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Hariri shelves resignation, pledges to stay in Lebanon

PM attends Independence Day military parade

Amir in hospital for checkups after cold; lawmakers send good wishes

KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said yesterday that HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has been admitted to hospital for a normal medical checkup after contracting a cold.



HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday that the Kuwaiti people's thoughts and prayers are with HH the Amir as he completes medical examinations. Deputy Speaker Essa Al-Kandari also prayed for "His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's good health" as he undergoes medical checkups. In a statement, the lawmaker said that he and his fellow citizens "wish His Highness the Amir a speedy recovery". — KUNA

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Saad Al-Hariri yesterday shelved his decision to resign as prime minister at the request of President Michel Aoun, easing a crisis that had deepened tensions in the Middle East. Hariri made his announcement after returning to Beirut for the first time since he quit abruptly on Nov 4 in a broadcast from Saudi Arabia. Top Lebanese officials have said Riyadh forced him to quit and held him in the kingdom. Riyadh and Hariri deny this.

At the presidential palace near Beirut, Hariri said he hoped his move would lead to "a responsible dialogue...that deals with divisive issues and their repercussions on Lebanon's relations with Arab brothers". Hariri said all Lebanese sides must commit to keeping the country out of regional conflicts, a reference to the Iran-backed Hezbollah political and military movement. Hezbollah's regional military role has greatly alarmed Saudi Arabia, Hariri's long-time ally.

"I presented today my resignation to President Aoun and he urged me to wait before offering it and to hold onto it for more dialogue about its reasons and political background, and I showed responsiveness," he said in a televised statement. The resignation had shocked even Hariri's aides. He returned to Lebanon late on Tuesday night after French intervention. Aoun, a political ally of Hezbollah, had refused to accept the resignation because



BEIRUT: Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri (right), President Michel Aoun (center) and House Speaker Nabih Berri attend a military parade to celebrate the 74th anniversary of Lebanon's independence yesterday. — AFP

it happened in "mysterious circumstances" abroad. He had called Hariri a hostage in Riyadh. Hariri appeared to express relief that Aoun had not accepted the resignation right away. He thanked Aoun yesterday for respecting constitutional norms and "his rejection of depart-

ing from them under any circumstances". The resignation pitched Lebanon to the forefront of the regional rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which backs Lebanon's Hezbollah, and raised concerns of a protracted crisis. In his resignation speech, Hariri had cited fear of

assassination, and attacked Iran along with Hezbollah for sowing strife in the Arab world. Hariri's resignation was followed by a steep escalation in Saudi statements against the Lebanese government, which includes Shiite Hezbollah.

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Minister urged to suspend new traffic campaign

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Acting National Assembly Speaker Essa Al-Kandari called on Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah to suspend new traffic regulations that allow policemen to impound vehicles if motorists are using mobile phones or not wearing seatbelts while driving. The lawmaker urged the interior minister to investigate if the new traffic rules are in breach of the constitution, saying the minister should discuss the issue with

constitutional experts to ensure the legal status of the rules.

Kandari said that if the minister finds that the rules are suspected of violating the constitution, he should suspend them, as the minister "is known for his positive cooperation with lawmakers". He said the rules have triggered strong controversy and wide divisions in the country.

As part of a new traffic campaign, the interior ministry last week began impounding vehicles for a series of traffic offences, mainly not wearing seatbelts and using mobile phones while driving. The campaign was harshly criticized by lawmakers as unconstitutional, who called for imposing fines without the need to seize vehicles. A number of MPs threatened to grill the interior minister if the rules were not suspended.

Meanwhile, head of the Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee MP

Salah Khorsheed said yesterday the panel discussed a government draft law stipulating to allow the government to borrow up to KD 25 billion for durations of up to 30 years. He said the government needs to borrow to boost its sovereign rating and safeguard the national currency.

Kuwait posted a budget deficit in the past two fiscal years due to the sharp fall in oil revenues, which make up around 95 percent of public income. As a result, the government borrowed from domestic and international markets, and issued international bonds for the first time to finance the budget shortfall. Under Kuwaiti law, the government can only borrow with legislation passed by the Assembly.

Separately, opposition MP Riyadh Al-Adasani yesterday warned ministers in the new Cabinet before its formation that he will grill those who fail to perform their duties and promises.

6 kg of fake jewelry worth KD 80,000 confiscated

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry confiscated six kilograms of fake gold ornaments valued at KD 80,000 (\$261,000) in various locations in Mubarakia and Rai, and culprits were referred to prosecution. The confiscated jewelry are duplications of international brands, stuffed with nonprecious material in order to increase their weight, the ministry said in a statement, adding that the shops were selling fake jewelry "to

make profits by illegal methods". The discovery comes a week after a similar crackdown resulted in confiscating nearly four kilograms of fake gold jewelry worth KD 50,000 (\$165,000) at a jewelry store in Rai.

The ministry is intensifying supervisory tours of gold markets to inspect the authenticity of the scales used in the shops, as well as the percentage of precious stones used and other commitments mentioned in the law, it said in the statement. The ministry will not hesitate to apply the mentioned sanctions against violators in order to protect consumers from any kind of cheating, it added. The ministry is also monitoring precious metal ornaments and precious stones, whether produced in workshops inside the country or imported from abroad. — KUNA

Syria oppn pressured to compromise in Riyadh

RIYADH: Syrian opposition figures met in Saudi Arabia yesterday in a bid to form an overhauled delegation to peace talks that analysts say may be more willing to compromise on key demands. The Riyadh meeting was co-chaired by the UN's Syria envoy, Staffan de Mistura, and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir, who said the aim was to reach a "fair solution" to the conflict. De Mistura said the goal was to give momentum to next week's talks in Geneva by forging a unified opposition delegation, as long demanded by the Syrian government. He said he would travel to Moscow today for talks with Russian officials. "I'm always optimistic... especially in this moment," he said.

The 140 or so delegates from a wide range of opposition platforms are under heavy pressure to row back on some of their more radical demands after a series of recent battlefield victories that have given President Bashar Al-Assad's regime the upper hand. Absent are several former leading figures who were seen as unwilling

to compromise. Among them is Riad Hijab, who stepped down as leader of the Saudi-backed opposition High Negotiations Committee (HNC) ahead of the meeting complaining that there were "attempts to lower the ceiling of the revolution and prolong the regime".

Multiple rounds of talks hosted by the UN have failed to bring an end to the war in Syria, which has killed more than 330,000 people since 2011 and forced millions from their homes. Factions opposed to Assad have been plagued by divisions throughout the maelstrom. Participants in the Riyadh meeting include members of the Istanbul-based National Coalition as well as of rival Cairo- and Moscow-based groups seen as more favorable to the regime, and independent figures.

Qadri Jamil, who heads the Moscow-based group, yesterday announced he would not be attending the talks, citing what he said was the Syrian opposition's inability to agree on "the bases and principles" of their stance at the Saudi summit. The National Coalition meanwhile said Jamil had pulled out after "disagreement over an article on Bashar Al-Assad stepping down and the start of a transitional phase" in Syria.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said he expected that the withdrawal of Hijab and other hardliners in recent days would "help the Syria-based

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Putin calls for compromise over Syria at summit with Turkey, Iran

SOCHI: Vladimir Putin called yesterday for "concessions and compromise" from all parties in Syria's six-year conflict as he kicked off a key summit with the leaders of Turkey and Iran aimed at reviving stuttering peace negotiations. The summit with Iran's President Hassan Rouhani and Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Black Sea resort of Sochi came two days after the Russian leader hosted surprise talks with the war-torn country's President Bashar Al-Assad there.

"It is obvious that the reform process will not be simple, it will require compromise and concessions from all parties, including obviously the Syrian government," Putin said. "I count on the fact that Russia, Iran and Turkey will put in their best efforts to make this work as productive as possible," he added. Putin added that there was a "real chance" to end Syria's war which monitors say has killed more than 330,000 people as he said Russia, Turkey and Iran had managed to prevent the collapse of the war-torn country.

Turkey's Erdogan for his part said the



SOCHI: Russian President Vladimir Putin (center), Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (right) and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani pose during a trilateral meeting yesterday. — AFP

three countries had to intensify efforts to try to settle the crisis. "We need to make significant progress on the political solution," he said in translated remarks. "I believe that we will make critical decisions here." Iran's Rouhani said the three countries' strategy was "based on partnership and not competition, on friendship and not on animosity". "By cooperating, our countries destroyed the decaying body of terror" in Syria, he said.

Russia claims to have practically ended

the military conflict through its intervention, but the various sides in Syria are far from a political agreement. Ahead of yesterday's summit in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, Putin discussed Syria with his US counterpart Donald Trump and Saudi Arabia's King Salman, among other leaders. In a lengthy phone call late Tuesday, Putin and Trump stressed the need to ensure "the stability of a unified Syria," the White House said.

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150th anniversary of Canada confederation celebrated

Embassy hosts reception at Four Seasons Hotel



(From left) Canadian Ambassador Martine Moreau points to a painting submitted during the students art competition as former Capital governor Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Reem Al-Khaled and Kuwait Times Deputy General Manager Adnan Saad look on.



Diplomats pictured in attendance. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



KUWAIT: Ambassador of Canada to Kuwait Martine Moreau (left) and Assistant Undersecretary at Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Reem Al-Khaled cut the cake during a reception to celebrate 'Canada150.'



Guests look at paintings submitted during the students art competition.



Paintings submitted during the students art competition, organized by the Canadian Embassy in cooperation with Kuwait Times.

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A reception celebrating 'Canada150' was held on Tuesday at the Four Seasons Hotel in Kuwait City. Assistant Minister and Kuwait Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Reem Al-Khaled graced the occasion and was warmly welcomed at the venue by Ambassador of Canada to Kuwait Martine Moreau.

"2017 has been a truly exceptional year for Canadians, as we celebrate the 150th anniversary of our confederation. During this milestone year, which has been named 'Canada150,' Canadians at home and around the world are celebrating not only their inclusive ethnic, cultural and linguistic mosaic, but also their country's natural beauty, rich history, heritage and longstanding democratic values," Moreau said.

