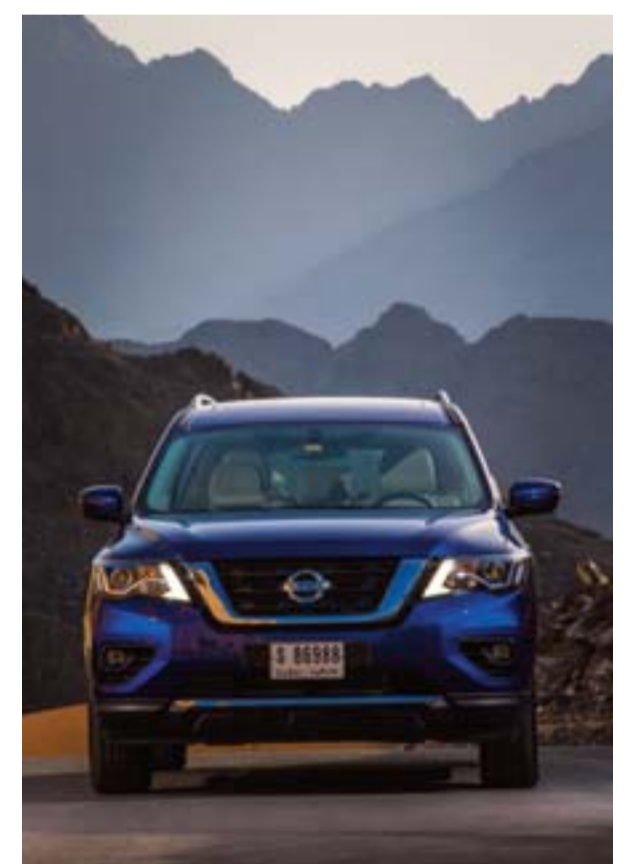
The new Pathfinder powertrain helps provide real world driving benefits of more responsive acceleration and re-acceleration, such as when entering highways or passing.

As in previous years, Pathfinder also features selectable 2WD, Auto or 4WD Lock modes from the available intuitive ALL-MODE 4x4-i system. With the available intuitive four-wheel drive, Pathfinder continues to serve as an excellent vehicle for inclement weather driving conditions.

Pathfinder is the only vehicle in class with selectable 2WD, Auto or 4WD Lock modes for its available intuitive ALL-MODE 4x4-i system. The system lets the driver choose fulltime 2WD for maximum fuel economy, Auto mode to automatically monitor conditions and adjust the balance of power between front and rear wheels for best traction, or 4WD Lock mode when full-time 4WD is desired.

In addition, standard Hill Start Assist helps prevent loss of control when starting and driving away on a steep incline (both 4WD and 2WD models), while standard Hill Descent Control (4WD only) helps by adjusting speed and brake pressure when traveling slowly down steep, rough terrain grades.

Standard safety and security features include Nissan Advanced Air Bag System (includes dual-stage front supplemental air bags with seat belt sensors and an occupant classification sensor), 3-point seat belts with pretensioners and load limiters, curtain and side airbags for side impact and rollover head protection for outboard passengers in all three rows (includes rollover sensor), 3-point seat belts for rear seat occupants, including 2nd row center position, LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children) - 2nd row outboard seating positions only, child safety rear door locks, Vehicle Dynamic Control (VDC) and Traction Control System (TCS).



BELT AND ROAD FORUM POINTS CLEAR WAY FOR FUTURE COOPERATION

KUWAIT: Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi said on Wednesday the just concluded Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation outlined the roadmap for the success of the Belt and Road Initiative and pointed a clear way for future cooperation.

Yang said in an interview that the forum, which was held in Beijing on Sunday and Monday, clarified an assortment of projects that would be implemented within the framework of the initiative. The forum yielded a list of outcomes, which included 76 consensus comprising more than 270 detailed results in five key areas, namely policy, infrastructure, trade, financial and people-to-people connectivity.

"The grand blueprint of the Initiative is being converted into a clear roadmap," said Yang.

Yang said forum was the largest multilateral diplomatic activity that was proposed and held by China since the founding of the People's Republic of China. The forum sent a positive signal for all parties to work together to

build a community of shared future, which would be extremely important for China and the world.

Yang said that China did not have selfish motives nor pursue selfish interests, and hosted the forum with an open, inclusive, democratic and transparent attitude.

He said the forum consisted of an opening ceremony, a round-table summit and high-level meetings to ensure all parties had the opportunity to fully take part in the forum.

Yang said he believes the broad and in-depth participation of all parties involved into the initiative will contribute hugely to China and world development.

Twenty-nine foreign heads of state and government attended the forum. Other delegates included officials, entrepreneurs, financiers and media from over 130 countries and regions, which are home to more than two thirds of the world's population and their combined gross domestic product accounts for 90 percent of the world's total.



DETROIT: Following seven years of steady growth that led to sales records in 2015 and 2016, deliveries of new vehicles in the US dropped 4.7 percent in April in one of the steepest declines since the 2008-2009 recession, AutoData reported.

US CARMAKERS DOWNSHIFT ON TRUMP ECONOMIC PLAN

AUTO SALES SHIFT TO LOWER GEAR DESPITE ECONOMIC UPTURN

DETROIT: Steadily rising US auto sales helped fuel the economic recovery, but sales have shifted into lower gear even as President Donald Trump counts on carmakers to provide a lift to his economic plans. And after adding thousands of jobs since the financial crisis to meet rising demand for new vehicles, US carmakers also have begun to idle workers for months at a time.

Trump has touted the auto sector—which he previously lambasted for moving production to Mexico—as proof of his program's success. "We're going to have expansion," Trump told reporters this week. "We already do. You look at what's happening with Ford and with General Motors in Michigan and Ohio. You look at the tremendous number of jobs that are being announced in so many different fields. That's what I'm proud of, and that's what we want to focus our energy on."

But the data is gloomier. Following seven years of steady growth that led to sales records in 2015 and 2016, deliveries of new vehicles in the US dropped 4.7 percent in April in one of the steepest declines since the 2008-2009 recession, AutoData reported.

Analysts at IHS Automotive have cut their forecast for US sales, which are expected to fall for the first time since the financial crisis. "Auto demand remains at muted levels," IHS analyst Chris Hopson said.

Auto workers idled

Earlier this year, in response to prodding and threats from Trump over their overseas operations, Ford, GM and Fiat Chrysler announced plans to add jobs at their US facilities. Ford even canceled construction of a plant in Mexico, although it did so largely due to falling demand for passenger cars.

GM announced plans to add jobs in Michigan even as it moving ahead with cuts to production. But so far this year, GM has idled 3,000 workers at three plants in Michigan and another in Tennessee.

Ford scrapped 130 workers at the Ohio Assembly Plant in Avon, Ohio, and now plans to cut another 1,400 salaried jobs. And Fiat Chrysler Automobiles laid off hundreds of workers in Sterling Heights, Michigan, Toledo, Ohio and Belvidere, Illinois. Some FCA workers have been called back in Belvidere, but the company has not set a timetable for recalling the 6,000 workers idled in Sterling Heights and Toledo.

Car sales peaked

AutoData's reports show US sales for GM, Ford and Fiat Chrysler, the heart of the American car industry, have experienced the biggest drops so far this year. Ford's sales are down 5.1 percent, GM's have dropped 1.1 percent and Toyota, Honda and

Nissan, all of which have large US production, also reported drops in sales in April.

"Car sales have peaked," said Danielle DiMartino Booth, founder of Money Strong LLC, an economic consulting firm. "Fully five percent of US jobs are tied to autos. The recovery is simply too tenuous to withstand a body blow to this sector." Jessica Caldwell, an analyst at Edmunds.com, said the end of the low interest rates that helped drive car sales is a key factor.

Car loans "are becoming less enticing for consumers, which inevitably creates further drag on new vehicle sales," she said. While wrestling with production cuts, GM and Ford also are facing grumbling from shareholders.

Citing GM's faltering stock price, Greenlight Capital, a New York based hedge fund, has put up an alternative slate of directors that will be voted on at next month's shareholders meeting.

"You say that your main priority is to provide long-term shareholder value," one shareholder said during Ford's annual shareholders meeting. "Losing 40 percent of the value since Mark (Fields) took over as CEO doesn't seem to be upholding that pledge." In response, William Clay Ford Jr, Ford's executive chairman and the great grandson of the company's founder, said Wall Street has historically undervalued automakers, even when they are earning substantial profits. — AFP



LAHORE: Pakistani farmers and traders gather as they sell watermelons at a fruit market in Lahore yesterday. — AFP

SPAIN'S LABOR REFORM DELIVERS JOB BUT AT A COST

MADRID: Spain's labor market reform has helped bring down sky-high unemployment but critics complain the bulk of the jobs it created offer lower salaries and less security. Without the 2012 law "we would not have dared to expand so quickly," said Juan Martinez, the manager of a Kia car dealership in northern Madrid.

The reform drastically reduced the amount of compensation that must be paid when workers are let go and allows for collective dismissals, even when a firm is not facing economic difficulties. It also created a new open-ended contract which can be used by small and medium-sized businesses which allows dismissals without justification during the first year of employment.

Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's conservative government adopted the reform in 2012 after 2.6 million jobs had been lost following the 2008 global credit crisis, which hastened a correction already underway in Spain's key property sector. It has been held up as an example of "flexibility" — a cooperative approach to labor relations pioneered by Denmark in which employees accept a degree of flexibility in working arrangements—to be followed in France and other European nations.

"You have less obligations as a business and that allows you to have less worries about the future than before," said Martinez. A third of jobs in the car sales sector disappeared after 2008. Spain's car dealers association credits the reform with a recovery in employment in the sector.

When Martinez opened his Kia dealership in 2014, he hired several former colleagues like him who had bet let go from car dealerships during the crisis.

He recruited a total of around 30 people, roughly a third under the new open-ended contract which allows for dismissal without justification during the first year.

The workers were eventually given permanent contracts as car sales recovered along with the overall economy. Spain's economy, the eurozone's fourth largest, expanded by 3.2 percent last year, one of the fastest rates in Europe.

'Fire at less cost'

About ten percent of open-ended con-

tracts in Spain now allow for dismissal without justification in the first year. Unlike what happened at Martinez's dealership, half of these contracts are terminated after the one year trial period, according to a report by Spain's second largest union, the UGT.

This more flexible contract has not led to the disappearance of temporary contracts, which continue to represent over one fourth of all contracts, a record in the 28-nation European Union.

Francisco Alvarez, a 42-year-old salesman at a Peugeot dealership in northern Madrid, said he knows he will have to complete at least four short-term contracts of three months each before he will be offered a permanent contract. "An open-ended contract is not worth the paper it is written on. If the company wants to let you go, they will fire you at less cost now," he said.

Spain's left-wing opposition parties have vowed to scrap the reform, which the government credits for a sharp drop in unemployment. Spain's jobless rate fell from a record 27.2 percent during the first quarter of 2013 to 18.7 percent during the first quarter of this year.

Work more, earn less

But while the reform was meant to provide "flexibility," the government has only focused on "flexibility" and has forgotten about the "security" portion, said Manuel Lago, an economist at Spain's largest trade union, the CCOO. Denmark sought to attenuate the problems of globalization by offering employers greater flexibility to let workers go but also gave workers greater security in the form of easy access to unemployment benefits and retraining programs.

But the Spanish government has "made access to unemployment benefits more difficult and reduced the amount that is paid" as part of austerity measures, said Lago. State spending on unemployment benefits has fallen from 33 billion euros (\$36.7 billion) in 2010 to 19 billion euros last year, a drop that is only due in part to the decline in joblessness, he added. Unions argue the reform has also caused salaries to fall, by favoring negotiations over pay within individual firms instead of collective agreements covering an entire sector. — AFP

RUSSIA SAGA POTENTIAL ROADBLOCK FOR TRUMP'S ECONOMIC PLANS

WASHINGTON: The repeated national security scandals rocking the Trump White House could derail the president's economic agenda and dampen the wave of investor enthusiasm that greeted his election, analysts say.

For the moment, the tremors are still slight and most economic data, job creation in particular, are healthy. But some signs suggest the firestorm sparked by President Donald Trump's sudden firing of Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James Comey, or the cloak-and-dagger investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 elections, have left investors rattled.

On Wednesday — amid news reports suggesting Trump attempted to pressure Comey into dropping the Russia investigation — Wall Street had its worst day since before November's elections. By Friday, stocks had regained some lost territory, however. Meanwhile, the Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank on Thursday also reported a dip in optimism among manufacturers in May, which followed a decline in consumer confidence in April.

"Investors are certainly becoming more disenchanted with the idea that there will be this Trump rally, not only on the stock market but also in the economy," said Ken Goldstein of the Conference Board, which publishes the closely-watched monthly consumer sentiment survey. Driven by the post-election euphoria, Wall Street's three major stock indices are up between 12 and 16 percent, with investors buoyed by hopes Trump will slash corporate taxes and regulations to boost growth. "Can this trend be reversed because of the turmoil in Washington? Yes, it can but we just don't know yet," said Mickey Levy of Berenberg Capital Markets.

None of Trump's grand economic plans have been abandoned yet. But some investors may doubt that a president reeling from scandal has the bandwidth to push his agenda through Congress, even if his party currently controls both chambers of the legislature.

A wrench in the works

"Tax and fiscal reform initiatives

may be delayed and some of President Trump's support for legislative proposals in Congress may be diluted," Levy said. Businesses are counting on the promised Trump tax cuts which could reduce the marginal corporate rate to 15 percent from 35 percent-freeing up vast resources but also threatening to blow a hole in the federal budget.

The tax cuts are needed "as soon as possible," the Business Roundtable, an industry lobby, said Thursday. "The United States cannot afford to squander this once-in-a-generation opportunity for reform." But the situation on Capitol Hill is complicated, as multiple congressional committees investigate possible collusion between the Trump presidential campaign and the Russian government.

The matter has deepened the gulf separating the Republicans from the minority Democrats, whose support may be decisive in enacting any major economic policies. "The challenges are twofold: quite a bit of time in Congress will be devoted to this investigation, which simply fills up the calendar," said John Hudak, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and an expert on presidential power. And "there are not going to be many Democrats willing to do a favor for the president."

The legislative calendar is filling up: the Senate still needs to pass its version of legislation to replace the current health care law before turning to the budget and a promised infrastructure overhaul program. The Conference Board's Goldstein said, "If they can't squeeze enough money out of the health bill, then it makes it harder to afford the tax cuts and to spend money on infrastructure."

Despite these obstacles, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Thursday he remains

"very hopeful" the new tax plan can be adopted this year.

The Trump administration can take comfort in the fact the unemployment rate has continued to fall, reaching its lowest point in 10 years in April, and consumer confi-

dence remains high in historical terms. "The average consumer doesn't pay too much attention to what's going on in Washington, unless there's more fire than smoke," Goldstein said. — AFP

GREECE APPEALS TO CREDITORS TO APPROVE DEBT RELIEF FAST

ATHENS: Greece told its EU-IMF creditors yesterday there should be "no excuse" for delays to debt relief payments now that Athens has "fulfilled its obligations" with new austerity cuts.

The appeal came on the eve of a meeting of eurozone finance ministers in Brussels that will discuss the issue. "Our country by adopting the new measures through the Greek parliament has fulfilled its obligations totally and on time," Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said in a statement carried by the Athens News Agency. "There is no excuse for further delay on the issue of the debt relief." The Greek parliament late Thursday adopted a new round of austerity cuts which the government hopes will secure a pledge of debt relief and loan disbursements by EU-IMF creditors.

The bill entails 4.9 billion euros (\$5.4 billion) in pension cuts and lower tax breaks in 2018-2021 and was passed by a majority of 153

lawmakers from the ruling coalition. "The decisions are now in the hands of the institutions in order to pave the way for our access to the QE (European Central Bank's asset purchase program), and our return to bond markets," Tsakalotos said.

The question of debt relief has served as a point of contention for months between Berlin and the IMF, which does not want to participate in the bailout program unless Greece's debt burden is brought down to manageable levels. In his calls for substantial debt relief, Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras faces resistance from Germany, where additional concessions are unpopular with an electorate called to a general election in September. According to sources familiar with the matter, the IMF and eurozone countries are close to reaching a compromise, which would clear the way for a global agreement allowing Greece to return to bond markets in 2018. — AFP

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'SYMPHONY' SETS SIGHT ON FINANCIAL WORLD AND BEYOND

NEW YORK: Having won over Wall Street and Silicon Valley with a low-cost messaging platform that aims to remake the way traders communicate, Symphony creator David Gurle has set his sights on new industries.

Barely three years old, Symphony quickly caught on in the world of high finance and now counts Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase, Credit Suisse, Societe Generale and Google among its investors.

BNP Paribas recently joined in, helping bring Symphony's estimated value to nearly \$1 billion. Created in 2012 and officially launched two years later in Palo Alto, California, the system allows users to send private messages, confidentially exchange research and trading strategies and place orders-all in real time.

Some have even portrayed the technology as a threat to the Bloomberg terminal's dominance in trading rooms, although others say that is premature.

"I'd been dreaming about this tool since my childhood," Gurle, 50, said in a video interview conducted over Symphony. He says he further developed the idea after working for France Telecom, Microsoft and Skype, and chose to "disrupt" the financial world because it could open doors to other enticing industries.

"If for example a banker is advising Airbus in a bond issue to finance its next investment, they will work with legal, government and auditing services," with each communicating on the same platform, Gurle said.

He said he hopes to diversify Symphony beginning in 2018, moving into sectors such as insurance, health, defense and aviation, building a secured network for businesses. A son of French and British diplomats, Gurle began his career in France but in January settled in Singapore to expand Symphony in Asia.

A Bloomberg rival? While Symphony is not really a head-to-head competitor with Bloomberg it is gaining ground on the dominant player on Wall Street.

Bloomberg, which has existed since 1983, offers a vast panoply of services, including research, analysis, trading, data and news, in addition to messaging, at an average annual cost of \$22,000 per terminal.

While Bloomberg is a closed ecosystem, Symphony by contrast integrates outside services-and with annual subscriptions at just \$180. This flexibility allowed it to rack up 200,000 users in barely two years, and it is on track to reach 300,000 by the end of this year. There are 325,000 Bloomberg terminal users.

But Spencer Mindlin of the business research firm Aite Group notes that "Bloomberg has been the incumbent for a very, very long time."

"There still is a long way to go" for any competitor. Bloomberg is still the favored channel between clients and traders, according to one Wall Street broker who spoke on condition of anonymity, adding that his firm prohibited traders from using Symphony for outside communications. Even so, most major banks are using Symphony for internal communications and for employees with administrative and marketing roles, Mindlin said.

'All favorable signs' With \$25 million in revenues in 2016, Symphony's goal is for a positive cash flow by next year. Wayne Kurtzman, an analyst at the market intelligence group IDC, said Symphony focused on a highly-regulated industry that stood to gain from collaboration.

This, in addition to its important new features and growing user base, were "all favorable signs for Symphony," he said. "The global collaboration market is seeing significant growth, which will continue," Kurtzman said.

"Companies focusing on regulated industries, which are traditionally slower to adopt new technologies, will see growth as well."

Unlike earlier messaging systems such as FIX, AOL IM or Wickr, which moved into the financial world with mixed results, Symphony is arriving as major banks are cutting costs and keeping a closer eye on traders after the Libor exchange and interest rate manipulation scandals.

"Symphony has sophisticated, real-time surveillance tools," Gurle said. "If there's an information policy violation, the firm can automatically cut off communication." He has agreed to let New York's Department of Financial Services, which was unnerved by the degree of encryption promised to clients, access chat logs in suspected cases of wrongdoing. — AFP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Sunday 21 May 2017. Table with columns for Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low, Volume, Value (KWD), Trades, Last, Change. Includes sections for Basic Materials, Industrials, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Consumer Services, Telecommunications, Banks, Investment Instruments, Technology, and Parallel Market.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. At 02:00 PM Previous Day. Table with columns for Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance %, Yearly Performance %. Includes sections for Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, and Global Bond Yields.

POLITICAL DRAMA AT THE HEART OF MARKETS

NBK WEEKLY MONEY MARKETS REPORT

With words such as impeachment being thrown around in every interview relating to the US President, the Trump reflation story that started in November seems to be rapidly fading away to the extent of potentially becoming an old forgotten memory if this political turmoil continues. Although the whole story covered in the news might not lead to any actual political result, currencies were the first to respond. All of the major currencies made gains against the dollar this week with the Swiss Franc leading the charge with a gain of 2.66 percent. Equity markets also began to waiver and volatility began to rise.

Needless to say, with controversies surrounding the new administration continue to be markets' main focal point, promises of new fiscal policies continue to be postponed if not forgotten at the expense of a continuation of dramatic political shenanigans.

The loss of confidence continues to affect the overall markets' mood and caused investors to flee risky assets and hide in treasuries. Ten year US yields continue to drop after reaching over 2.6 percent in March, while the US dollar continues to fall to a seven-month low, registering a drop of over 2 percent this week. Since the fourteen year high registered in January, the US dollar index has now fallen by 5.8 percent. US equities also had the steepest weekly drop in eight months before slightly recovering on Friday.

Even Fed speakers who have been accustomed to moving markets in the past couple of years, are being ignored in the latest political mess. For instance, Cleveland Fed President Mester reiterated on Thursday her call for more US rate hikes now that the US economy has reached full employment and with inflation nearing the Fed's 2 percent inflation target.

On the other side of the ocean, after a brief pause following the French elections, the Euro continues to move higher and is likely to continue on the same path over the next couple of weeks. Consumer confidence in the Eurozone continues to be restored, while investors seem to be pricing in additional hawkishness to be delivered on June 8 when the ECB council meets. The Euro had its best performing week this year increasing 2.35 percent in reaction to the stumbling USD and increased optimism. Even the preliminary GDP reading saw the economy growing by 0.5 percent in the first quarter and 1.7 percent over the year. The EUR/USD closed off the week at 1.1204.

The Sterling Pound had a mixed week, with manifesto releases from the two major parties

showing the Labor party moving radically to the left while the Conservatives picked every policy available to help the government in the Brexit negotiating platform. After reaching its high following the stellar April retail sales and gaining support from a struggling USD, the currency was knocked back slightly after the release of dismal poor wage. It managed however to recoup some of its losses closing the week at 1.3033.

Being the safe haven of choice, the Yen was the currency that benefited the most from the global risk aversion this week. Even upbeat economic data from the US provided little support to the dollar as traders remained deeply concerned with US President Donald Trump's political turmoil. Add on this stronger data out of Japan, the Yen registered over two percent gains against the USD. Also, Japan's economy posted the fastest growth rate since the same period in 2016 at an annualized rate of 2.2 percent. After opening the week at 113.30 the Yen made its way to a close at 111.26.

In the commodities complex, oil prices managed to make positive gains on speculation that OPEC members were looking to extend their production cuts and US crude supplies fell by 1.8 million barrels. Saudi Arabia and non-OPEC Russia have already voiced their support for the extension. The meeting will take place on May 25 to decide whether to extend beyond their June 30 deadline. Brent Crude and West Texas Intermediate were last 53.61 and 50.67 respectively.

Strong business confidence

Measures of business confidence continue to point to strong spending growth. Philadelphia Fed survey jumped 16.8 points in May to 38.8, which was the second highest reading in the current business cycle. Recall that the headline Philadelphia business conditions index began to pick up meaningfully in the wake of the US presidential election and peaked in February at 43.3. Despite falling in May by 3.9 points to 32.6, the level of the index remains very healthy, which bodes well for capital spending in the current quarter and beyond. The six-month outlook for capital expenditures index has averaged 34.6, the highest level since Q1 1984.

Moreover, Industrial production grew in April at the fastest monthly rate in more than three years due to gains in the manufacturing sector. While gains were broad based and covered several sectors such as utilities and mining output, automotive production was largest mover which rebounded 5 percent

from a fall in March. The factory sector is off to a strong start in the second quarter despite signs of slowdown in China and lack of consumer spending. According to the Federal Reserve, industrial production grew 1 percent in April.

On a less positive note, new home construction and building permits unexpectedly declined in April despite US employment at near full capacity. Economists suggest that the decline was due to lack of supply rather than demand. Furthermore, unusually warm weather that may have moved up construction earlier in 2017. Steady hiring and healthier finances are likely to continue to drive home purchases in coming months. Housing starts in April were 2.6 percent lower than March at 1.172 million and building permits to start construction were 2.5 percent lower to 1.260 million. Both figures were better than

Rates – 21st May, 2017

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0924	1.0920	1.1211	1.1204	1.1115	1.1400	1.1265
GBP	1.2887	1.2864	1.3039	1.3034	1.2820	1.3220	1.3075
JPY	113.18	110.21	113.85	111.26	109.20	113.40	110.75
CHF	1.0003	0.9722	1.0018	0.9722	0.9520	0.9830	0.9665

the same period in 2016 however.

ECB credibility

According to ECB Governing Council member Weidmann, "If the economic situation and inflation sustainably rises toward our goal of 2 percent, which is our definition of price stability, then we also take this into account in our monetary policy. If you look closely, then at least for the euro area you can say that political risks, after the elections in France, have generally diminished, even if new risks could arise."

In the minutes of the ECB's April meeting, Peter Praet called on ECB members to be "particularly cautious" on what the central bank's next steps, as any clues could jolt financial markets that have become accustomed to mass bond-buying. Benoit Cœuré, meanwhile, said in an interview published this week that the ECB needed to change its communication on the recovery soon, or risk losing its credibility.

We believe that while the ECB is unlikely to tighten policy via rate hikes in the absence of meaningful, self-sustained inflationary pressure until after tapering is complete; rates can be expected to start moving higher and curves to

steepen in Europe. This will happen on the back of increasing debates at the heart of the ECB council. The first proof would potentially come from the June ECB Meeting as a major turning point in the ECB monetary policy.

German sentiment high

The eurozone economy continued to expand in 2017 growing 0.5 percent in the first quarter while growing at 1.7 percent year-on-year. The fastest-growing economies were Latvia, Lithuania and Portugal, which expanded by 1 percent Germany posted a 0.6 percent expansion. With inflation approaching the ECB's target of 2.0 percent, the ECB could be pressured to consider tapering its ultra-loose monetary policy.

German economic sentiment also rose to its highest reading in two years despite missing expectations in May. Company execu-

tives are still optimistic about the growth prospects of Europe's largest economy as reflected by the growth in GDP. According to the report, "the latest figures on the gross domestic product confirm that the German economy is in good shape." The ZEW indicator rose to 20.6 points from 19.5 points in April while the current situation gauge rose to 83.9, up from 80.1.

Higher inflation

Retail sales rebounded in April, increasing 2.3 percent compared with March 2017 and by 4.0 percent compared with April 2016. Despite the number coming on the strong side, the rebound was attributed partly to a decrease in average store prices of 0.2 percent giving back some purchasing power to consumers. Despite the number being inconsistent with the latest CPI figures, retail sales cover goods only while CPI include services as well.

In details, consumer prices rose above expectations in April increasing 2.7 percent year-on-year versus 2.3 percent in March. The main reasons were higher air fares and the price of clothes jumping to the highest level

UK mixed labor

The office of national statistics reported that between October to December 2016 and January to March 2017, the number of people in work increased, the number of unemployed people fell. Employment rose 122k in the 3 months through March, well ahead of the 21k gain expected and the unemployment rate dropped to a 42 year low of 4.6 percent. Wage increase however remained subdued and was relatively flat in the first quarter of 2017 suggesting a further squeeze on UK households. Between January to March 2016 and January to March 2017 total pay increased by 2.4 percent, slightly higher than the 2.3 percent growth rate in the previous period.

RABA minutes

The Reserve Bank of Australia voted to keep its accommodative policies to support the economy the at this month's policy meeting. The Bank cited that subdued growth in labor costs and strong competition in the retail sector had continued to have a dampening effect on inflation while growth in housing credit continued to outpace growth in household incomes. However, recent data suggested that the Australian economy had grown at a moderate pace at the beginning of 2017 with improving employment and underlying inflation slated to pick up to 2 percent by early 2018. No changes are expected for the next RBA meeting in June.

Japan GDP expands

The Japanese economy grew in the first quarter at its fastest pace in a year thanks to robust exports and a helpful boost from private consumption. Japan's economy expanded at an annualized 2.2 percent in the first quarter, exceeding a median market forecast for a 1.7 percent rise to post the fastest growth rate since the same period in 2016. The Japanese economy has now expanded for five consecutive quarters, its longest streak of uninterrupted growth since 2006.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30335
The USDKWD opened at 0.30335 yesterday morning.



Easa Husain Al-Yousifi & Sons Company and Panasonic Launches Jet Stream Air Conditioners with longest Air Throw Capacity

The new energy efficient air conditioners are ideal for spacious Kuwaiti homes, and are capable of 25 meter long air throw

Easa Husain Al Yousifi & Sons Company (EHY) in collaboration with Panasonic Marketing Middle East & Africa (PMMAF), has launched its newest range of Jet Stream Room Air Conditioner, which features a 25-metre air throw capacity, and is ideal for big spaces like living rooms, halls and Dewaneya areas.

The innovative JET STREAM technology and design enhancements like AEROWINGS are the key features that allow the air conditioners to precisely control air flow and enable faster cooling. This also allows the customers to use the AC both on 'shower cooling' and 'direct blast' modes. Jet Stream Room Air Conditioner also comes with Econavi technology, which makes it around 30% more energy efficient compared to a regular air conditioner.

The new air conditioners with ECONAVI sensors can sense human activity in the room, and has an inbuilt air purification system, which utilises nanotechnology to purify the air. The air purification system is capable of capturing 99% of harmful micro-organisms attached to the filter of the AC and on fabrics in the room, as well as those present in the air.

Mr. Deepak Krishnan – Product Manager, Air Conditioners & Major Appliances, PMMAF said, "Amongst all the end user applications, residential sector accounts for the largest share in Kuwait air conditioner market. With the increase in number of large residential projects across the country, Jet Stream Air Conditioner line up is the right solution for Middle Eastern spacious homes. These new air conditioners will fully address Kuwaiti customers' needs and provide comfortable, healthy and reliable

air-conditioning. Keeping sustainable energy benefits in mind, we have incorporated technologies like ECONAVI and AEROWING, which allows faster cooling with reduced energy consumption."

Mr. Sashi Dharan - category head of AC & Home Appliances, EHY commented "We are confident that this power saving, eco-friendly air conditioning product will significantly appeal to our consumers in Kuwait, who are increasingly

investing in energy efficient products. With the introduction of the new Panasonic Jet Stream ACs, we intend to further strengthen our market leadership in providing best room air conditioners in the country."

The Panasonic AC line up in Kuwait now consists a full array of products, which includes standard model with R410, full spec model R22 with Jet Stream and ECONAVI sensors, which are priced competitively.





OOREDOO PARTICIPATES IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PANEL DISCUSSION MOYA HOLDS DISCUSSION AS PART OF ARAB YOUTH CAPITAL INITIATIVE

KUWAIT: Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, reiterated its commitment to supporting youth entrepreneurs, due to the company's firm belief in the vital role of entrepreneurs in bolstering the local economy. The statement came from the B2B Senior Director at Ooredoo Kuwait during a panel discussion organized by the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs held in Sheraton Hotel last weekend.

Al-Babtain noted that the company's deep-rooted belief in supporting youth stems from its core values of caring, connecting and challenging. He added: "Our interest in supporting such initiatives comes to translate the wishes and recommendations of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who under-



scored on numerous occasions the importance of involving private sector entities in the Kuwait 2035 plan."

He added that Ooredoo offers small and medium enterprise owners the best-in-class mobile internet services included within all the solutions and plans that are specifically created to meet the needs of entrepreneurs and small business owners. This is especially important, he added, in our current day where internet plays a major role in establishing any business.

Ooredoo announced earlier its strategic partnership in the regional initiative "Kuwait - Capital of Arab Youth 2017." The initiative was announced earlier with endorsement from the Arab League. Ooredoo Kuwait stated that this partnership stems from its deep-rooted values of caring, connecting and challenging, and is in tandem with its corporate social responsibility agenda, which aims to enrich the experience of youth and support their passions. Ooredoo aims to participate in a number of events that are part of the initiative in the following month, activating the memorandum of understanding that it signed with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs last year.

Kuwait was selected in the 38th assembly of the Arab Ministers of Youth and Sports Council. A number of activi-

ties will take place throughout the initiative's program, with a focus on involving private sector entities in enriching youth experience under the umbrella of corporate social responsibility. Additionally, the initiative will conclude with declaring a charter for building a constructive national youth policy. Empowering youth is among Ooredoo's top priorities through its CSR strategy. The company has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, to support youth projects and initiatives, making it the first telecom provider in Kuwait to sign such a high-level agreement. Ooredoo is continuously working with the Ministry to enrich youth experience in a variety of fields, with a focus on volunteerism.

WARBA BANK WINS 2 AWARDS FROM BANKER MIDDLE EAST

'BEST CORPORATE BANK IN KUWAIT', 'BEST INVESTMENT BANK IN KUWAIT'

KUWAIT: Warba Bank's corporate and investment banking efforts have resulted in the bank winning two prestigious awards from Banker Middle East, namely: "Best Corporate Bank in Kuwait" and "Best Investment Bank in Kuwait" for 2017. These awards are the result of the bank's pursuit of a development strategy in the corporate and investment sectors and its recent achievements in this regard.

The awarding magazine, Banker Middle East, is specialized in analyzing and providing comprehensive information about the global finance community in a precise, simple, and easy-to-understand way. The awards are based on the vote of readers and users of their website among the field of decision-makers in the business and finance community. It is a key reference that sheds light on market changes, giving them a clear idea of the complex economic processes taking place in the global business community.

Commenting on this achievement, Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanem, Warba Bank's Chief Executive Officer said: "Thanks to Allah's Grace, we are proud to say that Warba Bank has achieved a quantum leap in its operations in the corporate and investment sectors by providing them with Islamic banking solutions that meet their expectations and provide them with viable and consistent returns. This is in line with the bank's strategy that aims to support and enhance banking and financing operations. Our

consistent performance has captured the attention of the business community, investors and long-standing rating institutions.

"Thankfully, the bank today enjoys the confidence of the business community and investors who find constructive, viable, and secure opportunities in its investment tools. We will continue to stick to this approach so as to make Warba Bank the first option for investors and businesses by injecting the necessary investments to provide global investment opportunities and develop our services to high standards; in addition to enhancing the bank's digital infrastructure", Al-Ghanem added.

Since the announcement of its new and ongoing development strategy from 2017 to 2021, the bank has diversified its options and products for investors and companies. In the first quarter of this year, it achieved an unprecedented success in covering subscription with its \$250 million sukuk - five times as the issued Sukuk - with an amount of \$1.3 billion to enhance its capital to become the most competitive bank in these sectors in particular. In



Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanem

addition, the bank has successfully acquired a £9 million UK car import and export facility leased to Kia Motors with an irrevocable long-term contract until 2037.

As part of the Bank's commitment to provide innovative Sharia-compliant financing solutions to its customers, Warba Bank has signed a renewable agreement with Al-Mulla International Finance Company (AMIFC) whereby the bank will increase the amount of acquiring financing portfolios from AMIFC so as to reach KD 50 million.

Al-Ghanem concluded, "During the beginning of the year, we promised our customers and investors that we will be the leading Islamic bank in the corporate banking and investment banking sectors, and will provide advanced digital services to individuals, in addition to provide advanced electronic services that mimic the most important needs of the customer. We are fully determined to take this position in the near future relying on developing our services and investment tools.

It is worth mentioning that Warba Bank's performance and success were the main reason for getting Banker Middle East's "Fastest Growing Bank in Kuwait" 2017 award for the third time in a row. Warba Bank received the same award in 2016. During the first quarter of 2017, Warba Bank achieved a net profit of KD 1.3 million - four times as what was achieved during the same period last year.



RAMADAN'S GENEROUS OFFERS ARE BACK WITH NISSAN AL-BABTAIN

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co, the exclusive authorized dealer of Nissan in the State of Kuwait, launched one of the largest campaigns of the year for the Holy month of Ramadan, where customers receive special instant gifts, including smart devices and special prices on all models. The campaign that started 16th of May 2017 continues until the end of June.

Upon purchasing any Nissan vehicle during the month of Ramadan customers will get a chance to choose their gift from a wide variety, which include the latest smart devices along with receiving free registration and 3rd party insurance. Not only that, but customers get Ramadan special prices on all models during the Holy Month and an instant gift upon delivery. "Ramadan Generous Offers are Back" with Nissan

Al-Babtain. Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co would also like to wish all its customers a Ramadan Kareem, wishing to contribute that their strong promotion and the high level of services that they offer will increase and strengthen confidence in its brand and maintain its position as a leader in the local and regional automotive markets.

Nissan Al-Babtain invites customers to celebrate the Ramadan atmosphere within its widespread showrooms around Kuwait and learn about the details of the offers. Nissan Al-Babtain is known on being keen to constantly provide the best deals to its customers throughout the year, as well as after-sales service to meet the growing demand for Nissan and achieve the company's goals to always remain at the forefront of leading automotive brands.

KFH: LONG-TERM INVESTMENT PLANS ACHIEVE GREAT SUCCESS

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH)'s long-term investment plans "Jameati", "Rafaa", "Enjaz" and "Thimar" have achieved great success. KFH offered the total amount saved added to the investment profits to many customers who hold investment plans at the bank.

The customers expressed their appreciation to KFH in recognition of the innovation of the investment products that suit all segments of customers, and allow better investment and savings plans as per accurate perceptions.

Executive Manager Liabilities and Investments Products at KFH, Nehal Almosalem said that several customers have completed the investment plan "Jameati" according to the predetermined period and are entitled to the amounts saved in

addition to competitive profits. She added in a press release, that KFH is the only bank in Kuwait to offer the long-term investment plans products, indicating the huge customers' turnout on KFH investment products reflect their feasibility, while confirming their consistency with customers' savings and investment needs. They also reiterate the bank's vast experience and excellence in offering innovative products that maintain the pioneering position of KFH locally and globally. KFH is moving forward to improve its products and services as per highest international standards of service quality.

Almosalem illustrated that the investment plans are "Jameati" for education, "Rafaa" for marriage, "Enjaz" for youths' projects, and "Thimar"

for retirement. Customers target a sum of money that they wish to collect in the future ranging from KD 4-120 thousand, and through an organized plan, this sum of money is saved during a specific time frame over monthly installments ranging from 2-39 years according to every plan's terms and conditions. Accumulative sums of money are invested, and customers receive annual investment profits.

She added that all investment plans enjoy ensuring Takaful coverage, be it full coverage or partial one. It is worth noting that customers can withdraw from their plan's account starting from the second year of the investment period.

She continued: all the investment plans provide customers with full flexibility in adjusting the amount to be invested or monthly installments at any time, as they can deposit random payments in addition to monthly payments without affecting the schedule for the investment plan or target amount.

"Jameati" investment plan is tailored to meet parents' aspiration in paying their children's university education fees when they are 18 years old, while "Rafaa" is designed to cover marriage expenses and it assists in the early family planning and parents' planning for their children. Moreover, "Enjaz" is a multipurpose investment plan that caters for the youth's aspirations and ambitions by allowing them to plan for their future and achieve their goals by running their own businesses and projects or purchasing a house etc. Furthermore, "Thimar" contributes in offering restful and comfortable retirement life for customers, who can receive the targeted amount with all investment profits accrued by the end of the investment plan period identified by them.



Nehal Almosalem

AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-NAJMA ACCOUNT DRAW

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

The winners of the Al-Najma daily draw are:-

- Ramy Helmy Abdulatif Abdulmoneim — KD 7000
- Noor Mohammed Al-Abdullah — KD 7000
- Haya Jamal Al-Masri — KD 7000
- Soner Bagdad — KD 7000
- Hisham Abdullah Al-Romi — KD 7000

Al-Najma awards are now brighter and bigger than ever.

With the revamped Al-Najma account, all your dreams will be turned to reality. On top of offering the highest daily prize in Kuwait for KD 7,000, now our Mega prize draws got big-

ger to reach KD 250,000.

The new prizes scheme for Al-Najma account. Daily draw to win KD 7000.

- Quarterly draws to win great prizes that would start from KD 100,000 to KD 250,000
- 1ST quarter — KD 100 000
- 2ND Quarter — KD 150 000
- 3RD quarter — KD 200 000
- 4TH quarter — KD 250, 000

With Al Najma you have more chances to win greater prizes

- Each KD 25 kept in your account gives you one chance to win

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

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

ALARGAN CEO TO DISCUSS HOUSING SECTOR CHALLENGES

KUWAIT: ALARGAN International Real Estate Company, a leading real estate developer in the Middle East region, announced its participation in the upcoming Housing and Residential Development Forum, to be held on May 23 and 24 under the patronage of the Ministry of Electricity (MEW) and the Supreme Council of Planning and Development. As a development forum, it will provide an overview of housing projects under planning and development by Kuwait's Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), as well as an insight into the latest sustainable design and builds solutions.

The Forum will be inaugurated by the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Planning and Development, Dr Khaled A Mahdi, the Director of the Master Planning Department at the Kuwait Municipality and President of the Kuwait Society of Engineers, Eng. Saad Muhalbi as well as the Director of Planning at the PAHW, Naser Khraibut.

Speaking during an interactive session, ALARGAN CEO and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, Khaled Al-Mashaan, will expand on the opportunities and challenges in the housing sector in Kuwait. Al-Mashaan said: "With a growing middle-income population segment, we have a need today, to develop affordable communities that provide high quality residential and mixed-use spaces that ensure sustainable urban development. These communities should have standards

that create interconnected cities with a focus on green buildings, and most importantly, create a healthy and unique lifestyle experience.

A strategy regulated by government authorities and executed in partnership with the private sector can deliver this said need. Ultimately, this will develop the local infrastructure, benefiting the country and drive the economy. The Housing and Residential Development Forum is a great opportunity to discuss these needs and showcase the proven capabilities of the private sector in a master strategy that serves the population."