According to Moreau, Canada has invited the world to join Canadians in celebrating, exploring and participating in

the best that their nation has to offer. "With this in mind, our embassy has been marking 'Canada150' with our friends in Kuwait in the form of some unique events. These include, of course, our national day reception (Tuesday) evening, last week's very first Canada-Kuwait friendship hockey tournament and what has turned out to be a truly remarkable Canadian-themed students art competition organized in cooperation with Kuwait Times and Kuwait's Ministry of Education," she said.

Some of the students' works were displayed at the reception. "The works exhibited here are some of the beautiful artworks we received throughout the competition. With some 12,000 students from 175 schools participating, I must say it has been truly heartwarming to see such an extraordinary level of enthusiasm and interest by these students in discovering Canada and providing their artistic

interpretations in keeping with our 150th anniversary theme," she added.

The competition turnout, according to Moreau, speaks volumes about the special relationship that Canada enjoys with Kuwait. "Indeed, we share many common values that strongly underpin our close friendship and strong bilateral partnership - a partnership that seeks to enhance cooperation, strengthen commerce and expand shared expertise in a wide range of fields, while increasing and broadening people-to-people links. I am very confident that the excellent relations that exist between our two countries will continue to advance and prosper," Moreau said.

(See Pages 24, 25 and 26 for more pictures from the awarding ceremony of the students' art competition winners)

countries to band together for the sake of those affected by the hurricanes.

Human trafficking

Separately, Ambassador Otaibi said that finding the root cause for human trafficking will be an essential tool to combat this growing form of abuse. During a UNSC meeting on human trafficking at times of conflict, he said that his country issued several laws to prevent human trafficking and other similar crimes from being committed. Kuwaiti law 91/2013 implements several tenets found in the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, said Ambassador Al-Otaibi about his country's efforts within this regarding, adding that Kuwait commended UNSC resolutions 2331 and 2388, which called on members to fight against this heinous crime.

Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti official touched on forced immigration, saying that this particular dilemma should be handled in the most comprehensive and humane way possible. Terrorist organizations, such as the so-called Islamic State (IS) and others, carry out human trafficking activities while hiding behind humanitarian catastrophes such as force immigration, said Ambassador Otaibi who indicated that the difficulty lies here in finding the correct methods to detect human trafficking violations. The Kuwaiti



Minister hails 'remarkable' students art competition

Kuwait donates \$1m to Caribbean hurricane victims

NEW YORK: Kuwait announced that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah ordered the donation of \$1 million to be delivered to victims of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, which hit the Caribbean Sea region back in September.

This announcement was delivered by Kuwait's Permanent Delegate to the UN Headquarters in New York Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi to the donor's conference for the reconstruction states within the Caribbean Sea region.

Ambassador Otaibi said that Kuwait was always eager to provide a helping hand to those affected by natural disasters worldwide, affirming that the donation was handed in directly to the hurricanes-devastated countries as a result of the conference.

The Kuwaiti diplomat conveyed his country's sincere wishes of recovery for those inflicted by the disasters, adding that such circumstances required world

ICRC hails Kuwait's support for families of missing people

KUWAIT: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has applauded the Kuwaiti government's commitment to support the families of people missing since the 1990-91 Gulf War and its diplomacy efforts to ease the flow of humanitarian aid worldwide. "We have to commend the Kuwaiti government for their commitment to search for answers, but also, for their commitment to really support the families of these missing people," said Dr Hugo Slim, ICRC's Head

of Policy and Humanitarian Diplomacy.

"Speaking frankly, not every government cares for the families of missing people as much as the Kuwaiti government does," Slim said in an exclusive interview. The issue was discussed amid tripartite talks between the ICRC, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry along with Kuwait's diplomatic efforts on the humanitarian scale, particularly on Myanmar.

"Money and assistance can help people stay alive and survive but political influence, (and) diplomatic efforts, these things can really help the ICRC. "As a humanitarian leader, the Kuwaiti government uses its humanitarian influence whenever possible on states and varying parties in the different conflicts," he said.

These efforts help broaden inter-humanitarian agency cooperation and ease humanitarian access to conflict areas, explained the ICRC official.

Furthermore, as Kuwait prepares to serve a two-year term as a non-permanent member on the Security Council, Slim hopes that the Gulf country would use its influence as a humanitarian leader to make the issue of missing people a "global priority." The talks also discussed cooperation between the KRCS and the ICRC on humanitarian efforts in both Syria and Yemen.

"(KRCS) has played an important role in Yemen and in Syria and we have been able to work with them and often cooperate at a very operational level," he said, namely on the distribution of food and medical supplies.



Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi

diplomat lauded the UN Strategic Development Goals (SDG) for including human trafficking, as one of the problems that humanitarian must unite against. —KUNA



Dr Hugo Slim

Regarding Syria, Slim said that Kuwait has played an "extraordinary leading role" on mobilising the international community to provide much-needed funds to address the humanitarian plight of Syrian refugees. —KUNA

News in brief

\$1.7 million donation to Gaza

GAZA: A sum of \$1.7 million, part of the \$200 million Kuwaiti donation aimed at the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, was delivered to the authorities, said the Palestinian government yesterday. Palestinian Minister of Public Works and Housing Mufeed Hasayneh said that the new batch would be used to reconstruct Gaza's industrial facilities. Hasayneh thanked Kuwait for this generous donation, which reflected the strong ties linking Palestinians and Kuwaitis. In November of 2014, Kuwait pledged \$200 million as part the \$5.4 billion donation made at Cairo's donors conference for the Gaza Strip. —KUNA

FM meets Mauritanian Ambassador

KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the Ambassador of Mauritania to Kuwait Hamid Hamouni at his office yesterday. The meeting was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's Bureau Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, along with a number of senior ministry officials. —KUNA

Kuwaiti envoy meets Saudi Minister

RIYADH: Kuwait Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Sabah met with Saudi Interior Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef, the official SPA news agency said. The two officials discussed means of further cementing bilateral relations and issues of common interest, said SPA. The meeting was attended by senior security officials. —KUNA

Local

Ministry demands proper measures to stop subsidized food smuggling

Education ministry can't hire expat social workers

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) strongly urged relevant monitoring bodies to take proper measures to stop the smuggling of subsidized foodstuff abroad, especially after large quantities were spotted on sale in various countries. The ministry also referred to the Cabinet a decision on fighting hikes in foodstuff and consumer goods' prices, which in article 16, states that MoCI, the Interior Ministry, the customs department, the Kuwait Ports Authority and agricultural affairs authority are all responsible for meticulous implementation of decisions banning the export of ruminants, poultry, fish and all other subsidized goods in addition to authorizing the Interior Ministry to conduct investigations to foil such illegal acts.

In this regard, informed sources explained that MoCI asked the customs department to have strict control on various border exists to prevent smuggling such items and protect public funds. The sources added that large quantities of goods carrying the Kuwait Supply Company seal and logo are being sold on street markets in other countries.

The sources quoted a MoCI statement that around 1.7 million people are registered with the subsidized supplies system and that the total sum of subsidies they annually receive amounts to KD 150.5 million. The ministry also explained that citizens, GCC nationals, state-

less people and domestic helpers are included in the supplies system; ie 1.1 million citizens (with a cost of KD 98.4 million), 90,300 GCC nationals (with a cost of KD 7.7 million) and 97,900 stateless people (with a cost of KD 8.2 million), in addition to 413,400 domestic helpers with a total annual cost of KD 34 million.

Hiring on hold

As part of its policy to replace expatriate workers in the public sector with national manpower, the Civil Service Commission's (CSC) halted appointment of expats at the education ministry until it implements CSC instructions with regards to the jobs 'Kuwaitization' policy. High-ranking educational sources said CSC halted the procedures of appointing 35 social and psychological workers who completed appointment and medical tests, adding the commission refused to proceed with their appointment completely, adding that this move put the ministry and those involved in a bad situation. The sources said the ministry suffers from a severe shortage in social and psychological workers in schools, and that is why it resorted to locally hire those who meet the conditions, because nationals are shunning such jobs due to a lack of incentives. The ministry had informed the commission that it cannot implement the replacement policy at the present time over a lack of replacements and asked for two academic years to find

national replacements.

Gas stations

Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) plans to expand gas stations by restructuring some of them in a way that achieves competitiveness with other stations. Sources said the strategy aims at building 19 advanced petrol pumps in new cities in strategic locations. Meanwhile, sources said plans are being made to allocate 10 stations for small and medium projects in a move to support citizens' projects that are financed by the national fund to care for small and medium businesses.

Taxes collected

Official data revealed that the finance ministry was able to collect KD 10.080 million in taxes and fees during October, raising its collections in seven months to KD 101.7 million, and this is higher compared to what was collected during the same period last year. Data also showed that the customs department collected KD 164.575 million during this period, while the justice ministry collected KD 7.3 million and civil aviation collected KD 7.390 million. The Cabinet had previously approved a joint agreement of selective taxes for GCC countries, which calls for imposing taxes on tobacco and carbonated drinks that may reach 100 percent. The agreements needs to be passed in parliament before it can be put into effect.

Proposal approved

The parliament's interior and defense committee approved a proposal to accept the children and grandchildren of bedoons in the interior and defense ministries, and raise the maximum age of eligibility for military service to 40 years as proposed by MP Abdallah Fahhad.

COMCEC meeting covers vital issues: Minister

ISTANBUL: The Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) touched on vital economic issues pertaining to the Arab and Muslim worlds, said Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh yesterday. He made his statements on the sidelines of his attendance of the meeting, inaugurated earlier by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul.

During his opening speech, President Erdogan touched upon the grave economic and political challenges facing the Islamic world. President Erdogan added that Islamic countries should focus on "improving cooperation" to offer people "the prosperous life they deserve".

The COMCEC session's agenda is stacked with significant issues that run the gamut from the latest economic happenings and agricultural development to the role of the private sector towards economic growth. Established in 1981, the 57-member country COMCEC is one of four Organization of Islamic Conference standing committees and convenes annually at a ministerial level in Istanbul. — KUNA

Agreement to renew driving licenses via phones, kiosks

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry signed an agreement yesterday to allow drivers in Kuwait to renew their licenses online using their smartphones or at kiosks soon to be made available at public places around the country.

Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs signed a contract with a Polish company specialized in issuing smart driver's licenses, to provide easier services presented to citizens and expatriates in Kuwait. The company operates

according to the most modern specifications and has 150 certifications, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program and the Secretariat General for Planning Development.

Maj Gen Fahd Al-Showai said the project aims at renewing driving licenses through a smartphone app, as well as kiosks which will be distributed to markets and malls in all governorates. This new measure should enable speedy processing of transactions instead of following the current procedures of handing the old license and receiving the new one, thus reducing crowding at traffic departments.

He said the ministry seeks to enhance work mechanisms and introduce new techniques, adding the new system will enable citizens and expats to renew their licenses through mobile phones. Meanwhile, the old system will remain until everybody gets used to the new one, which will save time and money of citizens and expats who wish to use it.



KUWAIT: Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Maj Gen Fahd Al-Showai signs the contract.

Tanzania's speaker receives Ghanem's message

KUWAIT: Speaker of the Tanzanian National Assembly Job Ndugai has received a message from Kuwaiti counterpart Marzouq Al-Ghanem on boosting bilateral ties. Kuwait's ambassador to Tanzania Jassem Al Najem handed over Ghanem's message to Ndugai, the embassy in Dar es Salaam said in a press release yesterday. Ghanem invited his Tanzanian counterpart to visit Kuwait leading a parliamentary delegation, it added.

The invitation is part of Ghanem's efforts to promote parliamentary friendship ties between the two countries, besides exchange of views on a host of issues of common concern, following the meeting between him and Ndugai on the sidelines of the 137th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly in Russia, last month. According to the release, the Tanzanian Speaker expressed gratitude to the Kuwaiti government for continued aid to his country, with special thanks to the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) for funding many projects in the East African country since 1975.

He referred to the long history of Kuwait's oil and gas companies, saying it would form a take-off point for fruitful cooperation between the two countries in light of new discoveries in Tanzania. Ndugai voiced desire for concluding a MoU between the parliaments of Tanzania and Kuwait to activate bilateral cooperation for the benefit of the two peoples. — KUNA



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 * Kuwait Times employees, spouses and their second-degree relatives also cannot participate.

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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Sunset during a rainy day in Kuwait City. —KUNA

KUNA's Sheikh Mubarak re-elected as FANA's President

AMMAN: The 45th Assembly of the Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA) have unanimously and by acclamation re-elected Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah, the Chairman and Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) as FANA President for a second two-year term.

The meeting that kicked off in Amman yesterday, attended by the chiefs of the Arab news agencies, also agreed that Kuwait would host the next assembly. President of the News Agency World Council (NACO) Maxim Minchev, who is also Director General of the Bulgarian News Agency (BTA), attended the assembly sponsored by Jordanian Prime Minister Hani Al-Mulki.

In an opening address, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij reiterated the significant role of the mass media and news agencies in combating extremist and religious thinking and terrorism. In particular, they "have a major role that precedes all in countering religious and extremist thinking, as well as fighting strange and intruder thoughts that lead to violence and terrorism."

This is a huge and sophisticated responsibility that prompt further cooperation and synergy, he added. The FANA and KUNA Chief reaffirmed the need to promote news agencies' capabilities, referring to the spread of misleading news and information through social media, with no legal or ethical disciplines.

This has made it inevitable for discreet news agencies to act as a "fortified defensive wall" against such trends through publishing true and reliable information, he stressed. He noted that Takfiri and extremist groups have come to use the media as a platform to disseminate poisonous thoughts among the public, hence news agencies have to expose this.

FANA enjoys various advantages that have



AMMAN: KUNA's Chairman and Director General Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah speaks during the 45th Assembly of the Federation of Arab News Agencies. —KUNA

enabled the federation to carry on despite hindrances that faced it, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij said. The federation has managed over the past years to boost its status through participation in international events, concluding agreements with specialized world organizations and taking part in training programs, he said.

He recalled the 35th assembly, held in Amman a decade before, when participants reiterated the massive responsibility FANA shouldered requiring sound and best employment of the federation's potentials.

Future is promising if keenness is doubled to provide all that could guarantee moral and financial support for FANA's sustainability, he said. Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij highly appreciated the support he received over the past two years, lauding eagerness displayed by FANA's Secretary General Fareed Ayar for executing the

federation's mission with a "developed mentality" and "sedate action." Finally, he thanked the Jordanian Premier for patronizing the 45th Assembly, and the Director General of Jordan News Agency (Petra) Faisal Al-Shboul and Petra's staff for providing necessary requirements to secure success for the conference. Addressing the assembly on behalf of the Prime Minister, Jordan's Minister of State for Media Affairs, and government official spokesman, Mohammad Al-Momani, said that technical developments of the media and variety have come to constitute a huge challenge for the media institutions, particularly official ones. Official and non-official media are required to keep pace with such developments so that they would not allow non-professionals to dominate the media scene and negatively affect individuals and the society. —KUNA

program will discuss cooperation on social, economic, cultural, and political affairs under the theme 'Sustaining Peace and Development in Asia.' Earlier Tuesday, the APA's 2nd Executive Council meeting was held with delegates from

each member parliament. Turkey took over the APA presidency from Cambodia after last year's APA Plenary Session in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The APA will convene under the Turkish presidency for the next two years. —KUNA



ISTANBUL: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem (right) participates in the 10th plenary session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly. — KUNA

Kuwait asserts need of coordination among Asian parliaments

ISTANBUL: Kuwait parliament speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem Tuesday asserted importance of coordination among Asian parliaments to be more effective at the international level. Ghanem made his statements on sidelines of the 10th plenary session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA). He said there was an agreement among APA members that they should unite over issues discussed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), mirroring the parliaments in Europe and Latin America.

The Asian continent, he added, was facing many crises and challenges which required coordination. Speaker of the Turkish Parliament Ismail Kahraman, addressing the plenary session earlier, called for boosting cooperation among the APA members to guarantee sustainability of development and peace. The Asian parliamentarians discussed how the APA could play a bigger role in achieving sustainable development and peace in Asia. The three-day gathering's

Kuwaiti performance grabs golden prize in Jordanian Theater Festival

AMMAN: 'Atsah' a Kuwaiti theatrical performance, has won the golden prize at the 24th Jordanian Theater Festival concluded in Amman Tuesday. In a glitzy award ceremony, the prize was handed over to Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Assistant Secretary General and Head of the Kuwaiti delegation Dr Bader Al-Doweesh and the play director Abdullah Al-Turkmani. Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan

Hamad Al-Duaij and other play performers were also attending. The 'Atsah' (sneeze) play, written by Kuwaiti playwright Mohammad Al-Mussallam, was inspired by 'the Death of a Government Clerk' short story by the Russian legend playwright and short story writer Anton Chekhov. It shed lights on the helplessness of low class people in front of those who belong to higher classes.

The 24th annual Jordanian Theatre Festival kicked November 14 at the Royal Cultural Centre. The festival, which is held in cooperation with the Jordan Artists Association, comprised musical and theatrical performances, short movies and several workshops. Performances from the UAE, Kuwait, Sudan, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq vied for the festival prizes. —KUNA



AMMAN: Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan Hamad Al-Duaij, NCCAL Assistant Secretary General Dr Bader Al-Doweesh and the play's director Abdullah Al-Turkmani hold up the prize during the ceremony. —KUNA

French Foreign Ministry honors Kuwaiti trainee

PARIS: The French Foreign Ministry honored yesterday a Kuwaiti trainee who took part in the international Louise Weiss training program.

Trainee Sarah Al-Sabah thanked the French Foreign Ministry for providing her

with the chance to develop her skills at the program which included 27 participants from Europe and the Arab world. Sabah hoped that she would continue to gain the skills necessary to contribute to the development of Kuwait.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Ambassador to France Samie Al-Suleiman commended the French Foreign Ministry for providing a chance for Kuwaiti talents to develop their assets and skills. The program's name is a tribute to Louise Weiss (1893-1983) - a French author, journalist, and politician who championed women's rights and EU unity. —KUNA



PARIS: Kuwaiti Ambassador to France Samie Al-Suleiman (center left) attends the ceremony. —KUNA

Egaila complex tenants decry landlord's ‘oppression’

Lessees ‘intimidated’ to vacate their stores



KUWAIT: Photos showing damages to parking spaces that the shop tenants accuse the landlord of creating to drive customers away in an attempt to force them to vacate their properties. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Tenants at a shopping complex in Egaila are resisting its landlord's strong-arm tactics to force them to vacate their stores. One of the lessees told Kuwait Times about the oppression and injustice he is facing after pouring his life's savings in a small shop in the complex to earn a livelihood. The man, who asked to remain anonymous, said he has received eviction notices although he still has six years remaining on his contract. He said the owner of the complex is trying to push all the renters out so he can do minor repairs and charge significantly higher rent to a new group of leasers.

The man said he invested more than KD 150,000 to open a restaurant in the complex, which is near a university, where a lot of students come to shop and eat. "I will not leave such a good location after spending money on the shop, decor and more than KD 8,000 on electricity," he said.

After many shopkeepers refused to vacate, the owner cut power to most of them, broke up the sidewalks, wrecked the parking lot and sent goons to threaten the staff. The owner claims he is doing some repairs. "He destroyed the street and made the parking lot hard to get to. The workers he is sending are rude to my staff and threaten them if they try to move piles of bricks out of the

way. The owner closed the doors that we used to access the bathrooms. Security men prevent staff and customers from entering to use the bathrooms inside the complex!" the restaurateur told Kuwait Times.

Case filed

Some tenants of the complex moved out and agreed to rent another place in a food court near the mall, which is also owned by the same landlord.

He offered to pay 'six months' rent for evicting the shops. But the amount is less than what the lessees have invested, so more than 40 shops refused to take the deal. The renters also filed a case against the landlord to compensate them for the losses they have suffered.

"We believe the landlord has been using excuses as well as intimidation to try to push us out of the building. We are fighting to save our businesses - but ultimately, we are doing this to stand up for each other and the community of renters who are not always protected," the restaurateur said.