Speaking as well at the Forum is ALARGAN's Chief Business Development Officer, Meshaan Mohammed Al-Meshaan, who will take part of a panel discussion on strategies to establish a collaborative environment between the public and private sector to meet Kuwait's rising demand for housing. ALARGAN International Real Estate Company was established as a contracting company and has evolved to become a leading developer with fully-owned subsidiaries in the region, executing developments that are sustainable and add value to their communities.



Khaled Al-Mashaan

HOW NATIONS, ENTERPRISES CAN LEAD CYBER DEFENSE

DUBAI: As the cyber threat landscape continues to evolve, it's imperative that nation states act now to put in place cyber defenses to protect themselves from the most advanced threats the world has to offer. At GISEC 2017, BT will be discussing global pressing issues in cybersecurity, including: how nation states and enterprises can lead cyber defense. BT has always been at the forefront of cyber security development as an essential part of protecting its global network. And, as BT's expertise has evolved, they have shared knowledge with UK government and some of the largest business organizations in the world. They've distilled all this insight and proficiency into practical functionality that can give all enterprises and nations the cyber defense they need.

How is the global threat landscape changing?

The recent worldwide WannaCry ransomware attack is a stark reminder of the increasingly dangerous and fast-developing world of cybercrime we all live and do business in. Every business, financial institution, telecoms provider, energy company and government should now consider itself to be under threat from cyber criminals' intent on causing devastation for gain. This ever-growing network of cyber criminals is intent on developing the most

advanced attack methods to penetrate your systems. And, increasingly, nation states are employing these hacker services to damage other governments and influence political outcomes.

We need to respond to this. Those of us with national responsibilities, the leaders of nationally-important businesses, and major institutions, need to unite to fight. We need to lead a defense strategy against this cyber warfare at a national level, bringing the best minds and tools together to protect your assets and serve the national interest. We all know that the cyber defense landscape is one of constant change, but 2016 saw a seismic shift in attack methodologies, threat actors, means, motive and opportunities.

Throughout 2015, identity theft and ransomware exploitation pay-rolled heavy criminal investment in new technology, new attack vectors and new, increasingly complex exploits. On the back of this growth, and due partially to geopolitical influences, cyber-attacks in 2016 changed motives. The most advanced attackers moved to acquire a greater wealth: power. As a result, we've seen wave after wave of serious attacks designed to display, acquire or leverage power. Nation states are flexing their cyber powers, and displaying a disturbing willingness to escalate their actions to cause major nation-state-level threats. Relatively unso-

phisticated countries are revealing the ability and determination to use cybercrime to fund national developments such as nuclear weapons.

How can this be prevented at the national level?

The only effective response to this level of cyber-attack is a major step up in cyber security to give us national-level insight and oversight that will work closely with industry and government. We need to develop a cohesive, multi-layered and sophisticated national cyber defense capability. It starts by establishing a focus for its national cyber defense capability, by creating a National Cyber Security Centre, or Capability (NCSC), such as the ones in the UK and in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in addition to the cyber security centre in Dubai.

A NCSC then begins a significant period of strategy, policy creation and technical direction setting - all alongside working closely with its nation's industry. It's vital that government, critical infrastructure and industry forge strong and effective relationships to share relevant information and, together, make decisions that help detect, deter and (ultimately), defeat them at source. In fact, the NCSC in the UK played a vital role in coordinating a response

to the WannaCry attack - so it's clear that they're effective. A national cyber defense capability ideally divides its organization into the four key operational domains of intelligence, forensics, threat monitoring and information sharing.

What is the role of large enterprises in preventing cyber threats?

We all accept that business plays a key role in determining the success of a nation, and that national decisions impact on business; this interdependence now extends to cyber security. Cyber security has stepped beyond the realm of pure cyber security specialists. Key decision makers need to understand what data the NCSC will require, as well as how to maintain and follow the guidance and policies provided. You need to be ready to action NCSC-generated intelligence, to respond and defend with agility, in order to help the NCSC identify threats that could devastate businesses like yours. This spirit of shared enterprise makes it much easier for organizations like yours to scale up their cyber security measures, since the approaches taken by the NCSC provide a template to follow to develop a multifaceted, highly-responsive cyber defense capability.



DELL EMC LAUNCHES DATA PROTECTION APPLIANCE, EXPANDS CLOUD PROTECTION

LAS VEGAS: The new Dell EMC Integrated Data Protection Appliance (IDPA), a purpose-built, pre-integrated and turnkey appliance that converges protection storage, software, search and analytics in a single appliance, provides data protection across a wide ecosystem of applications and platforms, and offers native cloud-tiering for long-term retention. In addition, Dell EMC also rolling out new capabilities to its cloud data protection portfolio enable customers to simply and effectively protect and back up their data anywhere, anytime.

Introducing Dell EMC Integrated Data Protection Appliance

Efficient data protection is not easy to accomplish with many of today's solutions, where there is often complexity in the setup or the need to manage multiple point solutions for different applications, platforms or data silos. Often, there are multiple products to manage (e.g., backup software, backup servers, search servers and multiple vendors), which can result in lengthy and time-consuming deployments, siloed data protection environments and complex and expensive management. Dell EMC IDPA is a pre-integrated appliance designed to help organizations meet these data protection challenges head on.

Key benefits of IDPA:

- Protection storage, protection software, search and analytics in a single, easy-to-deploy, pre-configured appliance.
- Accelerated time to value and high performance - up to 10X faster time to protect than traditional build your own data protection deployment alternatives and 20% faster performance than the closest competitor.

- Expansive coverage for physical and virtual workloads, including support for a wide application ecosystem and multiple hypervisors.

- Coverage can seamlessly extend to the cloud with native cloud-tiering for long-term retention to private or public cloud.

- Encryption, fault detection and healing.
- Brings together industry-leading deduplication (average 55:1 deduplication rate) for data residing both on premise and in the cloud.

- Ability to scale without overhead for the security, reliability and value customers expect from Dell EMC.

- Flash enabled and VMware optimized for instant access and restore of virtual machines, enabling compliance with stringent RPO/RTO requirements for VMware environments.

- Customers can leverage the flash enabled capabilities to use appliance as live storage for dev-test environments.

IDPA also provides integration with key business critical applications and platforms for improved performance and greater levels of data owner control, including: MongoDB, Hadoop and MySQL. Further, IDPA offers the simplicity of a single user interface for typical daily operations. Through this UI, users can schedule and manage protection jobs, set up policies for long-term retention in cloud and comply with the protection SLAs.

IDPA will be available in four different models (DP5300, DP5800, DP8300, and DP8800) to fit the needs of midsize and enterprise customers, starting at 34 terabytes usable capacity at entry level and scaling up to 1 petabyte usable capacity at the high end. Services, such as remote monitoring and auto-dispatch of parts from globally distributed service depots, provide customers with additional confidence and peace of

mind that their data and investment are protected and supported by enterprise-tested and proven serviceability from Dell EMC.

Announcing new DELL EMC cloud protection capabilities

Dell EMC offers a comprehensive portfolio of multi-cloud data protection solutions for organizations at any point in their cloud journey. Currently, more than 150 PB of data in the cloud is managed by Dell EMC Data Protection technology, which is 2x the closest competitor. The enhancements to our portfolio that further broaden our cloud data protection capabilities adding two new uses cases for Protection Storage in the cloud and Disaster Recovery to the cloud.

With the release of Data Domain Virtual Edition (DD VE) 3.1, organizations can gain the performance, efficiency, and reliability of Data Domain in the cloud. DD VE enables backup of both traditional and emerging workloads in Amazon WebServices (AWS) and Microsoft Azure and efficient replication to, from and within the cloud. Additionally, the Data Protection Suite can perform monitoring and reporting of these backups in the cloud.

The combination of Data Domain and the Data Protection Suite can now provide low-cost disaster recovery to the cloud by enabling organizations to extend protection of their on-premises environments to AWS S3. Data is sent securely and efficiently, requiring minimal compute cycles and footprint within AWS. In the event of a disaster, VM images can be restored and run from within AWS. Since neither Data Protection Suite nor Data Domain are required in the cloud, compute cycles are only required in the event of a restore, enabling users to capture additional cost savings.

TAWASUL TELECOM SPONSORS 9TH INFO SECURITY CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

KUWAIT: Tawasul Telecom, the leading provider of MPLS networking services in the Gulf Middle East, sponsored the 9th Kuwait Info Security conference and exhibition that took place 10-11 May at the



Salem Al-Mulaifi

Radisson Blu Hotel. The event covered the entire spectrum of IT security, business continuity management and risk, all while fostering opportunities for regional and international IT professionals to network, share experiences in IT security and exchange ideas on emerging technology trends, applications and practices.

Commenting on this initiative, Salem Al-Mulaifi, Tawasul Telecom's Chief Marketing and Strategy Officer said that "participating in such an event allows Tawasul Telecom to stay at the forefront of the latest developments in the industry. Our employees are our most important asset and we are committed to their professional development. This was a great opportunity for them to share and learn

from other professionals in the same industry." Earlier this year, Tawasul Telecom unveiled its offerings of highly sophisticated tailored threat-monitoring service. The service allows businesses to detect threats, take immediate action to counteract these, and put preventative measures in place to prevent future attacks. Damage control services are also offered in the eventuality of an attack.

Customers benefit from a range of pre-defined intelligence reporting options, along with tailored solutions such as face-to-face workshops to identify at-risk assets, additional intelligence requirements, advice on how to efficiently position resources and new technologies to meet current and developing threats, and defining processes for how intelligence is used and how it is shared internally. "In today's challenging environment, organizations must stay connected at all times which exposes them to risks that come with 'always-on' connectivity.

It is our mission in Tawasul Telecom to continue to help organizations survive and thrive by providing flexible and high-quality services" ended Al-Mulaifi.



TOKYO: In this July 14, 2014, file photo, a fuel cell hybrid vehicle is refueled from a mobile hydrogen station at the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry in Tokyo. Japan is backing a push for pollution-free vehicles that run on hydrogen and planning to build more hydrogen fueling stations so that fuel-cell vehicles on roads will grow to 40,000 by 2020, from the current handful. The collaboration on fuel cells, announced Friday, brings together 11 companies, including automakers Toyota Motor Corp., Nissan Motor Co. and Honda Motor Co. energy and gas companies and a bank. — AP

24% UAE USERS ONLY UPDATE THEIR APPS WHEN FORCED

DUBAI: Digital clutter is growing due to an explosion in application usage and advances in the storage capacity of devices. But poor maintenance of these apps is leaving devices vulnerable to security threats. A new report by Kaspersky Lab reveals the scale of the digital clutter problem among Internet users worldwide.

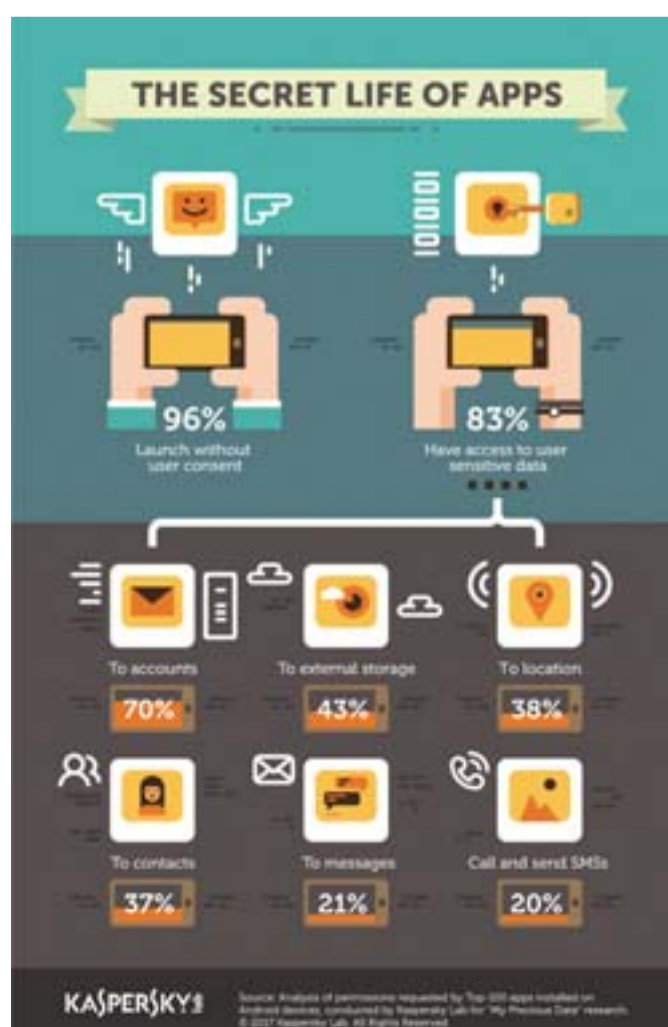
The study found that users typically install 12 Android apps every month but delete only 10, in effect adding two apps to their device on a monthly basis. With more apps installed on devices, managing apps is important in preventing digital clutter. However, we found that in only half (51%) of cases, UAE users regularly refresh and revise the contents of their device and delete unused docs and apps.

The findings are part of a new report compiled by Kaspersky Lab called "Digital clutter and its dangers". The study is based on insight gained from a unique combination of an online survey across 17 countries, statistical analysis from the Kaspersky Security Network (KSN) and an experiment into app performance by Kaspersky Lab internal testers. The build-up of digital clutter means that app cleansing and updating are now more important than ever in order to combat malware that use apps' vulnerabilities to penetrate devices. But

the survey found that 24% of UAE users only update apps on their devices when they are forced to, and in 12% of cases, they try not to do it at all.

One of the main dangers is that the apps themselves can put user data and devices at risk due to their everyday activity. Technical findings from Kaspersky Lab show that of 100 Android apps users can manage (ie install and delete), 83 have access to sensitive user data, such as contacts, messages and data, and can even make calls and send SMSs. Additional findings from KSN show how apps can operate without user permission. On average users have 66 apps on their Android device. When a representative sample of 66 of the most popular Android apps were tested, 54 launched in the background without users even touching them, consuming, on average, 22Mb traffic per day without any user interaction.

App settings give users a degree of control over what the app can access and interact with on the device. However, the survey found that only 46% of people in the UAE intentionally adjust the settings of each application on their smartphone. Furthermore, only 28% can refuse to install a mobile app if they are not satisfied with the content of license agreements.



WEF NAMES GHOSON AL-KHALED IN YOUNG GLOBAL LEADERS LIST

KUWAIT CITY: In its annual list, The World Economic Forum named ACICO Industries Group COO, Eng. Ghosoon Al-Khaled to be the only Kuwaiti personality to be selected in the field of art, business, entrepreneurship, technology leaders, thinkers and decision makers who are under the age of forty.



Ghosoon Al-Khaled

Among current and former YGLs are heads of government and Fortune 500 companies, winners of Nobel and Oscar Awards, Goodwill Ambassadors of the UN and pioneers of social work. They have been invited to join a community for a five-year leadership journey that aims, to tackle the world's most complex and pressing challenges. These young leaders will be part of a community working to find a cure for spinal paralysis, the addressing of water scarcity, the creation of a global emergency response network and promote waste-free circular economies.

Meanwhile, Al-Khaled has been selected for her professional achievements and her commitment towards the Kuwaiti society. This in turn will contribute to building the future for other

young leaders. The WEF further believes that the young leaders can break down silos, bridge cultures and use their collective skills to get things done, that will have a positive impact across private, public and civil society organizations.

In turn, Eng Ghosoon Al-Khaled expressed her happiness and pride for this honor, which confirms that the Kuwaiti woman has managed to reach the world and gain the confidence of decision-makers worldwide. She said: "Kuwaiti women are able to play a leading role in all institutions and sectors, enabling them to be placed first in categories and lists of major magazines and related bodies".

Al-Khaled also said: "It is a privilege for all Kuwaitis ladies to be selected for these specialized international lists. These lists show those women are able to succeed substantially within the community of business and finance".

She emphasized that Kuwaiti women are also able to play a significant role in building the future of the State of Kuwait, as she has sufficient administrative and scientific capabilities and expertise to be a pioneer among the women of the Arab Gulf and globally. Al-Khaled stressed the importance of hard work and meticulous implementation thereof, with regard to respect and time without prejudice to her family responsibilities.

STUDY FINDS SPEEDING UP SEPSIS CARE CAN SAVE LIVES

WASHINGTON: Minutes matter when it comes to treating sepsis, the killer condition that most Americans probably have never heard of, and new research shows it's time they learn. Sepsis is the body's out-of-control reaction to an infection. By the time patients realize they're in trouble, their organs could be shutting down.

New York became the first state to require that hospitals follow aggressive steps when they suspect sepsis is brewing. Researchers examined patients treated there in the past two years and reported yesterday that faster care really is better. Every additional hour it takes to give antibiotics and perform other key steps increases the odds of death by 4 percent, according to the study reported at an American Thoracic Society meeting and in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

That's not just news for doctors or for other states considering similar rules. Patients also have to reach the hospital in time. "Know when to ask for help," said Dr Christopher Seymour, a critical care specialist at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine who led the study. "If they're not aware of sepsis or know they need help, we can't save lives." The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last year began a major campaign to teach people that while sepsis starts with vague symptoms, it's a

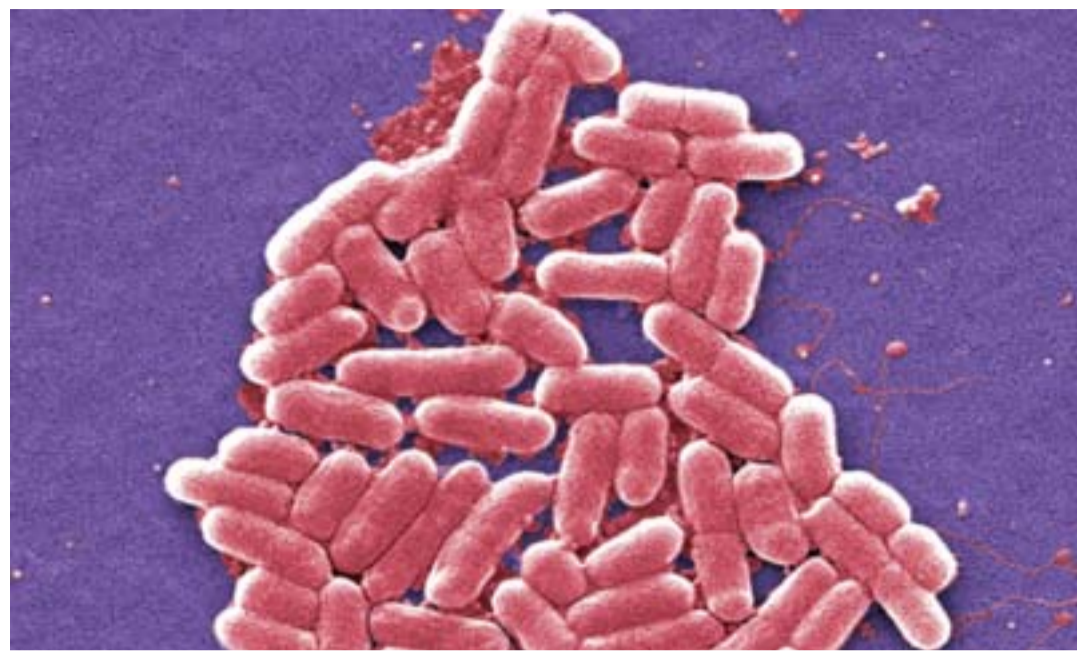
medical emergency. To make sure the doctor doesn't overlook the possibility, "Ask, 'Could this be sepsis?'" advised the CDC's Dr Lauren Epstein.

Sepsis is more than an infection

Once misleadingly called blood poisoning or a bloodstream infection, sepsis occurs when the body goes into overdrive while fighting an infection, injuring its own tissue. The cascade of inflammation and other damage can lead to shock, amputations, organ failure or death. It strikes more than 1.5 million people in the United States a year and kills more than 250,000. Even a minor infection can be the trigger. A recent CDC study found nearly 80 percent of sepsis cases began outside of the hospital, not in patients already hospitalized because they were super-sick or recovering from surgery.

There's no single symptom

In addition to symptoms of infection, worrisome signs can include shivering, a fever or feeling very cold; clammy or sweaty skin; confusion or disorientation; a rapid heartbeat or pulse; confusion or disorientation; shortness of breath; or simply extreme pain or discomfort. If you think you have an infection that's getting worse, seek care immediately, Epstein said. — AP



WASHINGTON: This 2006 colorized scanning electron micrograph image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows a strain of the *Escherichia coli* bacteria. — AP



MONROVIA, Liberia: In this file photo a medical worker sprays people being discharged from the Island Clinic Ebola treatment center in Monrovia, Liberia. — AP photos

STRAPPED UN HEALTH AGENCY SPENDS BIG ON TRAVEL

WE DON'T TRUST PEOPLE TO DO THE RIGHT THING WHEN IT COMES TO TRAVEL

LONDON: The World Health Organization routinely spends about \$200 million a year on travel - far more than what it does out to fight some of the biggest problems in public health including AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria, according to internal documents obtained by The Associated Press. As the cash-strapped UN health agency has pleaded for more money to fund its responses to health crises worldwide, it has also been struggling to get its own travel costs under control. Despite introducing new rules to try to curb its expansive travel budget, senior officials have complained internally that UN staffers are breaking the rules by booking perks like business class airplane tickets and rooms in five-star hotels.

The \$201 million yearly average that WHO spends on travel far outstrips what it reserves for some of its top programs, although those budg-

et that sends the wrong message to the rest of the agency's 7,000 staffers. "We don't trust people to do the right thing when it comes to travel," said Nick Jeffreys, WHO's director of finance, during an in-house seminar on accountability in September 2015 - a video of which was obtained by the AP.

Despite WHO's numerous travel regulations, Jeffreys said staffers "can sometimes manipulate a little bit their travel." He said the agency couldn't be sure they were always booking the cheapest ticket or that the travel was even warranted. "People don't always know what the right thing to do is," he said. Ian Smith, executive director of Chan's office, said the chair of WHO's audit committee said the agency often did little to stop misbehavior. "We, as an organization, sometimes function as if rules are there to be broken and

exceptionally high due to the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa. But staffers are still openly ignoring the rules. An internal analysis in March, obtained by the AP, found that only two of seven departments at WHO's Geneva headquarters met their targets, and concluded the compliance rate for booking travel in advance was between 28 and 59 percent.

Since 2013, WHO has paid out \$803 million for travel. WHO's approximately \$2 billion annual budget is drawn from the taxpayer-funded contributions of its 194 member countries, with the United States the largest contributor. After he was elected, US President Donald Trump tweeted: "The UN has such great potential," but had become "just a club for people to get together, talk, and have a good time. So sad!" Some health experts said while WHO's travel costs look out of place when compared to some of its disease budgets, that doesn't necessarily mean that travel expenses are inflated.

Disease programs

Michael Osterholm, an infectious diseases expert at the University of Minnesota, has frequently been flown to WHO meetings - in economy - on the agency's dime. "This may just speak to how misplaced international priorities are, that WHO is getting so little for these disease programs," he said. During the Ebola disaster in West Africa, WHO's travel costs spiked to \$234 million. Although experts say on-the-ground help was critical, some question whether the agency couldn't have shaved costs so that more funds went to West Africa, where the three stricken countries couldn't even afford basics like protective boots, gloves and soap for endangered medical workers or body bags for the thousands who died.

Dr Bruce Aylward, who directed WHO's outbreak response, racked up nearly \$400,000 in travel expenses during the Ebola crisis, sometimes flying by helicopter to visit clinics instead of traveling by jeep over muddy roads, according to internal trip reports he filed. Chan spent more than \$370,000 in travel that year, as documented in a confidential 25-page analysis of WHO expenses that identified the agency's top 50 spenders. Three sources who asked not to be identified for fear of losing their jobs told the AP that Chan often flew in first class.

Until February, WHO said the travel policy "included the possibility for the (director-general) to fly first class," but that Chan flew business class and requested the policy be changed. "There's a huge inequality between the people at the top who are getting helicopters and business class and everyone else who just has to make do," said Sophie Harman, an expert in global health politics at Queen Mary University in London. Other international aid agencies, including Doctors Without Borders, explicitly forbid their staff from traveling in business class - even having the charity's president fly in economy class, a spokeswoman said. With a staff of about 37,000 aid workers versus WHO's 7,000 staffers, Doctors Without Borders spends about \$43 million on travel a year. — AP



GENEVA, Switzerland: In this file photo, Margaret Chan, left, General Director of the World Health Organization (WHO) and Bruce Aylward, right, Executive Director of WHO and Health Emergencies Director-General's Special Representative for the Ebola Response, speak to the media after The International Health Regulations Emergency Committee on Ebola, during a press conference, at the WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

ets sometimes include certain travel costs. Last year, WHO spent about \$71 million on AIDS and hepatitis. On malaria, it spent \$61 million. And to slow tuberculosis, WHO invested \$59 million. Still, some health programs do get exceptional funding - the agency spends about \$450 million trying to wipe out polio every year.

Travel regulations

On a recent trip to Guinea where WHO director-general Dr Margaret Chan praised health workers in West Africa for triumphing over Ebola, she stayed in the biggest presidential suite at the Palm Camayenne hotel in Conakry. The suite has an advertised price of 900 euros (\$1,008) a night. The agency declined to say who picked up the tab, noting only that her hotels are sometimes paid for by the host country. But some say

that exceptions are the rule rather than the norm," Smith said.

Earlier that year, a memorandum was sent to Chan and other top leaders with the subject, "ACTIONS TO CONTAIN TRAVEL COSTS" in all-caps. The memo reported that compliance with rules that travel be booked in advance was "very low" and also pointed out that WHO was under pressure from its member countries to save money. Travel would always be necessary, the memo said, but "as an organization we must demonstrate that we are serious about managing this appropriately."

In a statement to the AP, the UN health agency said "the nature of WHO's work often requires WHO staff to travel" and said costs had been reduced 14 percent last year compared to the previous year - although that year's total was

BARRED FROM WHO MEET, TAIWAN URGES GLOBAL 'PRESSURE' ON CHINA

GENEVA: Taiwan voiced deep disappointment yesterday at its exclusion from a major World Health Organization meeting, and urged international pressure on rival China to ensure it has access in future. The WHO's main annual meeting, the World Health Assembly (WHA), kicks off in Geneva today, but for the first time in eight years, Taiwan will not be granted access. "We feel very, very disappointed," Taiwanese Health Minister Chen Shih-chung told AFP in Geneva yesterday. Self-governing Taiwan, which China sees as a renegade province awaiting reunification, has been invited to attend the WHO's main annual meeting as an observer every year since 2009, but this year it did not receive an invitation.

Relations with China have become increasingly frosty since Beijing-sceptic President Tsai Ing-wen took power almost a year ago and China has sought to block the island from a string of international events. "Each year since 2009, a cross-strait understanding has been the foundation for a special arrangement for Chinese Taipei to participate as an observer in the World Health Assembly," WHO's head of governing bodies and external relations, Timothy Armstrong, told reporters earlier this month.

"Unfortunately this year, no such cross-strait understanding exists, so there is no basis for the invitation." As a result, Chen will not even be able to access the UN's European headquarters in Geneva, where the WHA will take place through May 31. Taiwanese media have also been refused access to cover the event.

Permanent observer?

But Chen told AFP he had travelled to the Swiss city anyway to meet health minis-

ters and diplomats from more than 30 countries on the sidelines of the meeting. "We want every assistance to keep up the international pressure so that this condition will not be happening again," Chen said, refusing to say which country representatives he would be meeting. Taiwan was expelled from the WHO in 1972, a year after losing the "China" seat at the United Nations to Beijing.

With China in the ascendant, Taiwan has shed global allies in recent decades and only 21 countries now recognize the island's sovereignty. Even its most powerful ally, the United States, has no official diplomatic relations with Taipei. US President Donald Trump recently rebuffed the idea of another phone call with Tsai after their protocol-busting chat following his election victory, saying he would not want to damage relations with China's President Xi Jinping. Around a dozen representatives from countries that back Taiwan are expected to push today for the island to receive permanent observer status at the WHO, although there is little hope the request will be granted.

"Obtaining a permanent observer (seat) is our final goal," Chen said, acknowledging though that this was not likely to happen overnight. "We will do it step by step," he said. Chen said there were no plans to meet with Chinese officials during his trip to Geneva, but said that "for the health of both sides we are willing to work together if we have the chance".

He warned that leaving Taiwan out in the cold could be detrimental to global health, with international cooperation and rapid exchange of information seen as vital to halting disease outbreaks. "We feel sorry that the welfare of human health is unnecessarily polluted by China," he said. — AFP



GENEVA: Taiwan's Minister of Health and Welfare Chen Shih-chung (right) works with assistants yesterday. — AFP

OIL-BASED INFERTILITY TEST PRODUCES HIGHER PREGNANCY RATE THAN WATER-BASED TEST: STUDY

NEW YORK: When it comes to using X-rays to check a woman's reproductive system in search of a cause for her infertility, oil turns out to be better than water. A new study concludes that when doctors are debating whether to use a water-based or oil-based contrast fluid to inject into the egg-carrying tubes - part of a test known as hysterosalpingography - infertile women conceive more often with oil. The pregnancy rate after six months was 40 percent when the oil-based fluid was used versus 29 percent with a water-based contrast media. The rates of live births were 39 percent and 28 percent respectively.

"If a woman has an indication to check her tubes with this test, then my advice would be to use the oil contrast," chief author Dr Kim Dreyer of the VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam told Reuters Health by phone. The results were clear, but why oil would produce more pregnancies remains a mystery. "We did not look at the mechanism," she said. "Now we have to do further research to understand why." Nonetheless, the results, announced at the 13th World Congress on Endometriosis in Vancouver and published online by the *New England Journal of Medicine*, suggest an inexpensive step that can be used in some women before in vitro fertilization is attempted.

For years there was a suspicion among doctors that the diagnostic test and the oil contrast medium might enhance pregnancy rates. One review of previously published randomized controlled tests found a 3.6-fold increase in pregnancy. Yet there's been no clear evidence that oil contrast is better than water. "When I was doing this study, a lot of people said, 'We know there's no difference.' But some said, 'Why do the study because we know it works?' That's exactly why we had to do this study," said Dreyer, a gynecology intern.

The results are based on 1,108 women treated in 27 hospitals in the Netherlands. The volunteers, age 18 to 39, had been unable to conceive for at least a year and their Fallopian tubes were being evaluated as part of an attempt to discover why. All had spontaneous menstrual cycles. Oil and water contrast fluids were manufactured by France-based Guerbet. The trial was not blinded. When the chance of the woman getting pregnant on her own over the next 12 months was estimated to be less than 30 percent, the woman was also offered intrauterine insemination. Insemination was also used when the man's sperm count was mildly low or if at least two additional months since the test had passed without pregnancy. — Reuters

ROYALE HAYAT HOSPITAL WELCOMES DR NOHA AL-SALEH AT DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SURGERY

KUWAIT: Royale Hayat Hospital announces the appointment of Dr Noha Al-Saleh, consultant of general surgery and surgical oncology with a subspecialty in General Surgical Oncology from McGill University Quebec / Canada, at the department of general surgery. Dr Noha is an expert in screening for breast and colon cancers, diagnosis and treatment of cancers in most advanced ways, treatment of breast problems (benign



Dr Noha Al-Saleh

and malignant diseases) in specialized ways, treatment of anal problems such as hemorrhoids, fissures and anal abscesses, management of thyroid diseases and treatments of general surgical problems like gallstone and umbilical hernias.

Her vast experience also includes having a special training in breast diseases and breast cancer and treatments, diagnosing and treating breast lumps, breast pains and nipple discharge and following up of high risk patients for breast cancer as well as patients who were previously treated from breast cancer. Dr Noha Al-Saleh graduated from University of Leeds, UK. She is a fellow of the Royal College of Physician And Surgeons of Canada, and a Canadian board certified in general surgery from University of Western Ontario / Canada. Dr Noha has a ten year experience at Kuwait Cancer Control Center in Kuwait. Department of general surgery at Royale Hayat Hospital offers state-of-the-art equipment and technology. Like all departments it has a highly trained staff and the most qualified physicians to provide exceptional care that guarantees safety and comfort to all patients and their families.



WASHINGTON: In this file photo, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Chairman Sen Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn, accompanied by the committee's ranking member Sen Patty Murray, D-Wash, speaks on Capitol Hill in Washington. —AP

US SENATORS RUN INTO OBSTACLES, CONSIDER OPTIONS ON HEALTH BILL

WASHINGTON: Remember the Republican health care bill? Washington is fixated on President Donald Trump's firing of FBI chief James Comey and burgeoning investigations into possible connections between Trump's presidential campaign and Russia. But in closed-door meetings, Senate Republicans are trying to write legislation dismantling President Barack Obama's health care law. They would substitute their own tax credits, ease coverage requirements and cut the federal-state Medicaid program for the poor and disabled that Obama enlarged.

The House passed its version this month, but not without difficulty, and now Republicans who run the Senate are finding hurdles, too. A look at some of those obstacles and what senators are trying to do about them:

Short-term fix?

GOP senators say they're discussing a possible short-term bill if their health care talks drag on. It might include money to help stabilize shaky insurance markets with subsidies to reduce out-of-pocket costs for low-earning people and letting states offer skimpier, and therefore less expensive, policies. It's unclear Democrats would offer their needed cooperation, but Republicans are talking about it. "We've discussed quite a bit the possibility of a two-step process," said Sen. Lamar Alexander, chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. "In 2018 and '19, we'd basically be a rescue team to make sure people can buy insurance."

That could mean Republicans might even temporarily extend Obama's individual mandate - the requirement that people to buy coverage or face tax penalties. It's perhaps the part of Obama's law that Republicans most detest. But it does prompt some people to purchase insurance, which helps curb premiums and make markets viable. Alexander, R-Tenn, said there's a "strong bias" to address short- and long-term problems in a single bill. "If we can't do the real thing, we'd have to do the next best thing," Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, said of short-term legislation.

Time is ticking

Because Democrats oppose the repeal effort unanimously, Republicans will need 50 of their 52 senators to back their overhaul so Vice President Mike Pence's tie-breaking vote would clinch passage. GOP senators show no signs of producing a bill soon. Time is important, espe-

cially with Trump's problems distracting lawmakers. Insurance companies could grow increasingly spooked by the uncertainty and make health care markets even worse by raising premiums or pulling out. Also, the longer it takes Republicans to write the legislation, the less time they'll have for tax cuts and other GOP priorities.

GOP divisions

The House version would end in 2020 the extra federal payments that states get under Obama's law for expanding Medicaid to additional people. Senate conservatives prefer to start phasing out that money next year. But 20 GOP senators come from states that expanded Medicaid and want to protect those voters, so many would rather reduce the payments over many years. Conservatives and moderates are also bickering over how tightly to cut future spending on the entire Medicaid program.

Many Republicans want to refocus the House's health care tax credits, which grow with people's ages, by boosting subsidies for lower earners. Eager to reduce premiums, many want to roll back Obama mandates such as requiring insurers to cover specified services, including substance abuse counseling, but there are questions about how far to go.

Decisions await on helping states subsidize people with costly medical conditions and keeping insurers from fleeing unprofitable markets. Making Medicaid, the tax credits and other programs more generous than the House will cost many billions of dollars. Senators will need ways to pay for that.

Budget uncertainty

The Congressional Budget Office plans to release its estimate Wednesday of the House health care bill's cost and how it would affect coverage. Those numbers will give senators a starting point and could be a big deal. Congress' nonpartisan budget analyst projected in March that an earlier House version would mean 24 million additional uninsured people. That scared off many Republicans and complicated House leaders' job of passing their legislation.

Senators will examine whether the House bill still cuts Medicaid by \$840 billion over a decade and reduces taxes - largely on higher earners and health industry sectors - by around \$1 trillion. Democrats targeted both reductions as unfair. Also being watched is whether a number of late changes in the House bill will force the House to vote again on the legislation. That would be a major problem for the GOP, which nudged the measure through the House by four votes. The budget office said the earlier House bill had \$150 billion in 10-year deficit reduction. But that was before House leaders added extra money and provisions letting states reduce coverage requirements to win votes. Congress approved special rules that will block Democrats from using a Senate filibuster to kill the health bill. To retain the filibuster protection, the bill that the Senate receives from the House must reduce the deficit by at least \$2 billion, including \$1 billion each from two Senate committees, over a decade. If the final House bill doesn't meet those targets, the filibuster protections will vanish unless the House approves a new version that does. That wouldn't be easy. — AP

NEW ZEALAND SPACE LAUNCH HAS NATION REACHING FOR THE STARS

WELLINGTON, New Zealand: New Zealand has never had a space program but could soon be launching commercial rockets more often than the United States. That's if the plans of California-based company Rocket Lab work out. Founded by New Zealander Peter Beck, the company was last week given official approval to conduct three test launches from a remote peninsula in the South Pacific nation. Rocket Lab is planning the first launch of its Electron rocket sometime from Monday, depending on conditions.

"So far, it's only superpowers that have gone into space," said Simon Bridges, New Zealand's economic development minister. "For us to do it, and be in the first couple of handfuls of countries in the world, is pretty impressive." Rocket Lab sees an emerging market in delivering lots of small devices, some not much bigger than a smartphone, into low Earth orbit. The satellites would be used for everything from monitoring crops to providing internet service. The company hopes to begin commercial launches later this year and eventually launch one rocket every week. It plans to keep costs low by using lightweight, disposable rockets with 3D-printed engines. It's a different plan than some other space companies like Elon Musk's SpaceX, which uses larger rockets to carry bigger payloads.

The venture has left New Zealand officials excited and struggling to keep up. Politicians are rushing through new space laws and the government has set up a boutique space agency, which employs 10 people. Bridges said that if Rocket Lab is successful, it could change people's perception of New Zealand from a place full of farms and nice scenery to a technologically savvy nation on the rise. He said the space industry could soon bring in hundreds of millions of dollars each year and rival industries like wine and kiwifruit. He envisions spinoff companies and many high-paying jobs, much of it built on the back of Rocket Lab.

The company's Electron rocket is unusual in many respects. It carries only a small payload of about 150 kilograms (331 pounds). It's made from carbon fiber and uses an electric engine. Rocket Lab says each launch will cost just \$5 million, a tiny fraction of a typical rocket launch. Unlike SpaceX, which aims to build a rocket that's fully reusable, Rocket Lab's rockets are disposable. Beck said they are light and use relatively little fuel. Customers who have signed up so far include NASA and Moon Express. "Space has always held a fascination for me," said Beck. "Not enough people go out on nice starry night and look up." Both Beck and Bridges are careful to temper expectations for the test launch, which is scheduled to take place within a 10-day window. They say there could be delays and things could go wrong.

Get bigger and bigger

Rocket Lab, which is privately held, has received about \$150 million in venture capital funding, including an undisclosed amount from Bessemer Venture Partners in Silicon Valley. Bessemer partner David Cowan said that for years, the trend was for both rockets and satellites to get bigger and bigger, until many satellites were the size of a bus or even a house. Needs have changed rapidly over the last few years as technology has allowed tiny, cheap satellites to be put into lower orbits, he said.

Cowan, who is flying to New Zealand to witness the launch, said he was impressed with how local officials and everyday folks seem to be embracing the idea. On a recent visit to a sheep farm, he said a farmer who had no idea about his involvement in the project was eager to tell him how New Zealand would be launching a rocket. Eric Stallmer, president of the Washington, D.C.-based Commercial Spaceflight Federation, said a couple of other companies are also trying to fill the niche that Rocket Lab is aiming for but there is plenty of potential for growth. — AP

TWO CHINESE CITIES CLOSE POULTRY MARKETS AFTER H7N9 BIRD FLU INFECTIONS

BEIJING: China will shut poultry markets in certain districts of two cities after H7N9 bird flu infections were detected, state media reported yesterday, the latest incidents in this year's more severe outbreak of the virus. A 44-year-old man who sold poultry at a farmers market in southwestern Sichuan province's Zigong city was diagnosed with H7N9, China News Service reported. Local authorities announced a one-month halt to poultry markets in the city's Ziliujing district from midnight on Monday.

Separately, a 74-year old man who had visited poultry markets in Shandong province's Binzhou city was also diagnosed with H7N9, China Central Television reported. Binzhou authorities will temporarily halt poultry markets in three of its districts. Bird flu can jump from poultry to humans. Human cases of bird flu have been unusually high for China since last year, with three times more fatalities from H7N9 in the first four months of the year than in all of 2016. But deaths fell in April for the third consecutive month. — Reuters

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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



SPECIAL RAMADAN OFFERS AT INN & GO KUWAIT PLAZA HOTEL

Experience treasured and truly unique time during the holy month of Ramadan at Inn & Go Kuwait plaza hotel, Al-Dallah Restaurant will provide the ideal service and relaxed environment for families and groups as they break the fast and share quality time with each other. Savor the delicious iftar buffet with a mix of Ramadan specialties.

INDIGENOUS RAMADAN ATMOSPHERE AT SHERATON

The Sheraton Kuwait and the Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait Hotels express sincere congratulations and blessings for approaching the holy month of Ramadan and invite you to spend unforgettable times with family and friends with unique cultural experiences of hospitality and dining venues.

The Ramadan Tent will be held this year in the newly renovated Coral Ballroom, with its charming designs welcoming you for iftar, ghabkas and suhour with the traditional Ramadan ambience. Daily menus with a variety of soups, salads, international and traditional local dishes and distinctive kind of sweets and beverages.