Employees of a big name fast-food restaurant in the complex said they have a 10-year contract. "The owner cut power to the main entrance and ceiling lights two months ago, and we were threatened if we tried to get the electricity back. He has also told cleaners not to clean the street in front of our stores," one of the workers said.

Owner wants to charge higher rent to new leasers

Customs officials stop cigarettes before being smuggled to Saudi Arabia

KUWAIT: The Kuwait-Saudi border witnessed the confiscation of thousands of cigarette cartons that were heading to Saudi Arabia. After Saudi Arabia increased prices of tobacco products by 100 percent, some Saudis have resorted to the Kuwaiti market, where smokers have started to feel a shortage of some types of tobacco products because of wide-scale smuggling into Saudi Arabia. Many in Kuwait are finding it difficult to find their preferred brands in grocery stores and supermarkets, while some co-

ops only sell two packs per person. Customs authorities on both sides of the border have toughened inspections to prevent travelers from having more than two cartons. Land customs director Mashan Al-Saeedi said 3,000 cartons were confiscated during the last 10 days, while 856 cartons were confiscated only on Tuesday.

Fake detectives busted

Police arrested two citizens for posing as detectives to rob expats in Farwaniya. A security source said two Asians sought police's help after they were robbed by two "detectives", and led police to them. The suspects were arrested, and KD 1,600 as well as a number of wallets belonging to victims were found. The two said they robbed 10 persons and were found convicted previously for molestation and drugs.

Officer insulted

A citizen insulted a police officer in protest over



A sign reading 'Closed for Maintenance' put on the door of one of the shops at the complex.

pulling him over in Jaber Al-Ali. He then ran him over and dragged him, before fleeing on foot and leaving his car and civil ID behind. The police officer was in a patrol car near the Subhan cemetery, and asked an SUV to pull over. When he asked for the driver's ID, the driver became angry, grabbed the officer's hand and drove off. Paramedics were called in, who took the officer to the hospital. The suspect was not found in his house, so he was placed on the wanted list.

Suspected drug user arrested

A citizen, responding to questions by police patrolmen if he had illicit items, said, "Yes, I have hashish." The man was found sleeping in his car near the old Hawally security department building. The man told police he was sleeping because he was exhausted, but they noticed he was abnormal, and were surprised by his answer. He handed them a piece of hashish, and they also found a pack of cigarettes laced with hashish. He was arrested and sent to concerned authorities.

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai



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Eat with your family,
Indian women told

Indian navy – the odd man out in Asia ‘Quad’ alliance



SREBRENICA: A woman mourns over a relative's grave at the memorial center of Potocari yesterday. —AFP

‘Butcher of Bosnia’ found guilty of genocide

Ex-Bosnian Serb commander gets life in prison

THE HAGUE: A UN tribunal yesterday convicted former Bosnian Serb military commander Ratko Mladic of genocide and crimes against humanity for orchestrating massacres and ethnic cleansing during Bosnia's war and sentenced him to life in prison. Mladic, 74, was hustled out of the court minutes before the verdict for screaming “this is all lies, you are all liars” after returning from what his son described as a blood pressure test which delayed the reading-out of the judgment.

The UN Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) found Mladic guilty of 10 of 11 charges, including the slaughter of 8,000 Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica and the siege of the Bosnian capital Sarajevo, in which more than 11,000 civilians were killed by shelling and sniper fire over 43 months. The killings in Srebrenica of men and boys after they were separated from women and taken away in buses or marched off to be shot amounted to Europe's worst atrocity since World War Two.

“The crimes committed rank among the most heinous known to humankind, and include genocide and extermination as a crime against humanity,” Presiding Judge Alphons Orie said in reading out a summary of the judgment. “Many of these men and boys were cursed, insulted, threatened, forced to sing Serb songs and beaten while awaiting their execution,” he said. Mladic, the most notorious of the ICTY's cases along with ex-Bosnian Serb political leader Radovan Karadzic and late Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, had pleaded not guilty to all charges and is expected to appeal against his conviction. In its summary, the tribunal found Mladic “significantly contributed” to genocide committed in Srebrenica with the goal of destroying its Muslim population, “personally directed” the long bombardment of Sarajevo and was part of a “joint criminal enterprise” intending to purge Muslims and Croats from Bosnia. In Geneva, UN human rights chief Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini called Mladic the “epitome of evil” and said his conviction after 16 years as an indicted fugitive and over four years of

trial was a “momentous victory for justice”. “The prosecution of Mladic is the epitome of what international justice is all about,” Zeid said in a statement. “Today's verdict is a warning to the perpetrators of such crimes that they will not escape justice, no matter how powerful they may be nor how long it may take.”

Look to the future

Aleksandar Vucic, president of Serbia whose late national-ist strongman Milosevic was Mladic's patron but died in a tribunal prison before the end of his trial, said Serbia “respects

ly read the verdict rendered today ...in case that they are still no ready to face their past”. He was alluding to enduring separatism in post-war federal Bosnia's autonomous Serb region. Srebrenica, near Bosnia's eastern border with Serbia, had been designated a “safe area” by the United Nations and was defended by lightly armed UN peacekeepers. But they quickly surrendered when Mladic's forces stormed it on July 11, 1995.

Srebrenica slaughter

The Dutch peacekeepers looked on helplessly as Serb forces separated men and boys from women, then sent them out of sight on buses or marched them away to be shot. A bronzed and burly Mladic was filmed visiting a refugee camp in Srebrenica on July 12. “He was giving away chocolate and sweets to the children while the cameras were rolling, telling us nothing will happen and that we have no reason to be afraid,” recalled Munira Subasic of the Mothers of Srebrenica group. “After the cameras left he gave an order to kill whoever could be killed, rape whoever could be raped and finally he ordered us all to be banished and chased out of Srebrenica, so he could make an ‘ethnically clean’ city,” she said. The remains of Subasic's son Nermin and husband Hilmo were both found in mass graves by International Commission of Missing Persons (ICMP) workers. The ICMP have identified some 6,900 remains of Srebrenica victims through DNA analysis. Mladic's lawyers argued that his responsibility for murder and ethnic cleansing of civilians by Serb forces and allied paramilitaries was never established beyond reasonable doubt and he should get no more than 15 years if convicted. The “Butcher of Bosnia” to his enemies, Mladic is still seen as a national hero by some Serbs for presiding over the swift capture of 70 percent of Bosnia after its Serbs rose up against a Muslim-Croat declaration of independence from Yugoslavia.



SARAJEVO: This combination of pictures created shows (left) Ratko Mladic then Bosnian Serb General looking on in Sarajevo on February 15, 1994 and Mladic smiling as he enters the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) yesterday, to hear the verdict in his genocide trial. —AFP

‘Greater Serbia’

Prosecutors said the ultimate plan pursued by Mladic, Bosnian Serb political leader Radovan Karadzic and Milosevic was to purge Bosnia of non-Serbs - a strategy that became known as “ethnic cleansing” - and carve out a “Greater Serbia” in the ashes of federal Yugoslavia's disintegration. Mladic was indicted along with Karadzic in 1995, shortly after the Srebrenica killings, but evaded capture until 2011. His trial in The Hague took more than four years in part because of delays due to his poor health and will be the last case - barring appeals - to be heard by the ICTY. —Reuters

Zimbabwe’s next leader returns after Mugabe exit

HARARE: Zimbabwe's former vice president Emmerson Mnangagwa flew home yesterday to take power after the resignation of Robert Mugabe put an end to 37 years of authoritarian rule. Mnangagwa flew into Harare's Manyame airbase from South Africa and met key members of the ruling ZANU-PF there before heading to the nerve-center of power, State House, for a briefing, his aide Larry Mavhima told AFP. He will be sworn in as president at an inauguration ceremony tomorrow, officials said.

Mugabe's iron grip ended on Tuesday in a shock announcement to parliament where MPs had convened to impeach the 93-year-old who dominated every aspect of Zimbabwean public life for decades. He was last seen in public on Friday and gave a televised address on Sunday but neither he, nor his wife Grace, have been seen since, with their whereabouts unknown. On the streets, the news that his long and often brutal leadership was over sparked wild celebrations which lasted late into the night, with crowds dancing and cheering ecstatically amid a cacophony of car horns. Mnangagwa, 75, was sacked by the president on Nov 6 in a move that pushed infuriated army chiefs

to intervene, triggering a series of events which led to Mugabe's ouster.

Excited crowds

Ahead of his arrival, hundreds of people gathered outside ZANU-PF headquarters in Harare in the hope he would address them, some holding placards welcoming him home, while others wore shirts emblazoned with his likeness. A former key Mugabe ally, Mnangagwa had fled the country after his dismissal, saying he would not return without guarantees of his safety. His sacking was the result of an increasingly bitter succession battle with first lady Grace, who had been pushing to take over from her ageing husband.

In a highly symbolic scene shortly after his resignation, a man took down a portrait of Mugabe from a wall inside the building where MPs had assembled for the extraordinary session to impeach the defiant president. Another person replaced it with an image of the ousted vice president. Mnangagwa is a political veteran long-time party loyalist who has served in a host of different cabinet positions since independence in 1980 and who has close ties with the military. But critics describe him as a ruthless hard-liner behind years of state-sponsored violence, warning he could prove just as authoritarian as his mentor. And Rinaldo Dpagne of the International Crisis Group said Mugabe's departure “does not necessarily mean more democracy”.

Meeting Zuma

At Harare's Manyame airbase, senior military

commanders and a gaggle of journalists were waiting for him as his business jet touched down at around 1400 GMT, AFP correspondents at the scene said. Before leaving South Africa where he had been staying, Pretoria published a photograph of Mnangagwa shaking hands with President Jacob Zuma following a meeting earlier in the day, with both men grinning broadly.

Mugabe's resignation capped a chaotic week in which the military seized control and tens of thousands of Zimbabweans took to the streets in an unprecedented show of dissent against Mugabe. “We want our new president to make sure power hungry gangs don't infiltrate,” said Talent Chamunorwa, 37, a brick seller. “We hope to be able to access our money from the bank come December and the US dollar must come back.” He was referring to Zimbabwe's chronic shortage of cash and a mistrusted “bond note” scheme intended to be pegged to the greenback but trading at a low rate in reality.