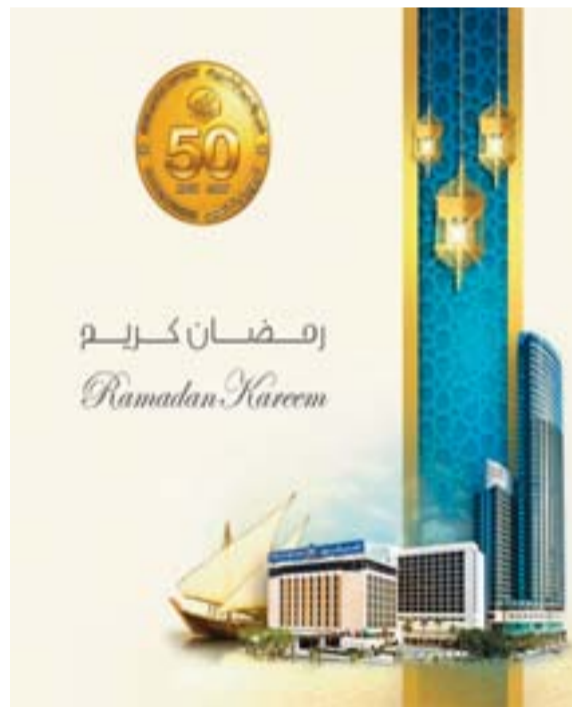
During the holy month, our chefs are keen to prepare a variety of dishes for an experience not to be forgotten. In this year all our restaurants will be opened to receive you with delicious menus and different cuisines, where Al-Hambra restaurant provides various and exceptional international dining set menu dishes from sunset until 11:30 pm. In addition to the Italian cuisine at Riccardo restaurant, Lebanese cuisine at Le Tarbouche restaurant, Indian cuisine at Bukhara restaurant, Persian cuisine at Shahrayar restaurant and the prestigious English Tea Lounge from sunset until 11:30 pm.

Sheraton Kuwait restaurants at the



Avenues- Grand Avenue invite you to indulge in an exceptional dining experience during the holy month of Ramadan, filled

with the authentic flavors by enjoying lavish dining at the newly renovated Al-Hambra restaurant and savoring a selection of



Oriental and Mediterranean set menu dishes specially prepared for the holy month from sunset until 11:30 pm. For more variety, Le

Tarbouche restaurant, Bukhara restaurant and Shahrayar restaurant provide delicious traditional dishes with various cuisines in a special Ramadan ambience from sunset until 11:30 pm, adding to that, our visitors could relax in the elegance of the English Tea Lounge until 11:30 pm.

Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait continues to offer best specialties during the holy month of Ramadan at La Mamma Pizzeria, which provides an assortment of appetizing antipasti, freshly prepared pasta and pizza baked in our wood fire oven to meet your culinary desire from sunset until 11:30 pm. Our outside catering is also available with a variety of selections from Ramadan menus prepared by our master chefs for 'iftar', 'ghabka and suhour.

On this occasion, Fahed Abushaar, the General Manager of the Sheraton Kuwait, Mounir Amer - The General Manager of Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait and the family of Sheraton and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait wish His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah a blessed month, a great health and wellness, along with all the Kuwaitis and residents of this great country.

PREMIER SPORT ACADEMY CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL SEASON



The Premier Sport Academy in association with Everton FC and under the sponsorship of Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company and Elite Sports Direct, held their Gala Presentation Evening Season 2016-17 at the Marina Hotel this week.

More than 450 players and guests filled the Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Theatre and Hall for the celebratory gathering, which was attended by the Guest of Honor Group Captain Finlay McLean, MA, BA, RAF, Defence Attache, British Embassy. The event convened with the playing of the nation-

al anthems of Kuwait and the United Kingdom. Over 140 of these players, aged from 6 to 18 years, were nominated by their coaches to receive awards in several categories, including: Most Outstanding, Most Improved, Most Sporting, Top Goalkeeper, Top Trainer, Coaches Award and Centre of Excellence Team Player. These players demonstrated an abundance of hard work, dedication, commitment, high standards of performance and conduct over the course of the season to earn their rewards.

Many surprise gifts including return flights to Europe with

KLM, Electric Skateboards, Segways, Golf Sets, Sports Equipment and Gift Vouchers were also provided by the awards sponsors, Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company, LSH International (member of Al-Homaizi Group) - Sports Direct, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Marina Hotel and Sebamed. Porsche model cars, Sports Direct Gift Bags, Ride Vouchers for Fun Quest Family Entertainment Centre, Fahaheel and Sebamed gift bags were also given to all award winners. DJ Marcus Fernandes from Human Encounter ensured all the tributes were accompanied by suitable musical soundtracks.



Congratulations to our little graduate Shiana Aliya De Leon. Continue to keep up the great work, we are proud of you; we love you! Love: mom, dad, Ate, Sean, family and friends.

TIES CENTER HOSTS TAFSEER CLASS

TIES Center invites you to our Tafseer class (Divine Wisdom from the Last Testament) today at 7:00 pm. In this class, we will focus on Surat Al-Haqqah (The Inevitable Reality) from verse 36 till 40. We will discuss the types of food that will be given to the unrepentant guilty in hell, some of the reasons that food will be given to them, and some other types of punishment that will be meted out to them.

We will also explore the wisdom behind Allah's swearing by His different creatures, yet Muslims have to swear only by the name of Allah (SWT). Finally, we will highlight the role of both archangel Gabriel and Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) with regard to the Noble Qur'an as well as deduce lessons significant for our lives today.



WENDY'S OPENS A NEW RESTAURANT IN KUWAIT MARINA MALL

Great news for Wendy's Kuwait fans as the restaurant famed for being deliciously different officially opens its second set of doors in the country. Owned by Alghanim Industries, one of the largest privately owned companies in the region, Wendy's is now open at Marina Mall, Kuwait.

Nothing is stopping the burger chain from expansion following the huge success of its first restaurant, located on Blajat Street, Salmiya. Marina Mall is the second restaurant, which is a part of several new openings planned this year in Kuwait. Square burger lovers will finally have their chance to take a bite of their favorite Wendy's meal when taking a shopping break; Marina Mall is the perfect place to enjoy the

wide range of options from Wendy's. When shopping in the mall, enjoy Wendy's best-selling burger, Dave's original cheeseburger, made up of 100 percent Halal Angus beef. If you're a chicken lover, try the Spicy Chicken, and for those with a sweet tooth treat yourself to the classic creamy Frosty. For something different, opt for the hot baked potato topped with sour cream and

spring onions. All meals from Wendy's are made with quality ingredients only after you order. Wendy's lettuce and fresh tomatoes are locally sourced and freshly prepared daily in the restaurants, and its burgers are made of 100 percent Halal Australian Angus beef. Phil Broad, Vice President of Food and Beverage at Alghanim Industries comments: "We

are thrilled with the success of the first Wendy's in Kuwait, the response from our customers has been fantastic and we are excited to expand further in the home country of Alghanim Industries. The Kuwait Marina Mall restaurant will reflect all of the famous Wendy's qualities, from the freshest ingredients, food made fresh to order, and quality customer service."

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AUTHORISED HALAL PROGRAM (AGAMP)

INSPECTION BY GOVERNMENT AND ISLAMIC ORGANISATIONS

WELL TRAINED MUSLIM SLAUGHTERERS

SHARP KNIFE

HALAL GUARANTEE

AUSTRALIA: A RELIABLE AND TRUSTED SOURCE OF HIGH QUALITY, GUARANTEED HALAL BEEF AND LAMB

A recent report published by the World Halal Forum, states that global trade in halal food is currently estimated to be worth around \$700 billion annually, with the halal food industry in the Middle East alone worth about \$20 billion.



Master Chef Tarek

There is an ever-growing demand for halal food products given the steady growth of Muslim population across the world. The halal market is currently worth 16 percent of the entire global food industry and is predicted to rise to 20 percent in the near future.

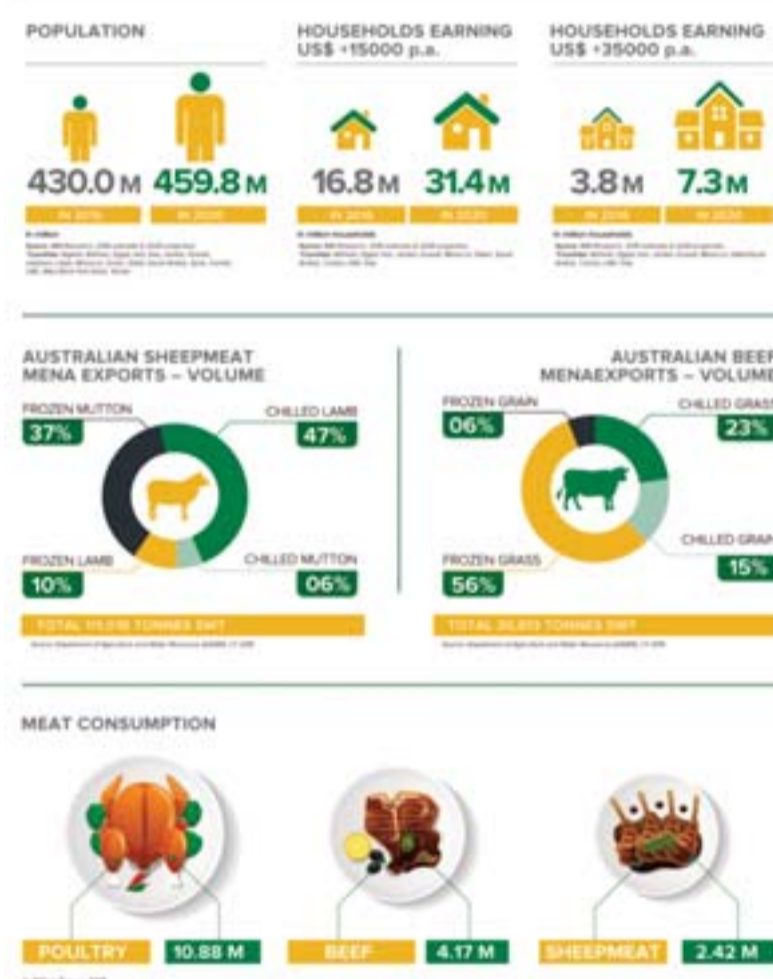
You don't have to look very far in the GCC to find Australian meat gracing retail shelves. As a nation, Australia has been sending their best meat products to the region for decades. Saudi Arabia, specifically imports 17 percent of its beef, and 62 percent of its sheep meat, from Australia.

Australia, with a local Muslim population of about half a million, has become a world leader in the processing and preparation of halal meat and meat products. The continent is a long trusted supplier of Halal Beef and Lamb to over 100 countries in the world, including Saudi Arabia and most countries in the Middle East.

A cycle of trust from farm to plate
Mark Morley, Senior Trade Commissioner of Austrade had this to say: "Saudi Arabia is conscious of the need to provide its citizens with clean, fresh and safe meat product. Particularly, Saudi Arabia needs to know they can trust Australia's halal certification. Australia has one of the most robust and traceable food certification standards in the world. We are free of many exotic diseases that are common in other parts of the world. As an isolated island, we have one of the strictest regimes for quarantine, which means that Saudi citizens can trust us when we say 'this meat is halal'."

Australia's halal meat enjoys a reputa-

SNAPSHOT OF MEAT CONSUMPTION MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA



tion for excellence and strict adherence to sharia law. Sharia law states how the animal must be treated during its whole life and not just during slaughter. It emphasizes zero tolerance of animal abuse and mistreatment, and stipulates that animals must be provided with enough space to roam, clean water, food and fresh air.

The Master Chef's first choice:
Master Chef Tarek, the first master chef from the Middle East, is clearly impressed by the quality of Australian meat. He stated "During my last visit to Australia, I was amazed by the strict standards of the Australian farms and slaughter houses. Every halal guideline is carefully adhered to and the halal slaughter is supervised and certified by Islamic organizations and soci-

eties working under the Australian Government Authorized Halal Program. You can confidently enjoy your food knowing that that when you buy Australian Halal Beef and Lamb, you are getting clean, safe and 100 percent guaranteed halal meat! Australia's commitment to quality assurance and food safety begins on thousands of farms across Australia. For Australian farmers, animal welfare is their number one priority. Most of the farms are family owned and animals are raised with tender, loving care. Animal welfare is a way of life in Australia. Stress free, well cared for animals give the best quality meat. Australia has invested millions of dollars in research and development in meat science and understands that healthy, well fed stress free livestock pro-

duce the best quality meat for all consumers to enjoy. Australia's livestock are raised in a natural clean environment, with fresh air, golden sunlight and large areas of lush green pastures. Around half of the land area of Australia is perfect for raising lamb and cattle naturally, with easy access to green grass, fresh water and clean air. Since Australia is an island continent, it is also naturally quarantined against diseases that usually spread amongst animals in other countries.

One of the strictest halal programs in the world

The Muslim market is very important to Australian meat companies, and each company has documented procedures to ensure halal slaughtering and processing requirements are implemented at all stages of production. All Australian meat processing operations exporting to Saudi Arabia and other countries in the Middle East must have a registered Australian Government Authorized Halal Program - this is a collaborative program between Islamic Societies and the Australian government.

Standards of hygiene are monitored frequently and management must have an approved quality assurance program to ensure they comply with overseas country requirements. Facilities must be inspected and accepted as suitable for Halal slaughter and production. All inspections are carried out by recognized Islamic organizations and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

For meat to be identified as halal, the animals must be slaughtered by a Muslim in accordance with the requirements of the Islamic law. The Muslim slaughterer must carry an official permit with photo ID. Halal and non-halal beef and lamb must be adequately separated and identified at all times. For all exports, only recognized Islamic organizations can certify halal meat and meat products.

To ensure customer specifications and industry standards for accurate description are followed, AUS-MEAT (Authority for Uniform Specifications) accredits all meat premises who wish to export. The system is the industry's guarantee that the product has undergone effective product quality assurance procedures. Australian meat is transported in sealed shipping containers destined for the many overseas customers. Such integrity of the Australian meat processing systems ensures a cycle of trust, from farm to plate, which has allowed Australia to remain a consistent supplier to Saudi Arabia.

A land perfect for raising animals naturally

Animal welfare a priority for Australian farmers

Stress free, well cared for animals give the best quality meat.

A cycle of trust, from farm to plate

A long history of exporting high quality Beef and Lamb to the Middle East.



Loyac Academy - AC Milan concluded its eighth football season (2016/2017) in a ceremony hosted recently at the Kuwait National Library theater. Nearly 450 players participated in training and friendly matches held during the eight-month-long season.





00:50 Saving Africa's Giants With Yao Ming
01:45 Mutant Planet
06:49 River Monsters
07:36 Going Ape
08:00 Going Ape
08:25 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
09:15 Saving A Species: Gorillas On The Brink With...

19:40 Beauty Queen Murders
20:30 Swamp Murders
21:20 I'd Kill For You
22:10 A Crime To Remember
23:00 The Real Story With Maria Elena Salinas
23:50 Killing Richard Glossip



00:00 Monster In My Family
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 Paranormal State
02:30 Paranormal State
03:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
04:00 Monster In My Family
05:00 The Haunting Of...

00:10 Hank Zipzer
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Binny And The Ghost
01:25 Hank Zipzer
01:45 The Hive
01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

02:40 Hank Zipzer
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:30 Binny And The Ghost
03:55 Hank Zipzer
04:15 The Hive
04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

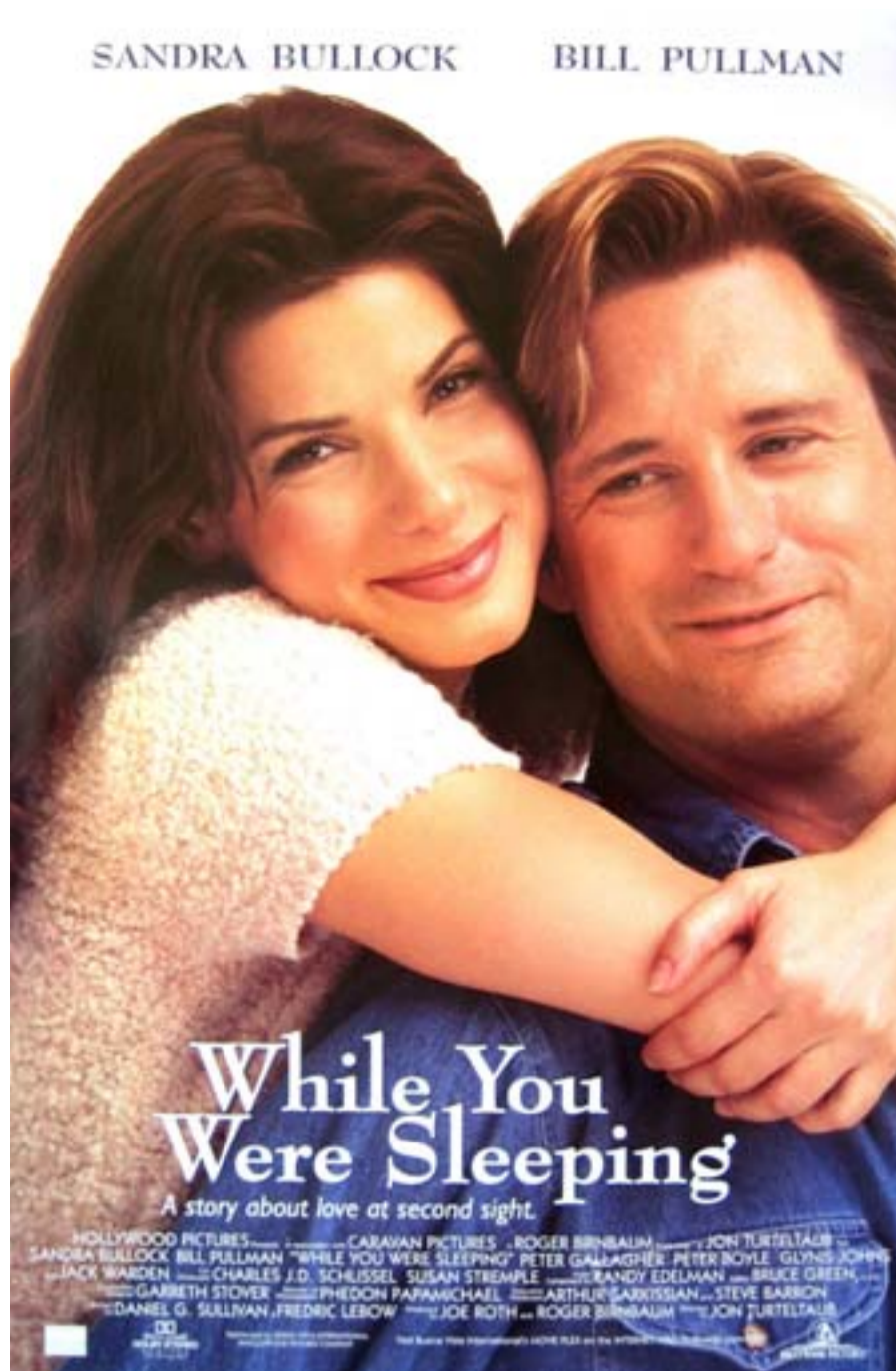
17:50 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
18:15 Sofia The First
18:40 Doc McStuffins
19:05 PJ Masks
19:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
20:05 Miles From Tomorrow
20:35 Miles From Tomorrow
21:05 Goldie & Bear
21:35 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
22:00 Gummi Bears
22:25 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
22:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
23:00 Goldie & Bear
23:30 Goldie & Bear
23:55 PJ Masks



00:30 Diesel Brothers
01:20 Street Outlaws
02:10 Heavy Rescue
03:00 Killing The Colorado
04:40 Diesel Brothers
05:30 Storage Hunters UK
06:00 How Do They Do It?
06:30 How Do They Do It?
07:00 Gold Divers
07:50 Street Outlaws
08:40 Diesel Brothers
09:30 Legend Of Croc Gold
10:20 Storage Hunters UK
10:45 How Do They Do It?
11:10 How Do They Do It?
11:35 Fast N' Loud
12:25 Diesel Brothers
13:15 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre
14:05 How Do They Do It?
14:30 Storage Hunters UK
14:55 Storage Hunters UK
15:20 Gold Rush
16:10 Legend Of Croc Gold
17:00 Gold Divers
17:50 Diesel Brothers
18:40 Street Outlaws
19:30 How Do They Do It?
19:55 How Do They Do It?
20:20 Legend Of Croc Gold
21:10 Storage Hunters UK
21:35 Storage Hunters UK
22:00 Gold Divers
22:50 Rebel Gold
23:40 Outback Truckers



00:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am
KSA
07:00 Gravity Falls
07:25 Supa Strikas
07:50 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
08:15 Milo Murphy's Law
08:25 Danger Mouse
08:40 Supa Strikas
09:05 Two More Eggs
09:10 K.C. Undercover
09:35 Counterfeit Cat
10:00 Lab Rats
10:25 Lab Rats
10:50 Future-Worm!
11:20 Pair Of Kings
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Danger Mouse
12:35 Supa Strikas
13:00 Supa Strikas



WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING ON OSN MOVIES HD

16:00 E! News
16:30 Celebrity Style Story
17:00 WAGS
18:00 Live From The Red Carpet
20:00 Live From The Red Carpet
22:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
23:00 Botched

11:55 Cash Trapped
12:50 Who's Doing The Dishes?
13:45 Emmerdale
14:15 Coronation Street
14:45 Coronation Street
15:15 Cash Trapped
16:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
17:00 Jekyll And Hyde
17:55 Shoot The Messenger
18:50 Coach Trip
19:20 Coach Trip
19:45 Emmerdale
20:15 Coronation Street
20:45 Coronation Street
21:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
22:00 Jekyll And Hyde
22:55 Shoot The Messenger

15:30 Rise Of The Legend
17:45 Black Rose
19:15 Tekken: Kazuya's Revenge
20:45 King Arthur
23:00 The Dead Room



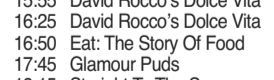
01:00 The World Made Straight
03:00 Jappeloup
05:15 The Better Angels
07:00 Penthouse North
09:00 The Love Guide
10:30 Jappeloup
13:00 The Better Angels
15:00 Fast Girls
17:00 The Love Guide
19:00 Fury
21:30 Big Eyes
23:30 Only God Forgives



01:15 Mousehunt
03:00 Eight Below
10:00 The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement
07:00 The Santa Clause 3
08:45 Mousehunt
10:45 Ice Age
12:15 The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement
14:15 The Hunchback Of Notre Dame II
15:30 Storm Rider
17:15 Ice Age 3: Dawn Of The Dinosaurs
19:00 The Parent Trap
21:15 Storm Rider
23:00 Monsterville: The Cabinet Of Souls



00:20 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
00:50 The Shelbourne
01:15 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
01:40 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
02:10 Street Food Around The World
02:40 Croatia's Finest
03:05 Food School
03:35 The Food Files
04:00 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
04:30 Poh & Co.
04:55 The Game Chef
05:50 Eat: The Story Of Food
06:45 Glamour Puds
07:15 Chef On The Road
08:10 Croatia's Finest
08:35 Food School
09:05 The Food Files
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15:30 Poh & Co.
15:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
16:25 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
16:50 Eat: The Story Of Food
17:45 Glamour Puds
18:15 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
18:40 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
19:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea



00:45 One In The Chamber
02:30 The Tower
04:45 Age Of Ice
06:15 Hudson Hawk
08:00 Rivers Nine
09:45 Jurassic Hunters
11:30 The Tower
13:45 Hudson Hawk



01:45 Quija
03:15 While You Were Sleeping
05:00 Raising Helen
07:15 The Horse Whisperer
10:15 Gridiron Gang
12:30 Sherlock Holmes
14:45 The Guardian
17:15 Rocky
19:15 127 Hours
21:00 S.W.A.T.
23:00 Swordfish



01:15 Bill
03:00 Junior
05:00 Love, Rosie
06:45 Parenthood
09:00 The Grand Seduction
11:00 Junior
13:00 Love, Rosie
14:30 The Girl
17:00 Sister Act 2: Back In The Habit
18:45 Perfect Match
20:15 Fierce Creatures
22:00 Dirty Work
23:30 Edtv



00:30 A Late Quartet
02:15 The Girl
04:00 The Fold
05:30 WarGames
07:30 No God No Master
09:15 Ironweed
11:45 The Yellow Handkerchief
13:30 The Girl
15:15 The Sting
17:30 Grand Central
19:15 Wildlife
21:00 The Girl In The Book
22:30 Frankie And Johnny



00:45 Outback
02:15 The Swan Princess: Pirate Today, Princess Tomorrow
03:45 Ghosthunters On Ice Trails
05:30 Vickie And The Treasure Of Gods
07:15 Memory Loss
08:45 The Tigger Movie
10:15 Big Baby
11:45 Outback
13:15 The Swan Princess: Pirate Today, Princess Tomorrow
14:45 Frog Kingdom
16:30 Big Baby
18:00 Capture The Flag
19:45 Bamsie And The City Of Thieves



00:30 The Simpsons
01:00 People Of Earth
01:30 Happy Endings
02:30 Happy Endings
02:30 Saturday Night Live
04:00 Gary Unmarried
04:30 Gary Unmarried
05:00 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
05:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
06:30 Superstore
07:00 Til Death
07:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:30 Kevin Can Wait
09:00 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
09:30 Gary Unmarried
10:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
11:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
12:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
13:00 Til Death
13:30 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
14:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
15:00 Gary Unmarried
15:30 Kevin Can Wait
16:00 Superstore
16:30 Happy Endings
17:00 Happy Endings
17:30 Til Death
18:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
19:00 Malcolm In The Middle
19:30 Malcolm In The Middle

20:00 Dr. Ken
20:20 Dr. Ken
20:40 The Mindy Project
21:05 The Goldbergs
21:30 The Goldbergs



00:40 Race To Escape
01:30 Race To Escape
02:20 USA Memory Championships
03:10 Mythbusters
04:00 Mythbusters
04:48 Mythbusters
05:36 Mythbusters
06:24 Mythbusters
07:12 Mythbusters
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
09:14 Mythbusters
10:02 Race To Escape
10:50 How Do They Do It?
11:14 Food Factory
11:38 You Have Been Warned
12:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
13:14 Mythbusters
14:02 How Do They Do It?
14:26 Food Factory
14:50 Race To Escape
15:38 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
16:26 You Have Been Warned
17:14 Mythbusters
18:02 USA Memory Championships
18:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
19:40 Mythbusters
20:30 How The Universe Works
21:20 How Do They Do It?
21:45 Food Factory
22:10 The Big Brain Theory
23:00 How The Universe Works
23:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?



00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
00:36 Max & Shred
01:00 The Haunted Hathaways
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:48 Henry Danger
04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
04:36 The Haunted Hathaways
05:00 Max & Shred
05:24 Henry Danger
05:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:48 Winx Club
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Breadwinners
09:00 Get Blake
09:24 Rabbids Invasion
09:48 Henry Danger
10:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
10:36 The Haunted Hathaways
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
12:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
13:00 Breadwinners
13:24 The Loud House
13:48 Harvey Beaks
14:12 Rabbids Invasion
14:36 Rufus
15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Sanjay And Craig
17:24 Rabbids Invasion
17:48 Breadwinners
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Breadwinners
21:48 Breadwinners
22:12 Sanjay And Craig
22:36 Sanjay And Craig
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:48 Henry Danger



ONE IN THE CHAMBER ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

08:50 Bad Dog
09:40 How It's Made
10:05 How It's Made
10:30 Science Of The Movies
11:20 Mythbusters
12:10 Bad Dog
13:00 Ultimate Survival
13:50 How It's Made
14:15 How It's Made
14:40 Storm Chasers
15:30 Kenny The Shark
15:55 Awesome Adventures
16:20 Bad Dog
17:10 Invent It Rich
18:00 Quarx
18:25 Quarx
18:50 Dirty Jobs
19:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things
20:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
20:30 How It's Made
21:20 Mythbusters
22:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things
22:35 Kids Do The Craziest Things
23:00 Dirty Jobs



00:20 Henry Hugglemonster
00:35 The Hive
00:45 Loopydoo
01:00 Henry Hugglemonster
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Zou
02:05 Loopydoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Zou
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopydoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:30 Loopydoo
04:45 Calimero
05:05 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Zou
06:00 Art Attack
06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
06:45 Loopydoo
07:00 Zou
07:15 Calimero
07:30 Loopydoo
07:45 Henry Hugglemonster
08:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
08:25 Sofia The First
08:50 The Lion Guard
09:15 PJ Masks
09:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:05 Goldie & Bear
10:35 The Lion Guard
11:05 Sofia The First
11:35 Doc McStuffins
12:05 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
12:35 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
13:05 Gummi Bears
13:35 Miles From Tomorrow
14:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
14:35 PJ Masks
15:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
15:30 The Lion Guard
16:00 Sofia The First
16:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:55 Sofia The First
17:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh

13:30 Gravity Falls
13:55 Anneandroids
14:20 Atomic Puppet
14:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Mighty Med
15:40 Kirby Buckets
16:05 Lab Rats
16:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
16:55 Right Now Kapow
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 Disney11
18:15 Mech-X4
18:40 Milo Murphy's Law
19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:10 Gravity Falls
19:35 Mighty Med
20:00 Atomic Puppet
20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:55 K.C. Undercover
21:20 Mech-X4
21:45 Disney11
22:10 Walk The Prank
22:35 Disney Mickey Mouse
22:40 Guardians Of The Galaxy
23:10 Ultimate Spider-Man
23:35 Booster



00:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
01:00 Second Wives Club
02:00 Live From The Red Carpet
04:00 Celebrity Style Story
04:25 Celebrity Style Story
04:50 Botched
05:40 Botched
06:30 Celebrity Style Story
07:00 Hollywood & Football
07:55 E! News
08:25 Hollywood & Football
08:50 Hollywood & Football
09:15 Hollywood & Football
11:10 E! News
11:40 Celebrity Style Story
12:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:05 Live From The Red Carpet
15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

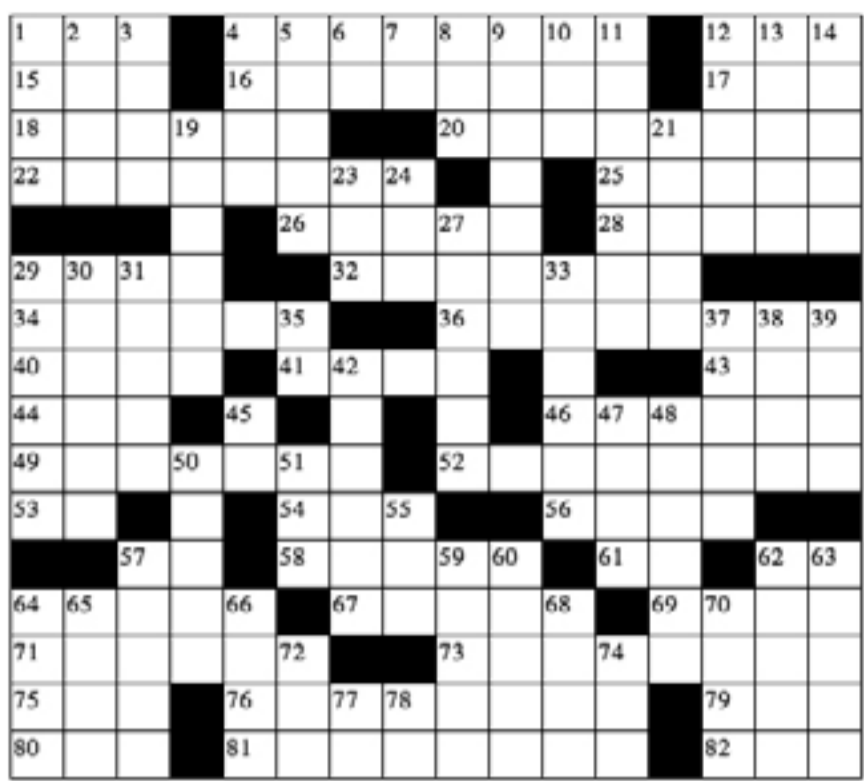


00:20 Shoot The Messenger
01:10 Cash Trapped
02:00 Emmerdale
02:30 Emmerdale
03:00 Coronation Street
03:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?
04:25 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
05:20 Surprise Surprise
06:15 Coach Trip
06:45 Coach Trip
07:10 Cash Trapped
08:05 Who's Doing The Dishes?
09:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
10:00 Surprise Surprise
11:00 Coach Trip
11:30 Coach Trip



NO GOD NO MASTER ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL HD

CROSSWORD 1615



ACROSS

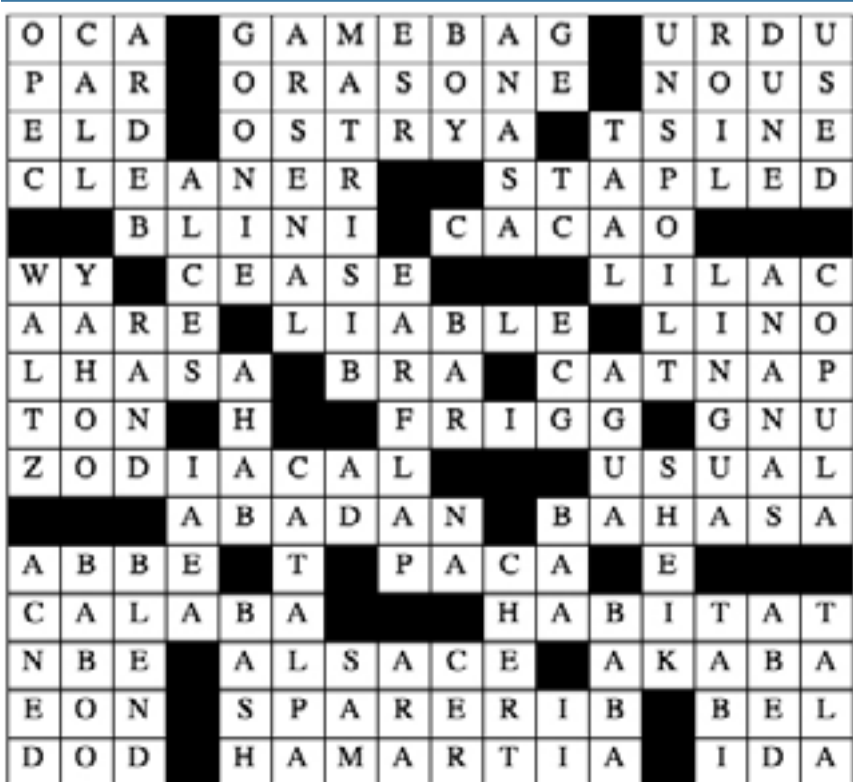
- Any triangular fore-and-aft sail (set forward of the foremast) v 1.
- A large elongated exocrine gland located behind the stomach.
- Injured by bites or stings.
- 10 hao equal 1 dong.
- Ethiopia is a republic in northeastern Africa on the Red Sea.
- Any of various systems of units for measuring electricity and magnetism.
- Included seven times in every 19 years.
- Of or connected with a deluge.
- (Japan) Ritual suicide by self-disembowelment on a sword.
- Wine and hot water with sugar and lemon juice and nutmeg.
- A member of the Siouan people of the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- An evergreen tree of the family Ulmaceae that grows in tropical America and Africa and Asia.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- Having a small piece broken off.
- French writer who generalized surrealism to literature (1897-1982).
- A personal attractiveness that enables you to influence others.
- The dressed skin of an animal (especially a large animal).
- A Loloish language.
- Pan with a convex bottom.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret.
- United States businessman who pioneered in radio and television broadcasting (1891-1971).
- A resident of Alabama.
- A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- A flat wing-shaped process or wing-like part of an organism.
- (Norse mythology) Goddess of old age who defeated Thor in a wrestling match.
- English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- Short and fat.
- Greek mythology.
- (South African) A journey by ox wagon (especially an organized migration by a group of settlers).
- A vast treeless plain in the arctic regions between the ice cap and the tree line.
- A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
- Noisy talk.
- Youthful appearance in an old person.
- Light informal conversation for social occasions.
- The capital and largest city of Japan.
- Of or relating to Galileo or his works.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- A name for the Old Testament God as transliterated from the Hebrew YHWH.
- The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.

- Old World wild swine having a narrow body and prominent tusks from which most domestic swine come.
- Of a period of maximal use or demand or activity.
- (nautical) Of an anchor.
- A state in New England.
- Being one more than one hundred.
- (British) A linear measure of 16.5 feet.
- An inscription on a tombstone or monument in memory of the person buried there.
- Aromatic bulb used as seasoning.
- A careless leisurely gait.
- Of a light grayish-brown color n.
- (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
- A major city of northeastern Oklahoma on the Arkansas river.
- The occurrence of a change for the worse.
- Italian operatic composer (1813-1901).
- Mythical bird of prey having enormous size and strength.
- Antibacterial drug (trade name Nydravid) used to treat tuberculosis.
- Stout-bodied insect with large membranous wings.
- A plumbing fixture (usually attached to the wall) used by men to urinate.
- Measuring instrument in which the echo of a pulse of microwave radiation is used to detect and locate distant objects.
- The 3 goddesses of fate or destiny.
- A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- A Hindu religious teacher.
- Among the largest bony fish.
- A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
- An oral cephalosporin (trade names Keflex and Keflin and Keftab) commonly prescribe for mild to moderately severe infections of the skin or ears or throat or lungs or urinary tract.
- A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.
- (usually followed by 'to') Having the necessary means or skill or know-how or authority to do something.
- When dried yields a hard substance used e.g. in golf balls.
- A rechargeable battery with a nickel cathode and a cadmium anode.
- An interest followed with exaggerated zeal.
- A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
- A swindle in which you cheat at gambling or persuade a person to buy worthless property.
- Strike with disgust or revulsion.
- 'Cease' is a noun only in the phrase 'without cease' End v 1.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- Jordan's port.
- One of four children born at the same time from the same pregnancy.
- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- An elaborate song for solo voice.
- Port city that is the capital and largest city of Latvia.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- (British) Your grandmother.
- Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
- A state in New England.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

If you attend a spiritual gathering you will enjoy the emotional satisfaction that it brings, as well as the opportunity to communicate with others just now. This afternoon will be an important time to catch up on reading and just soaking in some good vibes. Rest, relaxation and especially some private personal time are important today. Law, politics, education, travel, religion or perhaps a good true story may be where your interest is this afternoon. You will want to finish any weekend task before the workweek begins tomorrow. You will be setting aside some time to catch up on the affairs of those you love. This evening you enjoy communicating with family members. Clear thoughts about the past come to you tonight.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This could be a time to make changes in your environment. Real estate may be a consideration and if you are buying for an investment, you will do well in your choices. If you are looking for a home or apartment it would be good to have your mate or roommate share in the decision making. You may find yourself enjoying an afternoon book signing, art show or a small gathering of friends. If you attend a spiritual gathering, you will find some in-depth discussions that may cause you to think about your beliefs and urge your contribution in a group discussion. You will have a grasp for abstract and spiritual ideas, and you are able to express your views to others. Obtaining and exchanging information takes on more emotional significance.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Mixed responses from others today may have you remembering some old lessons from the past. It is not what people say to you that make your emotional state valid and it is not what you say that determines how others feel. It is good to be polite and respectful yet understand that you or someone else can have an off-center day. You may decide to dive into an old hobby part of this day. Most of your hobbies have financial possibilities and have an eye for the divine. This could mean you are thinking about becoming a musician or you enjoy rebuilding old cars or you love working with models or miniatures. A piece of real estate catches your eye this afternoon-you may see a floor plan that delights your fancy. Celebrate this day.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You will aid and soothe others in solving difficult situations. Others will seek you out for advice. Perhaps you are a speaker, counselor or adviser, but whatever the concern, you aid and support those that need your help. Your special gift at promoting a healing between people comes up frequently. You are able to span the generation gap and bring people together regardless of their ages or their feelings. This is a vital day with much energy and lots of action. You express yourself deliberately and have a natural sense of organization with much discipline and care. Hobby interests and routine chores absorb your attention this afternoon. You delight in completing some of the items on your chore list. A movie may be enjoyed this evening.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your energy is high and your creative juices are flowing, ready to be applied to any work you want to undertake. Giving your best effort now; considerable success will follow. Because of your desire to get things accomplished today, you may forget or set aside the instructions to your project; read all instructions. You will be finished quickly-with enough time to pitch a ball, ride a bike or hug a family member. Doing just about anything with friends or family will bring much joy. A barbecue party or homemade ice cream party will bring some interesting recipes out for viewing. This is also an excellent time to engage in activities with the opposite sex. This is a nurturing and fertile time in that any seed or impulse can be acted upon and developed.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

There is a drive to probe and penetrate that may find you examining and working through some strong internal changes. Don't push too hard-you could find more difficulties. You are presented with new energies and ideas along the line of creative endeavors now. This is a great time to clear away the cobwebs and complete any unfinished personal business or projects. You will be able to add a new touch or polish to some home project and complete a task in no time. Your interest in professional success is great and you could find yourself analyzing some future choices. You will be able to inspire your friends to new heights of accomplishment. A pleasant environment this afternoon encourages you to be with friends and family.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Today marks a time when your personality and mode of living will be changeable. You are adaptable but should be careful not to overextend your time. In other words, you must have some play or quiet time to think and be by yourself. You feel lucky and are lucky today. Buoyed with confidence, you could become carried away with some particular endeavor. Think things through and set realistic goals. A parent may be in a position to grant you a favor, especially if you make it a point to be humble. This is a great time to play in competitive sports. Perhaps a few neighbors will join you in some board game type of activities. You may appear perhaps more charming and refined than usual. This evening could be the time to plan a special date.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You are particularly energetic this Monday and involving yourself with some form of vigorous exercise early this morning will properly channel this energy. After you exercise you and a friend may enjoy a massage or some time in a sauna or hot tub. Humor and lighthearted feelings are easy to find this afternoon, and feeling rejuvenated can instigate a whole flurry of ideas. You could feel great support from those around you for whatever activity you may choose. You can see what is present and active and may commit yourself to correcting, protecting or improving a situation. This could involve security, relationships or health. A busy afternoon ends with you and several of your friends planning and creating a fantastic dinner.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