Outstayed his welcome

Mugabe had ruled Zimbabwe almost unopposed since independence and until his exit, he was also the world's oldest serving head of state. But efforts to position his 52-year-old wife Grace as his successor were his undoing. Although Mugabe's fate remains unknown, ZANU-PF has said he deserved to be treated with respect after leading the country for nearly four decades. “He deserves to rest and I believe every Zimbabwean agrees with this,” said ruling party spokesman Simon Khaya Moyo. —AFP



HARARE: People gather outside Harare's airport to welcome former Zimbabwean vice-president Emmerson Mnangagwa yesterday. —AFP

Indian navy - the odd man out in Asia ‘Quad’ alliance

US pushing deeper cooperation with Indo-Pacific allies

NEW DELHI: The Trump administration is pushing security ties between the United States, India, Japan and Australia, but the revival of the Asian “Quad” must overcome lingering mistrust in New Delhi towards its allies that hampers genuine military cooperation. Joint naval drills have been at the heart of a relationship that analysts widely see as a move to counterbalance China’s rising power by binding the region’s leading democracies more closely together. But while the navies of the United States, Japan and Australia can easily operate together - based on common US-designed combat systems and data links - India is the outlier.

Not only are most of its ships and warplanes Russian-made, its government and military remain deeply reluctant to share data and open up sensitive military communications systems. The United States has carried out more naval exercises with India than any other nation. But naval sources and experts say these are more about “cultural familiarization” than drills for joint combat. Because India will not sign an agreement on sharing data, naval exercises are conducted through voice and text commands with rudimentary SMS-style data exchange, Indian and Japanese military sources said.

“Think of it as directing your friend to your house in the 1980s. Your left may be his right, neither of you have situational awareness,” said Abhijit Iyer-Mitra, a senior fellow at New Delhi’s Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies who has tracked the military exercises. “What the Americans want is 2017 - drop a pin on Google maps and hit share. You know where your friend is and he knows where your house is and how to get to it.” The Indian defense ministry did not respond to a request for a comment.

Annual drills

The so-called Quad to discuss and cooperate on security emerged briefly as an initiative a decade ago - much to the annoyance of China - and was revived recently, with an officials-level meeting this month on the sidelines of a regional gathering in Manila. The Trump administration has talked up cooperation with India as part of efforts for a “free, open and thriving Indo-Pacific”.

Describing the Indian and Pacific Oceans as a “single strategic arena”, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson



Indian military wary of constraints to its autonomy

described India and the United States as regional “book-ends”. “In concrete terms, it will lead to great co-ordination between the Indian, Japanese and American militaries including maritime domain awareness, anti-submarine warfare, amphibious warfare, and humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and search and rescue,” he said. To be sure, India and the United States have steadily been bringing more powerful ships into their annual “Malabar” drills that have been expanded to include Japan in recent years.

This year the USS Nimitz carrier group was deployed for the manoeuvres off India’s eastern coast, along with an aircraft carrier from India and a helicopter carrier from Japan. But a Japanese Maritime Self Defense Forces official said when Japan conducts drills with the Indian navy, communication is done mostly through voice transmission. There is no satellite link that would allow the two navies to access information and share monitor displays in on-board command centers.

Communication is usually the most difficult aspect of any joint drill, he said.

Building blocks

The exercises are meant to lay the ground for joint patrols that the US eventually wants to conduct with India and its allies across the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. US Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Logan, a Pentagon spokesman, said better interoperability was a goal of the exercises and noted that India’s enhanced role as a major US defense partner would help boost the relationship. “The designation of India as a major defense partner is significant and is intended to elevate defense trade and technology sharing with India to a level commensurate with that of our closest allies and partners,” he said. “As this relationship matures so will the level of interoperability.” Last year, India signed a military logistics pact with the United States after a decade of wrangling, but two other agreements are stuck.

The United States says the Communication and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CIS-MOA) would allow it to supply India with encrypted communications equipment and systems. The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement is the other pact that would set a framework through which the United States could share sensitive data to aid targeting and navigation with



BANGALORE: Members of the Tornados motorcycle display team of the Army Service Corps (ASC) attempt to break the World Record by carrying 58 men on a single 500 cc motorcycle in Bangalore. The Tornados team which presently holds a total of 19 World Records achieved the feat on the two wheeler by traversing a distance in excess of kilometer with 58 men on it. —AFP

India. India is concerned that agreeing to the CISMOA would open up its military communications to the United States, and even allow it to listen in on operations where Indian and US interests may not coincide - such as against arch-rival Pakistan, military officials in New Delhi say.

Radars turned off

Captain Gurpreet Khurana, executive director at the government-funded National Maritime Foundation, said India’s underlying concern was having its autonomy constrained by binding its military into US codes and operating procedures.

Once, the Americans proposed a portable “suitcase” communications system called the CENTRIXS which could transmit full situational awareness data to Indian ships while the two navies practiced together. India refused to allow it to be plugged in for the duration of the exercise, citing operational security, according to an Indian source briefed on the planning of the exercises.

Even the joint air exercises that the two countries are conducting as a follow-on to Malabar are severely restricted, the source said. India sends its Russian-acquired Sukhoi jets to the drills, but their radars and jammers are turned off.

David Shear, who served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia under President Barack Obama, said US forces, particularly the Navy, were well aware of the interoperability constraints to interacting with India. “They understand what the obstacles are and that this is going to be a long-term project,” he said. —Reuters



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International

Germany's figurehead president now best hope of unlocking political crisis

Crisis draws Steinmeier into coalition negotiations

BERLIN: Frank-Walter Steinmeier was hardly Chancellor Angela Merkel's first choice for the largely ceremonial job of German president, but the lifelong Social Democrat may be her best hope of holding onto power amid an unprecedented political crisis. Steinmeier, 61, a two-time foreign minister, met on Tuesday with political leaders from the Greens and pro-business Free Democrats (FDP) after Merkel's bid to forge a three-way coalition with those parties collapsed. Yesterday, he met with Horst Seehofer, head of the Bavarian sister party of Merkel's conservatives. Today, he will meet Martin Schulz, head of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the second largest in the Bundestag lower house of parliament, to urge him to reconsider his party's rejection of another "grand coalition" with Merkel's conservatives for the good of the country.

Some 30 of the SPD's 153 parliamentary members questioned the rejection of such a coalition this week, the Bild newspaper reported yesterday. It said Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel also favored resuming the coalition that has ruled for the past four years. Merkel favors new elections over a minority government, but Steinmeier is pressing political leaders to avoid a new poll that experts say would further strengthen the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) after it moved into parliament with nearly 13 percent of the vote on Sept. 24. "The German president, who is now as powerful as seldom seen in German constitutional history, holds the reins," the Rheinische Post newspaper wrote on Tuesday.

This is the first time a German president has had to get actively involved in trying to forge a new coalition govern-

ment. The architects of the German constitution devised a complicated process to prevent the frequent elections that weakened the Weimar Republic in the 1920s and facilitated the rise of Adolf Hitler. But new elections are likely around April if Steinmeier cannot bring Merkel's conservatives, the Greens and FDP back to the negotiating table, or persuade his former SPD colleagues to return to government. The SPD wants a spell in opposition to rebuild after its worst election result since the 1930s.

Working relationship

Steinmeier, following the tradition of all previous German presidents, gave up his party membership upon taking office. But he could wield some influence with top SPD players after years in leadership roles. His first months as president were lacklustre, with some commentators skeptical that the veteran political operator could emulate the success of his predecessor Joachim Gauck, a former East German pastor, in serving as Germany's moral compass.

A carpenter's son from the west German state of North-Rhine Westphalia, Steinmeier is a long-time confidante of former chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. Steinmeier failed to win election as chancellor in 2009, but later won plaudits from the German public for donating a kidney to his seriously ill wife. He has long experience of working

Bid to forge a 3-way coalition collapsed



BERLIN: German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier addresses a press conference after coalition talks to form a new government failed overnight. — AFP

with Merkel after serving as foreign minister in the first 'grand coalition' between the SPD and conservatives in 2005-09 and then resuming that role in 2013-17, when the two parties allied again.

He and Merkel worked closely together on the Minsk peace agreement aimed at ending fighting in eastern Ukraine - a complex deal that required hours of negotia-

tions with Putin and Ukrainian leaders. "I thought Minsk was his biggest accomplishment, but it may pale in comparison with the effort involved in building a functioning government in his own country," said Olaf Boehnke of the Rasmussen Global consultancy. "Merkel and Steinmeier actually have a good working relationship. And now he's in the driver's seat," Boehnke said. — Reuters

News in brief

Victim of 'banking fatwa'

PARIS: French far-right leader Marine Le Pen accused banks yesterday of closing accounts that belong to her and her party, saying she has been the victim of a "banking fatwa" meant to silence her National Front. The 49-year-old is smarting from defeat in presidential and parliamentary elections this year, during which she already accused French banks of being politically biased for not giving loans to finance her campaigns. "This is an attempt to suffocate an opposition party and no democrat should accept that," Le Pen told a news conference, calling on President Emmanuel Macron and other political parties to back the National Front. The far-right leader, who is struggling with feuding in her party after May's election loss to Macron, said the National Front would file a complaint against Societe Generale and its subsidiary Credit du Nord.

6 killed in Illinois fire

DIXON: Four children and two adults from the same family died in a house fire early Tuesday in rural northern Illinois, according to the local sheriff. Authorities received a 911 call just after midnight reporting smoke in the basement of a home outside Dixon in the unincorporated community of Lost Nation, according to the Ogle County Sheriff's Office. Firefighters arrived to find the home "fully engulfed" in the blaze. Investigators haven't found anything suspicious about the fire. Sheriff Brian VanVickle said. The sheriff's office identified the victims as 39-year-old Timothy Shaw, 37-year-old Melissa Shaw, 17-year-old Ethan Shaw, 15-year-old LeAnne Shaw, 12-year-old Hailey Shaw and 11-year-old Dylan Shaw. Autopsies conducted Tuesday determined the victims died from smoke inhalation. The ages of the children haven't been released and autopsies are planned, he said. Ogle County Corner Louis Finch said the bodies were so badly burned that his office needed dental records to determine identification.