It could be difficult to get yourself motivated this morning. If you have really been busy as the energies indicate, you should not feel guilty about making this a day of relaxation. If you try to push your energies now, you could feel frustrated. Emotional crises can lead to poor health and having a handle on your emotions will aid you in solving difficulties, especially cognitively. This is a day to take stock in the life that is evolving around you. Look at ways in which you can make improvements and think about what you can do to good those changes now. This afternoon can be filled with times of amusement and good communication while visiting with the older generation in your family. The time you spend with the older generation is a gain in insight.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

It is best to proceed with your plans for the day and not involve yourself with too many extracurricular activities, at least for the morning. Before the family melts into the couch or leaves the house for their selective activities, you might talk with them about the benefit of an exercise program; with your enthusiasm, you may be able to encourage them to sign up for some curriculum of their own. Exercise encourages the body to find and keep a chemical balance during each day. There are good results from the tests run on people that exercise: hormones, mental well-being and the desire for the right sort of food as well as good digestive or intestinal health, etc. You can prevent problems or arguments through your thoughtful behavior.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Relaxing and enjoying this day is in order. You could find yourself a bit envious around others, but work around the house or in the yard can actually help to refurbish your energies. You have created pleasant surroundings in and around your home. The need for emotional security may be great at this time, though you should not pressure a partner into doing things just to please or satisfy you. It is a good idea to check all the facts before jumping to a conclusion. You should take every opportunity to be with friends or loved ones later this afternoon. You can be in touch with your most personal emotions, usually filling you with a sense of contentment and peace. A new family project creates a wonderful opportunity to build and deepen relationships.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have decided to begin a home project or to help someone with his or her home project. Your energies continue throughout the day-you may however, be encouraged to quit working sometime this afternoon. Other people want your attention now. You could find yourself solving puzzles and finding solutions. You feel a love of order and law-an appreciation for responsibilities and duty. Problems are valued and you are pleased when you can see a new understanding. Sympathy and understanding are emotional qualities that take on greater importance. It is wisdom and not knowledge that counts most. You are in a great mood and may volunteer to have some of your family members over for a barbecue this evening.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Canada

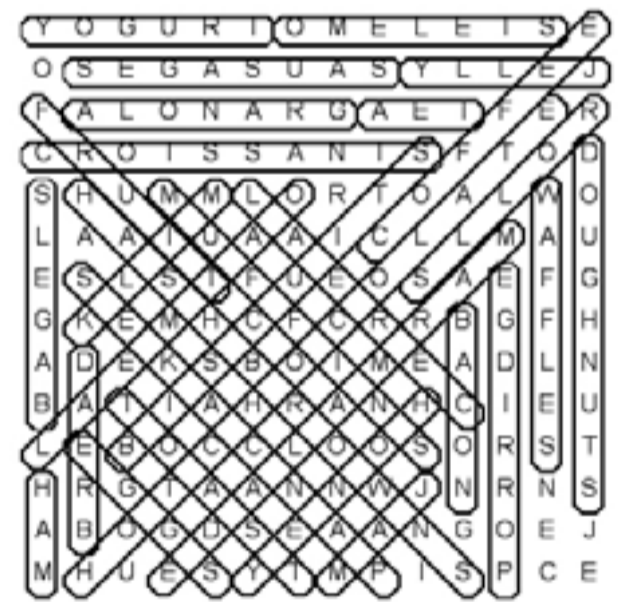
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 47 letters spell a secret message.



- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| ALBERTA | HOCKEY | NEWFOUNDLAND | REGINA |
| BEARS | ISLUIT | NORTHWEST TERRITORIES | SASKATCHEWAN |
| BEAVERS | LABRADOR | NOVA SCOTIA | SNOW |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA | LAKES | NUNAVUT | ST. JOHN'S |
| CARBIDOU | LOONIE | OIL | TOQUE |
| CHARLOTTETOWN | MANITOBA | ONTARIO | TORONTO |
| CURLING | MAPLE LEAF | OTTAWA | VICTORIA |
| EDMONTON | MAPLE SYRUP | PRAIRIES | WHITEHORSE |
| FORESTS | HOGS | PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND | WINNIPEG |
| FREDERICTON | MOUNTAINS | QUEBEC | YELLOWKNIFE |
| GEESSE | NEW BRUNSWICK | RCMP | YUKON |
| HALIFAX | | | |

Yesterday's Solution

Breakfast



- | | | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------|----------|
| BACON | EGGS | JELLY | ROLLS |
| BAGELS | FRUIT | MARMALADE | SAUSAGES |
| BISCUITS | GRANOLA | MILK | TEA |
| BREAD | HAM | MUFFINS | TOAST |
| CEREAL | HASH BROWNS | OATMEAL | WAFFLES |
| COFFEE | HONEY | OMELETS | YOGURT |
| CROISSANTS | HOT CHOCOLATE | PANCAKES | |
| DOUGHNUTS | JAM | PORRIDGE | |

The hidden message is: ORANGE JUICE

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





Emeli Sande nearly quit music

Emeli Sande considered quitting the music industry. The 'Read All About It' hitmaker became a household name when her debut studio album 'Our Version of Events' topped the charts but admits some people's response to her success left her feeling like she should change careers. She said: "It hurt, and I didn't know what to do. I was like, 'Should I stop? Should I continue? Should I just go away?' I considered it now and again, but I was never serious. I knew I'd never break away from music, but I felt that if people didn't want to see me singing then I could do other things. It's very hard to get the balance right, and I never want to force anything on anyone. But I was also very proud of what I was representing, as when I was a kid I didn't see many women who looked like me on TV." However, the 30-year-old singer ultimately decided to continue on her journey in the music industry but felt some time back in her hometown of Alford in Aberdeenshire, Scotland with her family was needed. She added to The Sun on yesterday's Fabulous magazine: "I needed to build my confidence up. I came into the industry with lots of it, because I didn't know any different. Then you [come to] London and [join] the industry and you're like, 'Am I doing it right?' "You have lots of people behind you and a lot of opinions, but you forget the only opinion that got you here was your own. Everyone has the best intentions - I have no one in my team who doesn't want the best for me. But without being a diva, you have to shut everything out and be like, 'What's the whole point of this?'"

Tokio Myers wants Stormzy collaboration



'Britain's Got Talent' multi-instrumentalist Tokio Myers wants to collaborate with Stormzy. The 32-year-old musician has wowed judges and viewers on the current series of the ITV talent show so far after getting four yesses from judges Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden, David Walliams and Alesha Dixon. And, although music is his main passion the hunk says with his style of "cinematic pop" he can work with any kind of performer such as ballet dancers and violinists. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz at the Novotel London Canary Wharf launch party on Thursday night Tokio said: "I would love to work with people like Stormzy, all of the UK artists, Skepta, people from the States as well because the stuff that I write is cinematic, pop culture, electronic so I can work with ballet dancers, violinists, to rap artists to pop stars - across the board really and that's really where I want to be - not many people have been able to do that before." Since qualifying for the semi-final rounds, Tokio says he has gained strength from public support. He explained: "The only way I can describe it is that it feels like I've dropped a number one album just in terms of the support, the fans and the love, you're doing this stuff and you don't know (how it will be received). Especially the stuff I'm doing is so unique - you just don't know how people are going to accept it or take it. It's just been incredible, everyone gets what I'm doing and that's making me stronger and making me want to write, produce and give something that the people really want." Britain's Got Talent' star Tokio Myers performed at the Novotel London Canary Wharf party at BOKAN Restaurant, Bar and Rooftop Terrace on Thursday evening.

Kaiser Chiefs ready to record new album

Ricky Wilson thinks Kaiser Chiefs "scared" fans with their last album 'Stay Together'. The 'Parachute' hitmaker - also comprised of Simon Rix, Nick 'Peanut' Baines, Andrew White and Vijay Mistry - are currently working hard in the studio working out the next sound the band will take for their seventh studio LP, although the hunk insists he's going to get hung up on what they do next. Speaking about their sixth outing, the 39-year-old musician told BANG Showbiz: "I don't think we picked up new fans with our last album, I think we scared them. We've made six records and they've been different, like, what's the point of making the same record? We just keep doing what we want and we've been afforded the ability to do what we



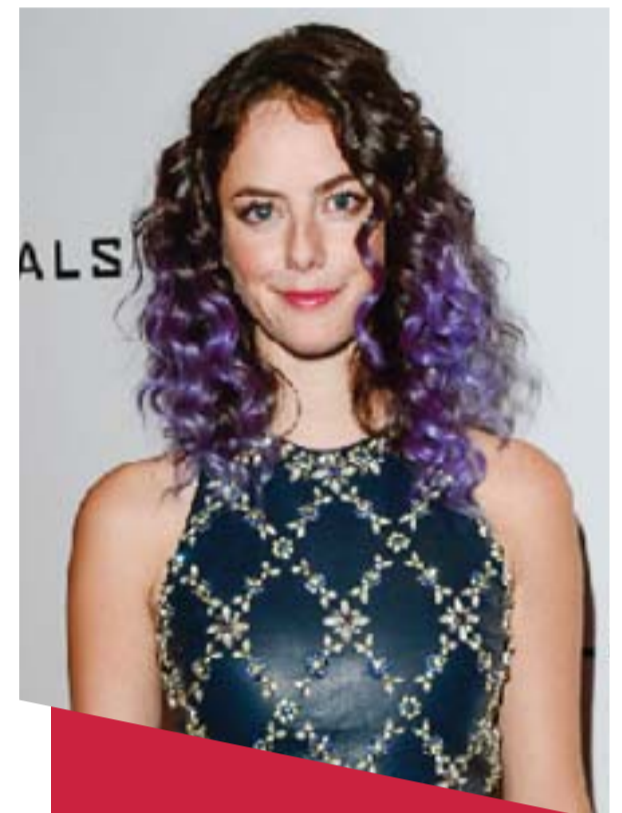
want for the best part of around 15 years now. It's nothing to get stressed about, it's only pop music, it's not like it's life or death." And while Ricky doesn't want to give fans an idea of what they'll do next, he says 'Moaning Lisa Smile' rockers Wolf Alice are a big inspiration for him personally. On their next direction, he added: "The band rehearsed for five days a few weeks ago, I was only there for two, I couldn't be bothered for any more than that, but the band is making some nice noises. I've no idea where I want to take the sound next, it just happens, the album will sound how it sounds. I'm not going to say we're going in this direction. I am a Wolf Alice fan, I go running every day and I always listen to Wolf Alice."

First Wives Club sequel didn't go ahead because of pay



Goldie Hawn says the sequel to 'First Wives Club' didn't go ahead because of pay issues. The 71-year-old Hollywood legend had the lead part as Elise Elliot Atchison in the 1996 movie - which followed three vengeful ex-wives played by Goldie, Bette Midler and Diane Keaton - who teach the young ones how it is done, but has revealed the next installment in the franchise didn't go ahead because she was insulted by the salary she was offered. Speaking to Total Film, she said: "When you are trying to develop a movie as a sequel to 'The First Wives Club'... and that movie does so well and you're on the cover of Time and all that stuff when you do that the studio gets excited and we all took a cut. "But because they were afraid of women of a certain age, when they came to do the sequel they wanted to pay us exactly the same amount." "It

was such an insult. That's the kind of stuff I look at and I go 'you know what, I'm taking this other movie.' "I got paid very little for it and that movie was 'Banger Sister' and I love that movie. She was a great character. "It wasn't about the money it was about respect. "It was about being treated that way which was awful. Unheard of!" After almost five decades in the movie business, Goldie has finally been given a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and revealed that her husband Kurt Russell of 34 years only agreed to have one if his spouse got one too. She said: "It's a lovely thing but I'll tell you what's more important is that Kurt was asked to have his done and he said 'I don't want to do it unless Goldie has one with me.' "So when we do it we're going to do it together." Goldie currently stars alongside Amy Schumer in comedy film 'Snatched'.



Kaya Scodelario plans schedule around her family

Kaya Scodelario and her husband do "one project on, one project off" so they're always together. The 'Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials' star doesn't want to be apart from her spouse Benjamin Walker or their baby son and so the pair have agreed to fit their schedules around each other and only work when the other is free so they can travel around the world as a family unit. She said: "My husband is great. He is really supportive and knows that I want to continue to work, to enjoy motherhood and also to still have my life. "[We] do one project on, one project off, so that we're always together as a family. We think it is important to be a unit and stick together." And the 25-year-old actress was amazed by how big the production was on her latest movie 'Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales' compared to TV drama 'Skins', where she found fame. She told The Sunday Times' Style magazine: "They even had heat lamps for each palm tree so they would grow by the same amount overnight. "You have no idea [how different it was to 'Skins']! I love looking back on those days. We used to share the tiniest trailer between six of us. We'd make our own sandwiches to take to work. It was very, very different." Meanwhile, Kaya previously admitted she "lost it" when she shot her first scene with Johnny Depp. She admitted: "You can try and mentally prepare yourself for it. But when he actually steps on set in that costume, you just lose it. You turn into a child." Whilst her co-star Brenton Thwaites, who plays Henry Turner, added: "It was mesmerizing. To the point where I found it difficult to focus. One part of my brain was thinking, 'He is the only man who can lead me to my father.' And the other was thinking, 'Holy s***, I'm in a scene with Jack Sparrow.'"

Pierce Brosnan got frustrated with James Bond

Pierce Brosnan admits he got frustrated with playing James Bond. The 64-year-old actor portrayed the British Secret Service Spy for four 007 films from 1995 to 2002 - 'GoldenEye', 'Tomorrow Never Dies', 'The World Is Not Enough' and 'Die Another Day' - before Daniel Craig took over in 2006's 'Casino Royale', but has admitted he grew bored of the character as he feels the films need to be more "gritty and real". Speaking to Total Film, Brosnan said: "There was a certain frustration within me as the films went on as I could see the world happening around me and the movies... I wanted Bond to get a little more gritty and real and down and dirty but however you try to nurse it along the scripts would come along with the same outlandish scenarios. "So you go with the flow and just enjoy the great experience of travelling the world and being this character." The actor also admits when he read the script for 2002's 'Die Another Day' there were parts that he thought were "ridiculous" but he just carried on with it. He said: "I had a great time on 'Die Another Day'. There were things that I read in the script that were so ridiculous, like the invisible car, but I just tried to act my way through it and believe in it. "You can really give yourself a massive headache and a great amount of stress trying to wangle some sense of believability into it." When Brosnan took on his first Bond film, 1995's 'GoldenEye', the franchise had been dormant for six years and the actor says he was nervous taking over as he wanted to keep both of Sean



Connery and Sir Roger Moore's spirits in his version. He said: "I wanted to keep both of their spirits within my Bond and at first I was very aware of it, and I was nervous about indicating or playing impressions of those guys. "But then I made peace with it and rather came at it with my own rhythm and sense of timing."

Cruise made Johnson do his own stunts in The Mummy



Tom Cruise made Jake Johnson do his own stunts in 'The Mummy' reboot. The 54-year-old actor's co-star - who rose to fame starring in comedy series 'New Girl' - says it was a

delight to star with Cruise in the Warner Bros. Monster Universe movie set in Egypt because the Hollywood legend insisted they get stuck in and carry out all of their own action scenes rather than sit on the sidelines and allow stunt doubles to take over. Speaking to Total Film, Johnson, 38, said: "When you're on his (Tom's) team, it's an intense ride. "But you've got to play by the rules. The rules are 'we're doing stunts together and we're working out and we're pushing.' "I'm used to a generation of more, y'know, apathetic actors, where it's almost as if we stumble into their movies. "So it was really nice to have that old-school 'we are making a movie and we are trying our hardest' attitude. "There's no eye-rolling." Johnson also admits he was warned about taking on a Cruise movie by his agents but said he

wanted to do it because he wanted to "experience" it. He said: "I wanted to do it because I wanted to experience it. "What I didn't understand was that he's really funny, and he's a really nice, warm human being." 'The Mummy' will be released in June. 'Peaky Blinders' actress Annabelle Wallis, who stars as the love-interest in the movie, also had to do her own stunts including being underwater. The 32-year-old actress added: "It's the underwater stuff. When you're dealing with an elemental wall like: 'I cannot breathe underwater.' "When you're being drowned by five stunt guys your body believes it's actually happening. "So the cortisol that you produce in your body, the adrenaline is so insane. You're wired for hours after it. "Cruise added running scenes, which I was very happy about." — Bang Showbiz

Javier Bardem: Actors should have therapy

Javier Bardem thinks all actors should go to therapy. The 'Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales' star believes it is important for his fellow actors to attend therapy as he feels it encourages people not to "use their work as something to put their thing in". He told the Sunday Telegraph newspaper: "If it's always about you, you, you, then you need to go to a therapist, not a movie set... "I do therapy, and I think every actor should. Because then you don't use your work as something to put your thing in. Those characters don't need it. What they need is for you to be generous enough to go to their thing, in the imaginary realm. Otherwise, it becomes just you, constantly doing the same character on and on." Meanwhile, the 48-year-old actor previously praised his 'Pirates of the Caribbean' co-star Johnny Depp for being "a joy to work with". He explained: "He's playing this character he knows so well that sometimes, the difficult part is to not be a spectator. "Sometimes I was shooting with him and I was watching how he became Sparrow and it was a delight. And then it's like, 'S***! I have to say my line.' Javier's wife Penelope Cruz starred opposite the Hollywood icon in the fourth 'Pirates' installment, and she offered her husband some advice about working with Johnny. He added: "[Her] advice for working with Johnny is very simple, it's 'have fun. When I was on the 'Pirates' set, while Penelope was shooting, I realized how amazing the team was [that] Jerry Bruckheimer and Disney put together to make this kind of movie. I knew from the very beginning it was going to be an easy and exciting process."



'Stone Age' Trump going back to horse and cart, says Schwarzenegger

Arnold Schwarzenegger laid into US President Donald Trump yesterday, saying his plans to revive coal would bring the world back to the horse and cart. "He's back in the Stone Age," the Hollywood star told AFP. The former California governor said he despairs of what Trump's energy policy, which is heavy on fossil fuels, will do to the planet. "As far as the environment is concerned, he is misinformed," he said.



This file photo shows Arnold Schwarzenegger attending "The New Celebrity Apprentice" Q & A and Red Carpet Event At Universal Studio, Universal City, California.

But "one man" cannot destroy the Earth, he argued, particularly a leader as ineffective as the billionaire businessman.

"So far nothing has got done since he became president. Nothing," he added. "When I hear he wants to bring coal back, that's going backwards. The next thing he'll want to bring horses and buggies (carts) back," the actor and activist told reporters at the Cannes film festival. "Trump or no Trump we all have to move forward," he added. "Only people power and embracing technology to replace fossil fuels will change this," insisted the actor, whose R20 network works with local and regional leaders across the world to combat climate change.

"All great movements—civil rights, the vote for women, the anti-apartheid movement, the freedom movement in India—all started

on a grassroots level. "We cannot wait for London, Moscow, Beijing, Washington, Berlin, Delhi... Let's do it locally," he told AFP. "The people have to rise up and say we got to protect what we have so we don't have climate change and seven million people dying every year because of pollution." Schwarzenegger produces and narrates a new documentary by the son of undersea explorer Jacques Cousteau, "Wonders of the Sea 3D", which he claimed would make "people fall in love with the ocean".

Environmental shaming

He said the movie's positive message worked much better than "the shaming, guilt and finger pointing" that Schwarzenegger believes puts people off environmentalism. "You can't just tell people all the time that they shouldn't fly, or drive a big car or have a jacuzzi," he told the Hollywood Reporter. "If you want people to change you got to make people feel good about it. When you see this film you will inevitably fall in love with the ocean," he added. Even though both Trump and Schwarzenegger are Republicans, the star has had prickly relations both politically and personally with the president. In January, Trump blamed the low ratings of "The Apprentice" television show on Schwarzenegger, who took over from Trump as presenter.

Schwarzenegger said in March that he was quitting the show because it had too much "baggage". He said Trump's name in the credits as executive producer scared away sponsors and viewers. While in Cannes, Schwarzenegger, 69, also congratulated French voters on electing centrist Emmanuel Macron as president earlier this month. Trump had praised his opponent, far-right leader Marine Le Pen. "I love being in France," he told Screen International, adding that French people had done "a great job with the election of the president". The "Terminator" star is also playing the world's greatest hitman in a forthcoming film being sold at Cannes, "Why We're Killing Gunther" by "Saturday Night Live" performer Taran Killam. Schwarzenegger also confirmed he would be making a sequel to "Twins" with Danny DeVito and Eddie Murphy, called "Triplets" and that he would be returning to the "Terminator" franchise. — AFP

Harvard student submits rap album as his senior thesis

While other Harvard University students were writing papers for their senior theses, Obasi Shaw was busy rapping his. Shaw is the first student in Harvard's history to submit a rap album as a senior thesis in the English Department, the university said. The album, called "Liminal Minds," has earned the equivalent of an A-minus grade, good enough to guarantee that Shaw will graduate with honors next week.