Georgia 'terror' raid

TBILISI: Explosions and gunfire were heard in the Georgian capital Tbilisi yesterday as armed counter-terrorist units raided an apartment block on the outskirts of the city, an AFP reporter witnessed. Several suspected members of a terrorist group "refused to surrender and opened fire from automatic rifles and threw hand grenades on counter-terrorist units," Georgia's security service said in a statement. One soldier was hospitalized with gunshot wounds, the service's spokeswoman Nino Giorgobiani said in a televised statement. "One suspect has been arrested and a special operation is under way to detain several others who, according to a preliminary information, are not Georgian nationals and are members of a terrorist group," Giorgobiani said. "Investigation is under way both in Georgia and abroad to establish the suspects' criminal links," she added. Rustavi-2 television station reported that the wounded soldier had died during surgery.

The runaway Uighurs

BANGKOK: Thai police yesterday said ethnic Uighur Muslims from China who escaped an immigration detention centre will not be deported if they are all recaptured despite a request by Beijing. The dramatic pre-dawn jailbreak on Monday saw a group of 25 Uighurs use blankets to climb out of their cell in southern Thailand. Five of them were arrested on Monday while one more was detained yesterday, Thai police said, with media reporting the escapee was found over the border in Malaysia. The group were among hundreds of Uighurs, a Muslim minority that faces repression in western China, detained in 2014 in Thailand, sparking a tussle over their citizenship. Uighurs intercepted in Thailand often say they are Turkish as Turkey shares ethnic links with them and accepts those who flee from China's restive Xinjiang region. In 2015 Thailand forcibly deported 100 Uighurs to China.

Balkans war: The story that will never die

PARIS: In the more than two decades since the end of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, AFP correspondent Sonia Bakaric says the painful memories of covering the conflict have never left her, receding to the back of her mind with the passage of time. But they have resurfaced with the verdict against Ratko Mladic, the "Butcher of the Balkans," who was found guilty of genocide by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague. Here she recalls her experiences covering the war in Bosnia, the worst conflict in Europe since World War II.

'Safe zone' no more

In the summer of 1995 concerns were growing over the enclave of Srebrenica in northeastern Bosnia, which was surrounded by troops loyal to the general Mladic, the Serb "Napoleon" who had gained a reputation for ruthlessness over the course of the wars between the former republics of Yugoslavia. The spectre of a major massacre occurring at Srebrenica was growing. I still remember the embarrassed faces of UN spokespeople as I pressed them to say if there would be aerial strikes against Serb positions to break their siege. Or if at least a corridor would be opened to allow the civilian population to escape. The spokespeople were always evasive. Wanting to scream at the inaction of the so-called civilized world, I realized once again that no news story or photo would change the course of the war in Bosnia after more than 40 months.

As reporters, we worked tirelessly to expose what was happening on the ground. But has our reporting managed to save a single life? I remember photographers telling me that they could no longer cover this war, saying they were engaging in a "pornography of death" that didn't seem to interest anyone in the outside world. Srebrenica



POTOCARI: Victims' relatives react as they watch a live TV broadcast from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in a room at the memorial in Potocari, near Srebrenica yesterday. —AFP

had been declared a UN "safe zone" in 1993, under the protection of UN "Dutchbat" soldiers. But they retreated in the face of the Serb assault on the enclave two years later. Abandoned, the town fell without resistance on July 11.

I remember televised images of Mladic, surrounded by his men, walking through the streets of the town. Leaning over to tap the cheeks of a petrified child, the image of a kindly grandfather reassuring a kid for the benefit of the cameras. Then another, as he discusses "corridors" and protection for the civilian population. Then him offering farewell presents to the "Dutchbat" troops. In a surreal moment, Dutch commander Thom Karremans asks a smiling Mladic, who ignores him, if the gifts are meant for his wife in The Hague. In the following days, some 8,000 Muslim men and boys, separated from their mothers, wives and children, would be executed by Serb forces in those warm summer days.

A few days after Srebrenica's fall, the "Dutchbat" arrived at Zagreb airport, on their way home. I still see their stern faces, with dark circles under their eyes. Many were chain-smoking on the tarmac. Still in shock, they were impatient to get back to their homes,

almost 2,000 kilometers away, after having been humiliated by the Serbs. They would take with them one of the darkest chapters in the history of the Bosnian war. The blue helmets were easy targets for the dogs of war in Bosnia and Croatia. It's poignant then that it was in The Hague that Ratko Mladic was judged for his deeds.

'Constant state of worry'

It was hard to breathe that summer, with temperatures above 38 degrees Celsius. The war in Bosnia was in its fourth year. My daily routine consisted of countless briefings at the headquarters of the UN force in Yugoslavia, the UNPROFOR. A French national of Bosniak-Croatian origin, I was just 20 years old when I got my job with AFP. I worked for seven and a half years in the Zagreb bureau. We were bombarded by ferocious propaganda from the three camps of the Bosnian war—the Croats, the Serbs and the Muslims, known as Bosniaks. In such conditions, it was vital to work with other sources. The work of getting testimony from witnesses was depressing and traumatizing. At times you had to travel for days to get to a place where you could talk to a source in a besieged area. —AFP

Russian billionaire arrested in France

MOSCOW: The Kremlin said yesterday it will spare no effort to defend the rights of Suleiman Kerimov, a Russian businessman and lawmaker who was arrested in the French Riviera resort of Nice in connection with a French tax evasion case. Shares in Polyus, Russia's biggest gold producer which is controlled by Kerimov's family, were down on the news of his detention. "We will do everything in our power to protect his lawful interests," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told a regular conference call with reporters. "Intensive work is now being undertaken by the foreign ministry." A representative for Kerimov in the upper house of parliament, where he sits as a lawmaker, declined to comment on the case yesterday when contacted by Reuters. Polyus declined to comment.

Russia's state-run Rossiya 24 TV station, citing an unnamed source, reported that the 51-year-old billionaire had denied any guilt. In the lower house of parliament, lawmaker Rizvan Kurbanov asked the Russian foreign ministry to make representations on Kerimov's behalf with the French authorities. "We have still not received from the

French authorities any explanation of the reasons for the detention of our colleague," Kurbanov told parliament. "All this testifies to an unprecedented demarche by the French," he said, adding that he hoped the Russian foreign ministry would issue a formal protest.

Luxury residences

Shares in Polyus were down by more than 3 percent in early trade in Moscow but since then recovered some ground to trade at minus 1 percent by 1217 GMT. Originally from the mainly Muslim Russian region of Dagestan, Kerimov built his multi-billion natural resources business through a combination of debt, an appetite for risk, and political connections. He owned top flight soccer club Anzhi Makhachkala until he sold it in 2016. Kerimov's fortune peaked at \$17.5 billion in 2008 before slumping to just \$3 billion in 2009, according to Forbes magazine, due to so-called margin-calls on his assets triggered by the 2008 global financial crisis. In March this year, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree giving Kerimov the state award "For Services to the Fatherland, second class" for his contribution to Russian parliamentary life.

French police arrested Kerimov at Nice airport on Monday evening. A French judicial source said the investigation centered on the purchase of several luxury residences on the French Riviera via shell companies, something that would have enabled Kerimov to reduce taxes



DUBAI: File photo shows Russian powerful oil and metals magnate, billionaire Suleiman Kerimov watching a friendly football match at Al Nasr Stadium in Dubai. —AFP

owed to the French state. Kerimov is a regular visitor to Nice and in 2006 he crashed his Ferrari Enzo into a palm tree on the city's Promenade Des Anglais. A woman Russian TV presenter was also in the car at the time. Kerimov was badly injured and on his rare occasions since in public he has worn gloves to conceal his burns. — Reuters

International

Escape from N Korea: Video shows defector under fire

N Koreans violated border rules during chase: UN

SEOUL: A North Korean border guard briefly crossed the border with the South in the chase for a defector last week – a violation of the ceasefire accord between North and South, a video released yesterday by the UN Command (UNC) in Seoul showed. The North Koreans were only steps behind the young man when they shot him at least four times as he made his escape on Nov 13.

The video, filmed as the defector drove an army truck through the demilitarized zone and then abandoned the vehicle, gives a dramatic insight into his escape. The defector, identified by a surgeon as a 24-year-old with the family name Oh, was flown by a US military helicopter to a hospital in Suwon, south of Seoul. Doctors said he had regained consciousness, having had two operations to extract the bullets, and his breathing was stable and unassisted.

“He is fine,” lead surgeon Lee Cook-Jong said at a news conference in Suwon. “He is not going to die.” A UNC official said North Korea had been informed yesterday that it had violated the 1953 armistice agreement, which marked the cessation of hostilities in the Korean War. The UNC official told a news conference that a soldier from the North Korean People’s Army (KPA) had crossed the Military Demarcation Line (MDL), the border between the two Koreas, for a few seconds as others fired shots at the defecting soldier.

“The key findings of the special investigation team are that the KPA violated the armistice agreement by one, firing weapons across the MDL, and two, by actually crossing the MDL temporarily,” Chad Carroll, Director of Public Affairs for the UNC, told reporters. The incident comes at a time of heightened tensions between North Korea and the international community over its nuclear weapons program, but Pyongyang has not publicly responded to the

defection. The video, released by the UNC, was produced from surveillance cameras on the southern side of the Joint Security Area (JSA) inside the demilitarized zone. When tree cover is too dense to see the wounded defector crawling across the border, it switches to infra-red.

Desperate escape

The film begins with a lone dark green army jeep speeding along empty, tree-lined roads toward the border. At one checkpoint, a North Korean guard marches impassively toward the approaching vehicle. It races by. He runs in pursuit. After passing a memorial to North Korea founder Kim Il Sung, where tourists often gather, the jeep runs into a ditch just meters from the border, which is not clearly marked. For several minutes the driver tries to free the vehicle, but the wheels spin uselessly in fallen leaves. The driver abandons the vehicle and sprints away, pushing tree branches out of his way

and sending leaves flying. He scrambles up a slope to cross just seconds before more guards appear, shooting as they run. One slides into a pile of dead leaves to open fire before running forward and appearing to briefly cross the dividing line between the two countries. He quickly turns on his heel.