Count Shaw among those most surprised by the success. "I never thought it would be accepted by Harvard," said Shaw, a 20-year-old from Stone Mountain, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta. "I didn't think they would respect rap as an art form enough for me to do it." Shaw describes the 10-track album as a dark and moody take on what it means to be black in America. Each song is told from a different character's perspective, an idea inspired by Geoffrey Chaucer's 14th-century classic "The Canterbury Tales." Shaw, who's black, also draws on the works of writer James Baldwin while tackling topics ranging from police violence to slavery.

Shaw's thesis adviser, Harvard English lecturer Josh Bell, said Shaw is a "serious artist and he's an amazing guy." "He was able to turn around an album that people in the English Department would like very much but also that people who like rap music might like," Bell said. Harvard undergraduates aren't obligated to submit senior theses, but most departments require it to graduate with honors. Often it takes the form of a research paper, but students can apply to turn in an artistic work as a creative thesis. Some submit screenplays, novels or poetry collections.

Shaw was at home for winter break in 2015, struggling to find a topic for a written thesis, when he told his mother, Michelle Shaw, about the creative thesis option. He had recently started writing his own raps and performing them at open-microphone



Obasi Shaw poses outside the gates of Harvard Yard in Cambridge, Mass., Thursday, May 18, 2017. — AP

nights on campus. His mother connected the dots and suggested he record an album for his thesis. It took Shaw more than a year to write the songs and record them at a studio on Harvard's campus. His friends supplied many of the beats, while he taught himself how to mix the tracks into a polished product. "I'm still not satisfied with the quality of the production just yet, but I'm constantly learning and growing," Shaw said.

Rap and hip-hop have drawn growing interest from academia in recent years. Harvard established a fellowship for scholars of hip-hop in 2013, and other schools including the University of Arizona have started to offer minors in hip-hop studies. Clemson University announced in February that a doctoral student submitted a 34-track rap album as his dissertation, a first for the South Carolina university. Shaw plans to circulate the album online for free and hopes it opens doors to the music industry. In the meantime, he's headed to Seattle to work as a software engineer at Google. — AP

Willem Dafoe to play painter Van Gogh in new biopic



Willem Dafoe

Hollywood star Willem Dafoe is to play the painter Vincent Van Gogh in a new film about the tortured genius by artist Julian Schnabel, its producers said yesterday. "At Eternity's Gate" takes its title from one of Van Gogh's last canvases which shows a man holding his head in his hands.

"This is a film about painting and a painter and their relationship to infinity," said Schnabel, who won best director at the Cannes film festival in 2007 for "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly". "It is told by a painter. It contains what I felt were essential moments in his life. This is not the official history—it's my version," he added. Schnabel wrote the script with acclaimed French screenwriter Jean-Claude Carrière. The film—which will be shot in France—centers on Van Gogh's time in the southern French city of Arles and the village of Auvers-sur-Oise, near Paris. — AFP



Indian actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan waves as she arrives on May 19, 2017 for the screening of the film 'Okja' at the 70th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Adam Sandler earns raves at Cannes Film Fest (yes, really)

It's not every day you hear the name "Happy Gilmore" referenced at the Cannes Film Festival. But that was the case yesterday when Noah Baumbach's "The Meyerowitz Stories (New and Selected)," starring Adam Sandler, Ben Stiller and Dustin Hoffman, premiered at the French Riviera festival. When the film's cast, which also includes Emma Thompson, assembled for a press conference, the moderator noted this was the second film that Sandler and Stiller have made together after that classic 1996 comedy.

"I just think it's cool to hear 'Happy Gilmore' mentioned at the Cannes," Stiller chuckled. Worlds often collide at the Cannes Film Festival,



US actor Adam Sandler talks yesterday during a press conference for the film 'The Meyerowitz Stories (New and Selected)'.

even between broad comedy and international art house pieces. But while Sandler is far from a Cannes regular, the comedian was the toast of the festival yesterday, earning some of the best reviews of his career for his performance as a recently divorced father and the unappreciated son of Hoffman's aging artist, the patriarch of a neurotic, dysfunctional New York family.

"The Meyerowitz Stories" premiered in competition for the Palme d'Or - the festival's coveted top prize. For many, Sandler's sensitive, rumbled performance recalled some of his rare dramatic turns, like in "Punch Drunk Love" or "Spanglish." Sandler first came to Cannes in 2002 with "Punch Drunk Love," directed by Paul Thomas Anderson, and he was clearly excited to be back. "It's different for a comedian to get an offer like this," said Sandler. "My first thought is I don't want to let anyone down."

Sandler described his joy at reading Baumbach's script. "I was misty-eyed, laughing," said Sandler. "I just couldn't believe we were going to do this movie." Stiller and Sandler play half-brothers of very different temperaments in the film, a relationship that culminates in both



(From left) Actress Emma Thompson, director Noah Baumbach, actors Ben Stiller, Dustin Hoffman, Adam Sandler and Netflix CEO Ted Sarandos pose for photographers during the photo call for the film 'The Meyerowitz Stories' at the 70th international film festival, Cannes, southern France yesterday. — AP



US actor Adam Sandler (right) talks yesterday as he attends a press conference for the film 'The Meyerowitz Stories (New and Selected)' with US actor Ben Stiller (second left), US actor Dustin Hoffman (third left), US director Noah Baumbach (third right) and British actress Emma Thompson (2ndR) at the 70th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

connect with him like this. Where we're at in our lives personally, it was a chance for us to really get closer than we've been before. Playing brothers, it was really like one of the best experiences I've had." "Me too, buddy," chimed Sandler. — AP



An all-robot rock band makes music during the Street Music day in Vilnius on May 20, 2017. — AFP photos

Robot rockers lead Lithuania's street music day

From folk singers to an all-robot rock band, hundreds of Lithuanian music lovers flocked streets and squares Saturday to celebrate Street Music Day in dozens of cities and towns nationwide. The Baltic state of three million people has hosted the festival since 2007, also attracting followers in other European countries.

On the hottest day of the year, the robot band played at a square in Vilnius, one of more than 100 spots hosting concerts by professional and amateur musi-

cians, and proved particularly popular with children. "Robots are still quite rarely used in art," said Povilas Zmejauskas, 24, explaining the idea behind the band, which played rock and pop music.

There was also classical music, alternative rock, electronic dance music and jazz. Andrius Mamontovas, a Lithuanian musician and actor involved in organizing the event said some cities in Ukraine, Georgia, Latvia and Russia had also joined the street music initiative. — AFP



An all-robot rock band makes music during the Street Music day.

Get Ramadan ready with Bloomingdale's



Photo shows the eight designers posing. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

By Nawara Fattahova

This May, Bloomingdale's invites its customers to discover the exclusive Ramadan pop-up featuring a coveted selection of modest fashion from regional designers. Labels available in Dubai and Kuwait include BOUGUESSA - known for their minimalistic elements coupled with clean silhouettes. Drawing inspiration from art, architecture, and global culture, BOUGUESSA combines straight-lined designs with elegant sophistication. Get the staple kaftan as a wardrobe essential with CHADOR. The brand relishes in the sartorial journey between modern and tradition, East and West, between contemporary elegance and the fiery passion of the designer Nora Aldamer's Arabic roots.

Alanoud Badr, internationally acclaimed designer and stylist known for her Lady Fozaza fashion line, continues to evolve and the latest collection consisting of the classic powersuits, abayas, blazers and more. Having earned an international reputation for her show-stopping bespoke creations and pret-a-porter line, Dubai's Ayesha Depala softly structured designs in cream, mink and dusky fawn are a great addition to your Ramadan wardrobe.

The Bloomingdale's Kuwait Fashion floor also showcases brands including Amira Haroon, Osman and Sandra Mansour to name a few. No iftar outfit would be complete without shoes and bags to match. Creative handbags from Sofia Al Asfoor, Amanda Navai,



Nathalie Trad, Sandra J, Rula Galayini and Okhtein and stunning shoes from Aennis Eunis- Bloomingdale's Dubai and Kuwait have Ramadan covered.

Kuwait Times interviewed one of the designers, Amanda Navai, who attended the event last week. Navai is a creative Iranian designer displaying her beautiful collection of bags at Bloomingdale at 360 mall. "I'm Persian so I like the lion, as there is always a lion in our history and mythology. I live in Lebanon now,

but I visited Iran recently and was impressed by the culture. It made me think what happened there before and what is happening there now, and this was part of my inspiration," she told Kuwait Times. Some excerpts:

Kuwait Times: What is the main symbol of your collection?

Amanda Navai: The Azadi (freedom) lion collection. There are always two lions looking in opposite sides. One represents the past while



Iranian designer Amanda Navai.



the other represents the future. It shows how important it is to remember the past and its lessons, and equally to be excited and hopeful about the future and everything it can bring. There is always a separation between them. The most important thing is the present, as the past and future are disconnected and the reality is now.

KT: What about triangles?

Navai: Triangles were always in my collections since the past four years. I decided to work on a full collection inspired by the Iranian artist Monir Farmanfarman, who is now 94 years old. She started work in the 1960s when she studied in the United States, and then returned to Iran. After the revolution, she moved with her husband to the States. After her husband died, she moved back to Iran and started working on a new collection with mirror work. She started with the collection 'Infinite Possibilities', which I really love. She worked on this collection for 10 years. When she was 90, she became the first Iranian artist

to hold a solo exhibition at the Guggenheim, and became very famous internationally. This shows that there is no age limit for success.

The stars on some of my bags are actually triangles that symbolize unity, which means that together we are more beautiful. So there are endless possibilities of what we can do when we are united. I launched my first designs seven years ago, and the collection is repeated every season due to the demand, as people love it. All my pieces are made of python skin.

KT: Where do you manufacture your collection?

Navai: I'm based between Dubai and Lebanon. I manufacture at the same factory as Elie Saab. In the beginning, I was traveling back and forth, but then I decided that I want to be where my business is and I wanted to visit my factory every day, so I moved to Beirut, because I'm serious about my business and I want to be successful, although I don't speak Arabic. This is the first time I've launched a collection in Kuwait.



Arab Fashion Week



Models walk down the catwalk wearing designs by Zoe Eckett during the Arab Fashion Week in the United Arab Emirate of Dubai. — AFP photos



Models walk down the catwalk wearing designs by Marchesa during the Arab Fashion Week in the United Arab Emirate of Dubai. — AFP photos

Little women stand tall at DUBAI FASHION SHOW

Everybody just needs to be accepted



Models pose after walking down the catwalk during the International Dwarf Fashion Show as part of the Arab Fashion Week.

Like all working mums, Colleen Theriault has her hands full with her four-year-old son and a full-time career as head baker at a patisserie in the US state of North Carolina. But the 24-year-old is also an advocate for a budding movement that is breaking into the international fashion scene. Its models, like their initiative, are small but strong. The International Dwarf Fashion Show, a non-profit organization that aims to "reverse the discriminatory diktats of beauty", brought seven women with dwarfism to Dubai this week for a show dedicated to raising awareness about the need for more inclusivity in fashion.

"This is the farthest I've ever travelled, especially by myself," Theriault told AFP, after modeling two dresses at the show late Saturday. "This trip was a big step." In shimmering bodycon dresses and bright embellished saris, models from the United States, the Philippines, Italy, Bulgaria and Russia strutted down an impromptu garden runway under heart-shaped arches of flowers. The show closed with a charismatic model in a bridal dress, her holographic Mary Jane shoes peeking out from under a rose-dotted train.

Zahra Mufaddal Khumri waited for more than two hours with her husband and young daughter to get into Saturday's show. After

living in Dubai for more than a decade, she recently set up a Facebook support group for individuals and families in the emirate who, like her own, live with dwarfism. She and her banker husband have built "a pretty good life" for themselves in the global shopping hub, she said, but even there the basic task of finding clothes that fit has remained a struggle. The couple generally seek out the help of a tailor to alter or make garments to be the right size, particularly traditional Indian clothes. "You should be comfortable in anything you wear," Khumri said.

Beyond the 'kids' section

She does manage to buy tops and dresses off-the-rack, she said, "but with a bit of difficulty since I do have to search in the petite section. Sometimes in the kids' section." It was witnessing firsthand the exasperation of a woman with dwarfism shopping for basic staples that inspired Myriam Chalek to set up the International Dwarf Fashion Show. "It was seeing this little lady shopping in a kids section—very frustrated, not finding clothes that fit her," she said.

"I work in the fashion industry, so you always deal with designers and clients who ask you for tall and skinny," Chalek added.



"Even though some people are trying to turn the tide, like we are, unfortunately that still remains the norm."

The International Dwarf Fashion Show has attracted worldwide attention since it launched in 2014, taking to the runway during New York Fashion Week, as well as in Tokyo and Paris, supported by France's culture ministry. But in Dubai, the show almost did not happen after an eleventh-hour cancellation, organizers said.

Chalek said there was "chaos, drama, disappointment and anger" when the hotel they had booked cancelled on them last minute. A second hotel also refused to host the show. Contacted by AFP, the manager at one hotel said he was not aware of any fashion show. The head of communications at the second hotel was not reachable for comment. While Theriault was anxious to fly back home to her son, she said she was not giving up on working for more inclusivity in the world of fashion and beyond.

"We just want to show them that we're people just like they are," she said. "Everybody has a disability, no matter if you can see it on the outside or on the inside," the model added. "Everybody just needs to be accepted." — AFP



Lifestyle

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Little women
stand tall
at Dubai
fashion show

39



Indian actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan poses as she arrives for the screening of the film '120 Beats Per Minute (120 Battements Par Minute)' at the 70th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

'Star Wars' at 40: The Force is still strong

The date was 1977, and no one had yet worn a copper bikini to bed, made "whooshing" lightsaber noises with a broomstick or yelled "May the Fourth be with you" at strangers. But that was all about to change as a 33-year-old Californian filmmaker named George Walton Lucas Jr. prepared to release his third feature—a far-fetched, slightly corny intergalactic saga of good and evil starring a sulky farm boy with daddy issues.

Jump forward 40 years and "Star Wars" has grown into the most lucrative and influential movie franchise of all time—Princess Leia's signature side hair buns are all the rage on Halloween and Jedi is an official religion in several countries. "I'm running out of hyperbolic adjectives to describe the power of 'Star Wars,' but that's because it is the ultimate standard-bearer," Shawn Robbins, chief analyst for BoxOffice.com, told AFP. "Four decades of record-breaking, genre-defining entertainment across film, television, video games, toys, books and everything else the brand has touched simply speaks for itself." With its indie flick budget of just \$11 million, the brash-looking "Star Wars" opened on Wednesday, May 25, 1977 — the anniversary falls on Thursday-on an inauspicious 32 screens, taking in \$1.6 million on its first weekend.

Bumps in the road

Starring relative newcomers Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher and Harrison Ford as swashbuckling Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia and Han Solo, it benefited from word-of-mouth buzz and the crowds lining up to see it quickly grew exponentially. Its first theatrical run ended with a phenomenal \$221.3 million while various reissues by 20th Century Fox brought the domestic total to more than twice that amount. The premiere was at the Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, where it played to sold-out audiences five times a day for over a year, according to resident historian Levi Tinker, who told AFP the crowds literally wore out the hand-woven Chinese carpet in the lobby.

Two sequels—"The Empire Strikes Back" (1980) and "Return of the Jedi" (1983) — grossed more than \$450 million each worldwide, but there were sizeable bumps in the road ahead. Lucas's 1997 "special edition" reissues were met with jeers thanks to digital tweaks deemed unnecessary or downright off-putting. Then there was the Lucas-directed 1999-2005 prequel trilogy beginning with "The Phantom Menace"—films considered sub-par in almost every department. The 73-year-old filmmaker—who had struck a deal with Fox to keep 40 percent of the gross from the original movie, as well as merchandising and sequels rights—was just as shrewd when he sold LucasFilm to Disney in 2012 for a staggering \$4 billion.

The Mouse House breathed new life into "Star Wars" with the announcement of a sequel trilogy and three standalone "anthology"



A Yoda-inspired hot air balloon "Star Wars" has grown into the most lucrative and influential movie franchise of all time. — AFP

films, and has already added \$3 billion with its first two movies to bring the total box office past \$7.5 billion.

'Into the infinite'

Speculation is already building over the future of the franchise with the approach of the final movies by 2020 but, long before then, fans have Rian Johnson's "The Last Jedi"—the second of the sequels—to look forward to in December. It continues seamlessly from "The Force Awakens" (2015), which became one of three films in history to take \$2 billion after posting the biggest domestic and worldwide debuts ever.

"The Last Jedi" now has the potential to challenge those numbers and—particularly given the goodwill generated by "The Force Awakens" and "Rogue One"—it is set up to be an absolute monster," said Paul Dergarabedian, a senior analyst at comScore. Jeff Bock, of Exhibitor Relations, believes the untimely death of Fisher in December will give "The Last Jedi" the same boost experienced by "Fast and Furious 7" and "The Dark Knight Rises" after the deaths of Paul Walker and Heath Ledger.

In any case, experts agree that LucasFilm is unlikely to want to let go of a franchise which can add \$1-2 billion with each new release, even if fan fatigue is an ever-present threat. "Like the universe itself, Star Wars will just keep expanding into the infinite," said Bock. "Literally, there is no end in sight for this franchise." — AFP

Bizarre News

King of Netherlands is a secret pilot

The King of the Netherlands has had a secret part-time job as a pilot for over two decades. King Willem-Alexander rules the European country, but he has reportedly been co-piloting KLM passenger flights twice a month for the past 21 years and refers to his other job as a "hobby". He said: "For me the most important thing is that I have a hobby for which I need to concentrate completely." And the ruler believes passengers don't recognize him or his voice when he speaks over the tannoy because he claims the travellers are not listening to his instructions anyway. He told De Telegraaf: "The advantage is that I can always say that I wish everyone a heartfelt welcome in the name of the captain and the crew. "So I don't have to say my own name. But most of the (passengers) don't listen anyway."

Obese monkey goes on strict diet

A 60lb monkey has been put on a diet. The obese primate, which is believed to be aged between 10 to 15 years old, has been nicknamed Uncle Fat after he became morbidly overweight from gorging on junk food and soft drinks left behind by tourists. And it has been reported on the Metro Online the animal's overindulgence left him at a high risk of heart disease and diabetes. A team of vets decided to catch the animal and put him on a strict healthy eating plan in a bid to get his weight down to an ideal size. Vet Kaewchot said: "I understand that people feel sorry for the monkeys and want to feed them when they see them. "But please don't feed them food that people like to eat like snacks and soda. It is very bad for their health and the problem is entirely man made."

Groom wakeboards to wedding James Bond style

A James Bond fan turned up to his wedding on a wakeboard. A thrill-seeking groom named Matt Knight had all eyes on him when he made an action-packed entrance to his own wedding at Chateau Rhianfa hotel in Anglesey, which saw him whiz along the lake on a board attached to a rope connected to a boat dressed in a dinner suit, according to the Mail Online. The husband-to-be showed off his skills to the wedding guests and completed a somersault as he approached the venue. And Matt, who is a huge fan of the 007 franchise, was accompanied by his two best men on the unusual journey in. But the big entrance came as "no surprise" to his bride

Kirsty, who is a finance director from Stoke-on-Trent, looked on at the events which she said were "no surprise" given that Matt is a "huge bond fan". She said: "Matt is a huge Bond fan so it came as no surprise when he suggested a crazy stunt like this." Thankfully Matt and his best men changed into dry suits when they reached the venue.

Raccoon causes chaos after breaking in to family home

A raccoon has broken into a home and caused with the homeowners and their pet cat. Marek Chapanionek, 44, and his wife Caroline, 47, were woken up after they heard crashing in their home only to discover the mammal rummaging through a bag before it grabbed a Nutri-Grain bar to snack on. The rampaging raccoon is believed to have entered their home via the cat flap, but ran into different rooms in the house in Northamptonshire when the family arose when it was pulling items out of drawers and scattering clothes across the room, according to the BBC. This news come as a surprise as it has been rumored the black and white furry animal has never been seen inside someone's house for almost 30 years, and the RSPCA have previously claimed any raccoons that have been seen in the wild are believed to have escaped from wildlife parks.

One in 10 Brits agree with Pippa Middleton's 'no ring no bring' policy

One in 10 Brits agree with Pippa Middleton's 'no ring, no bring' policy to her wedding. The survey by protein brand STRIPPD compiled a list of the top ten "bridezilla" behaviors, which has revealed 25 per cent of brides-to-be agree with Duchess Catherine's siblings decision to not make her 35-year-old sister her chief bridesmaid. The research has also revealed more than 30 per cent of brides believe losing weight is the most important thing in the run up to their big day as it was ranked as more important than the wedding cake and the first dance. The list of STRIPPD's top 10 bridezilla behaviors are as follows:

1. Getting tipsy at the reception and behaving inappropriately
2. Complaining about the food
3. Fighting with the new-in-laws
4. Shouting at wedding photographer
5. Sending out dress specifications for female guests
6. Revoking invitations from guests
7. Micro-managing the hen do
8. Demanding expensive presents
9. Strict rules imposed on the groom during the event
10. Buying bridesmaids ugly dresses.

—Bang Showbiz



Italian graffiti artist Andrea Castegnino works on his piece during the international graffiti art festival in Pristina on May 19, 2017. — AFP