The video does not show the moment the defector is hit, but he is seen lying in a pile of brush next to a concrete wall in a later edited clip. The UNC’s Carroll said the position was still exposed to North Korean checkpoints across the border. Allied troops operating the cameras had by then notified their commanders and a quick reaction force had assembled on the South Korean side, according to Carroll. The video does not show this force. Infrared imagery shows two South Korean soldiers crawling through undergrowth to drag the wounded North Korean



PANMUNJOM: This screen grab made from video footage shows a North Korea defector running out from a vehicle at the Joint Security Area of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). —AFP

to safety, while the deputy commander of the border security unit oversees the rescue from a few meters away.

Long recovery

Doctors have conducted a series of surgeries to remove four bullets from the critically wounded soldier, who arrived at the hospital having lost a large amount of blood. “From a medical point of view he was almost dead when he was first brought here,” said the surgeon, Lee. Hospital officials said the man remains in intensive care. The soldier showed signs of depression and possible trauma, in addition

to a serious case of parasites that has complicated his treatment, the hospital said in a statement. Lee said last week one of the flesh-colored parasites he removed from the soldier’s digestive tract was 27 cm (10.6 in) long. Continuing stress made the soldier hesitant to talk, but he had been cooperative, doctors said. The patient first recovered consciousness on Sunday, and asked where he was in South Korea, Lee said. He was in “agony” when he came to, the surgeon added. Since then doctors have played South Korean pop music for him, and American action movies including “The Transporter” from 2002. —Reuters

Pakistan releases ‘mastermind’ of Mumbai attacks

LAHORE: A Pakistani court yesterday ordered the release of one of the alleged masterminds of the 2008 Mumbai attacks which killed more than 160 people, after months of US pressure on Islamabad over its alleged support for militants. Firebrand cleric Hafiz Saeed, who heads the UN-listed terrorist group Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and has a \$10 million US bounty on his head, will be freed tomorrow after less than a year in detention following the decision by the Lahore High Court, a JuD official said.

“The review board looking in to the case... has refused to extend his house arrest as the government failed to provide any evidence against the charges,” a spokesman for the party, Ahmed Nadeen said. The horror of the Mumbai carnage played out on live television around the world as commandos battled the heavily armed gunmen, who arrived by sea on the evening of November 26, 2008. It took the authorities three days to regain full control of the city. JuD, which has operated freely across Pakistan and is popular for its charity work, is considered by the US and India to be a front for Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the militant group blamed for the attack on India’s financial capital.

New Delhi has long seethed at Pakistan’s failure either to hand over or prosecute those accused of planning the attacks, while Islamabad has alleged that India failed to give it crucial evidence. India has also said there is proof that “official agencies” in Pakistan were involved in plotting the attack—a charge Islamabad denies. Analyst and retired Pakistani general Talat Masood told AFP that Saeed is given special treatment by the government “because they think that his organization was supportive in Kashmir”, the disputed Himalayan territory over which India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars.

India blames Pakistan for sending militant groups, including LeT, to foment unrest in the part of Kashmir controlled by New Delhi. However Masood said the government could seek new reasons to detain Saeed to avoid more interna-



LAHORE: Pakistani head of the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) organization Hafiz Saeed (center) speaks to the media after his release order outside a court in Lahore yesterday. —AFP

tional pressure, particularly from Washington, which has been pressuring Pakistan for months over its alleged support for militants including the Taliban in neighboring Afghanistan. US President Donald Trump in August accused Pakistan of harboring “agents of chaos”, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said last month that the Washington has made “very specific” requests of Pakistan over militancy.

The US has also made several overtures to Pakistan’s arch-enemy India for closer ties. Following a brief period

of house arrest in 2008, Saeed led a high-profile public life and regularly delivered fiery anti-India speeches. He was placed under house arrest once more in January this year following years of foreign pressure, prompting demonstrations in several Pakistani cities. Masood said that his release could see him participate in a general election set to be held sometime next year, adding that if he won a seat in the national assembly that could be “very embarrassing internationally”. —AFP

Battle for hearts, minds and ears in Nepal election

KATHMANDU: With days to go before elections in Nepal the battle for votes is being fought over the air waves as radio stations, many backed by political parties, beam campaign messages to the farthest corners of the Himalayan nation. Social media may now dominate political campaigns in the West, but in Nepal, where fewer than one in five people has access to the internet, radio is king.

Community radio exploded in the early 1990s as Nepal’s monarchy began to loosen its grip on power, liberalizing the media and allowing popular elections for a new government. It grew with the mobile revolution as cheap handsets with built-in FM receivers became widely owned, allowing news to reach areas of the landlocked mountainous country where newspapers can take days to arrive. Now the young republic of 29 million people has over 550 radio stations—nearly double the number of commercial FM stations in neighboring India. But some fear that a medium once seen as a beacon of democracy has become overly politicised.

The vast majority of stations—by some

estimates as many as 90 percent—are now backed or owned outright by politicians or prominent supporters. “Community radio (in Nepal) has always been the most powerful means of communication. They reach the largest number of people... the political parties have understood that,” said Kunda Dixit, editor of the English-language Nepali Times newspaper. “What we’ve seen in the last five years is political encroachment into that space, meaning local units of the political parties buying into the radio stations.” Dixit said many stations had now become mouthpieces for local political parties. “Especially at election time they are really misused,” he added.

Guerrilla stations

Radio was used by both sides during the 10-year civil war between Maoist insurgents and the state that ended in 2006. The rebel fighters used guerrilla stations to spread their message, carrying transmitters on their backs and broadcasting from hidden locations to evade authorities’ efforts to jam their frequencies. After the conflict ended, the Maoists transformed themselves into a political party, winning the next national election and voting to end centuries of royal rule—a move that would set the country on the road to becoming a secular federal democracy.

Sunday will see the first phase of voting in the general election, the first under a new national constitution. The CNP-UML, a communist party that has formed an



DHANKUTA, Nepal: A Nepali man listens to the radio with his mobile phones in Dhankuta, some 400 km east of Kathmandu. —AFP

electoral alliance with the Maoists, is expected to sweep the board and oust the current centre-right government. But the leader of the one-time rebel Maoists, former prime minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, could become a casualty of the radio revolution he helped to start. Dahal’s chief rival for a parliamentary seat in his home district is Bikram Pandey, a minister in the current

government who owns the popular station Kalika FM—which some say gives him the advantage.

Another former Maoist party prime minister, Baburam Bhattarai, could lose the seat he has held for nearly a decade in the central district of Gorkha to a rival politician who owns a local radio station, Radio Matribhumi. —AFP

News in brief

Third journalist killed

NEW DELHI: An Indian soldier shot dead a journalist following a dispute, police said yesterday, the country’s third high-profile media killing in barely three months. Sudip Dutta Bhaumik died Tuesday at a paramilitary base in the remote northeastern state of Tripura, where his editor said he was investigating allegations of financial fraud by the force. Local police chief Abhijit Saptarshi said the soldier shot and killed Bhaumik “after they argued and scuffled over some issue” and had since been arrested. “He was shot dead inside the office of the commander by a soldier,” Saptarshi said, adding the soldier claimed Bhaumik had tried to snatch his rifle. The editor of the newspaper that employed Bhaumik, the Bengali-language Syandan Patrika, said the reporter had gone to the headquarters of the Second Tripura State Rifles near the state capital Agartala to speak to a senior officer allegedly involved in fraud. “The commandant called him to his office after we published four stories on his alleged role in a scam,” Subal Kumar Dey said.

Rare shooting in China

BEIJING: Three people were shot dead and six others wounded in a rare episode of gun violence in China, police said yesterday, adding they were hunting for a number of suspects. Officers were deployed after receiving reports that people were hit by apparent gun fire during a fight on Tuesday night in Chaozhou city, in southern Guangdong province. “According to a preliminary investigation, two people died at the scene, one died after being sent to hospital and six more were wounded,” the police said on its Weibo social media account. “Police have identified the suspects and are in pursuit,” the statement said.

Yazidi mass grave found

MOSUL: Iraqi officials said they found another mass grave in the northern Sinjar region yesterday containing the bodies of dozens of members of the Yazidi minority killed by the Islamic State group. “The mass grave contains the bodies of 73 people, men, women and children executed by the Islamic State group when they controlled the region,” local official Chokor Melhem Elias said. He said Iraqi security forces made the latest discovery in the Rambussi area near the town of Qahtaniyya. In 2014, IS killed thousands of Yazidis in Sinjar and kidnapped thousands of the community’s women and girls as sex slaves. The United Nations estimates 3,000 of them are still being held captive. Kurdish fighters backed by the US-led coalition recaptured Sinjar from IS in November 2015 before Iraqi security forces took control of the region in October.

Mafia godfather buried

ROME: Former “boss of bosses” Toto Riina, one of the most feared godfathers in the history of the Sicilian Mafia, was buried yesterday in his hometown of Corleone. Riina, who had been serving 26 life sentences and is thought to have ordered more than 150 murders, was laid to rest in the family tomb, which sits near the graves of other famed mobster-in-chiefs. Nicknamed “The Beast” because of his cruelty, Salvatore “Toto” Riina succumbed to cancer last week aged 87. His coffin, with white flowers on top, was briefly blessed by a priest as mourners including his wife and three of his four children looked on, according to Italian media reports. The cemetery was closed to the press amid a heavy police presence. Riina’s son Giovanni, who is serving time in jail for four murders, was not given permission to attend. The Church had refused to give the man dubbed “U Curtu” (“Shorty”) — who led a reign of terror for almost 20 years after taking control of the Cosa Nostra in the 1970s—a public funeral.



BEIRUT: Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri greets his supporters upon his arrival at his home yesterday. — AFP

Hariri shelves resignation, pledges...

Continued from Page 1

Riyadh said the government as a whole - not just Hezbollah - had declared war against it. Western governments including the United States struck a different tone, affirming their support for Hariri and the stability of Lebanon, which hosts 1.5 million Syrian refugees - nearly one-in-four of the population. Ahead of his return to Beirut, Hariri had stressed the importance of the Lebanese state policy of staying out of regional conflicts, notably Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition is battling Iran-backed Houthi fighters.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who had also called for Hariri's return, said on Monday his group was open to "any dialogue and any discussion". Nasrallah also issued his clearest denial yet of any Hezbollah role in Yemen. A senior source in a political alliance that includes Hezbollah said Hariri's move yesterday would start a breakthrough in the crisis. "This step is not detached from the framework of a complete solution whose features will appear in the coming days," the source told Reuters.

Lebanese dollar bonds, which had fallen in response to Hariri's resignation, gained following yesterday's announcement. A government minister from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a close ally of Saudi Arabia, said Lebanon must implement its policy of keeping out of Middle East conflicts in order to get out of its own crisis as well as regional troubles. "The main problem facing that is the selective implementation of (this) principle and the functional Iranian role of Hezbollah outside the

Lebanese framework," Anwar Gargash, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, wrote on Twitter.

Cyprus, where Hariri had briefly stopped on his journey home, said it would attempt to help defuse the crisis. "Our common objective is stability in Lebanon, stability in our area. Within this context... the President of the Republic will undertake some initiatives precisely to promote this objective: stability in Lebanon," Cypriot government spokesman Nikos Christodoulides said.

Hariri took office last year in a power-sharing deal that made Aoun head of state. He arrived in Beirut in time for independence day celebrations yesterday morning, taking the premier's seat alongside Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri. Hariri said he looked forward to "real partnership with all the political powers, in placing Lebanon's interests high above any other interests" and preserving coexistence among Lebanese.

Despite the potential struggles ahead, Hariri appeared relaxed as he attended a military parade, and then appeared at his Beirut home, where large crowds of supporters had gathered. As celebratory music played, the crowd chanted "Saad, Saad" and waved the blue flag of his Future Movement party. "I'm staying with you... to be a line of defense for Lebanon, Lebanon's stability and Lebanon's Arabism," Hariri said, in an emphatic speech delivered at the door of his home in the center of the capital. "You are my real family," he said, before soaking up his newfound popularity with a walkabout near his downtown residence.

"His presence in the country alone brings stability," said Manar Akoum, 26, as she stood with the celebrating crowd. Outside his house, 32-year-old Hala waved the blue Future Movement flag enthusiastically. "He managed to bring Lebanon together," she told AFP. "His return is very important, even if there are many things we don't understand." — Agencies

Syria oppn pressured...

Continued from Page 1

and foreign-based opposition unite on a constructive basis". Observers said it could clear the way for a new negotiating team that would water down some of the opposition's longstanding demands, notably Assad's immediate ouster. His fate has been one of the chief obstacles to progress in peace talks, with the opposition demanding he step down at the start of any transition. "The Saudi pitch to the Syrian opposition has been that denial will only make the situation worse, and that they have to rethink their strategy," said Hassan

Hassan, a fellow at the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy in Washington. "The problem... is that the political opposition does not see it that way, and most activists are still struck in the 2012 thinking, that Assad has to be toppled."

Ahead of the meeting, dozens of prominent civilian and armed opposition figures appealed to participants not to compromise on the "ouster of Bashar Al-Assad and his gang". "No one should back down or quietly circumvent" it, they said in an online statement. HNC member Yehya Al-Aridi acknowledged some participants, notably the Moscow platform, were more flexible on the president's future. But they "do not represent the choices of the revolution or the Syrian people," Aridi told AFP. And Hisham Marwah, another National Coalition member, said his group's "positions toward Assad have not changed". "Whoever is betting on the Riyadh conference to legitimize the presence of Assad is delusional," Marwah said. — AFP

Putin calls for compromise over...

Continued from Page 1

Syria is divided between forces loyal to Kremlin-allied strongman Assad, the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and several jihadist groups and rebel units. Multiple rounds of talks hosted by the UN have failed to bring an end to the conflict. Other initiatives including those spearheaded by Moscow have also failed to bear much fruit. Encouraged by military progress of the Russian and Syrian forces on the ground, Putin is hoping to breathe new life in the stalling negotiations.

Regime forces have gained the upper hand on the

battlefield with Russia's help, including recent victories against the Islamic State group and a fresh drive against rebels near Damascus. Putin said in comments released Tuesday that "thanks to the Russian army, Syria has been saved as a state". Moscow, Ankara and Tehran are cooperating with increasing intensity on ending the civil war, even though Turkey backs the rebels, at odds with Russia and Iran.

The Syrian president's fate remains a stumbling block, preventing global players from reaching a peace settlement. During their phone call on Tuesday, Putin told Trump that "the Syrian leader confirmed his commitment to the political process, (and) conducting constitutional reform and presidential and parliamentary elections". Assad said he wanted to advance negotiations. "We don't want to look back and we are ready for dialogue with all those who want to come up with a political settlement," Assad said in translated comments. —AFP

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Sports

Olympics favorite Medvedeva has broken foot, may miss GP Final

Home favorite Yuzuru Hanyu is out with injured ankle

MOSCOW: Evgenia Medvedeva, widely seen as the favourite for gold at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, is nursing a broken foot and could miss next month's Grand Prix Final, the Russian figure skater has said.

In an interview carried on the Russian Skating Federation's website, Medvedeva - who topped the podium in Grand Prix events in Moscow and Osaka - said she felt pain before the Russian event in October but was able to compete after taking painkillers.

She was then diagnosed with having a crack in a bone in her right foot but she decided to compete in Japan earlier this month. "Yes, there was a big risk that my leg and foot would not stand it. But this is the Olympic season," Medvedeva was quoted as saying, adding that she had never missed a meet because of an injury.

"After the short program, I was worse. For the free program, I skated on strong painkillers." An MRI in Japan confirmed the injury and on her return to Moscow she was put in a cast, she said, adding that she was undergoing rehabilitation and doing everything she

could to get back on her skates.

She added that she hoped she could still take part in the Grand Prix Final. "If doctors do not allow me to compete in Japan, that would be the worse-case scenario. It would be very difficult to watch from the sidelines," she was quoted as saying.

"But I very much hope this will not happen." If Medvedeva is unable to take part she would not be the only big name missing from the Final, which is to be held in Japan from Dec. 7-10. Home favourite Yuzuru Hanyu is out with an injured ankle, while Canada's Patrick Chan has dropped out to devote himself to training after a disappointing finish in Skate Canada.

While there was no suggestion that Medvedeva's injury could prevent her from competing at the Winter Games in February, the International Olympic Committee has yet to decide on Russia's participation amid ongoing questions over its anti-doping programme. The IOC is set to make the decision at its executive board meeting on Dec. 5-7. — Reuters



OSTRAVA: In this Jan 27, 2017 file photo, Russia's Evgenia Medvedeva displays her gold medal after her free program at the European Figure Skating Championships in Ostrava, Czech Republic. World champion figure skater Evgenia Medvedeva says she may miss December's Grand Prix Final with a fracture in her foot.—AP

Bragging rights and money at stake in F1 finale

LONDON: The Formula One season winds up in Abu Dhabi on Sunday with both titles won, Lewis Hamilton aiming to close the year on a winning note and big money still at stake for those further down the paddock pecking order.

While four times world champion Hamilton's Mercedes team mates can again look forward to healthy year-end bonuses, others are scrapping for crucial points that could swell their 2018 budgets.

Toro Rosso, Renault and Haas are just six points apart, with the difference between sixth place and eighth in the constructors' championship equivalent to about \$12 million when it comes to revenue distribution. "This race is almost a championship in itself," says Renault Sport F1 head Cyril Abiteboul, whose team are four points behind Toro Rosso and two clear of Ferrari-powered Haas.

There is extra needle in the showdown with Red Bull-owned Toro Rosso using the French manufacturer's engines for one last time before switching to Honda. At the top, Hamilton will be determined to grab a 10th win of the season-making it the fourth year in a row that his tally has entered double figures and giving him a warm glow through the winter.

"I'm going to give it everything in Abu Dhabi," said the Briton, who won his title in Mexico last month but has failed to make the podium in his last two races. Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel will also be looking for bragging rights by becoming the first non-Mercedes driver of the V6 turbo hybrid era that started in 2014 to finish in the top two of the championship.

The German is 22 points clear of Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas, who can only finish runner-up if he wins and Vettel scores no more than two points.

Ferrari have yet to win in Abu Dhabi but Vettel and Hamilton, who was given a hero's welcome when he returned to the Mercedes factory this week, have both triumphed three times at Yas Marina's floodlit circuit.

For Brazilian Felipe Massa, with Williams, Abu Dhabi will be a final farewell to the sport. "I am looking forward to it and plan to enjoy every moment, to finish my Formula One career on a high note," said the 36-year-old, who won 11 times for Ferrari in a career that will end after some 270 races.—Reuters



Acting Director of PAS visits training centers of sports in Al-Ahmadiya school

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Acting Director of Public Authority for Sports (PAS) Dr. Humoud Fulaiteh visited training centers of several sports in Al-Ahmadiya School. He was received by the General Supervisor of Physical Education at the Education Ministry Waleed Ayesh, Director of Training Centers Mahmoud Abul, PAS Public Relations and Information Director Khalid Al-Subaie and Director of Al-Ahmadiya School Nabeela Al-Khalifa.

Dr Fulaiteh expressed his pleasure with the cooperation between PAS and Education Ministry as well clubs, and the keenness on having joint work with the Education Ministry to project sports activities and discovery of talent under the slogan "Our children are our hope".

He said centers and schools were divided on governorates and clubs, and the role of clubs is to follow the skilled players and have them join clubs and utilize their abilities, as well as efforts of competent trainers of vari-



ous activities and games.

Fulaiteh said he is confident with the center, and that will reflect on Kuwait and its national teams, and the future is for those youth, adding that centers put in their plans this year the inclusion of women sports and designated several centers for female students.

Dr Fulaiteh said PAS cooperated with Kuwait Football Association to establish an academy for skilled players, and have training camps for them abroad to

gain experience.

He thanked Education Ministry leadership as well as schools administrations, trainers, director of centers project, and Director of Al-Ahmadiya School Nabila Al-Khalifa.

General Director of Physical Education at the Education Ministry Waleed Ayesh lauded the cooperation with PAS, and the implementation of this vital project to serve the talented students and polish their skills.

Alghanim Industries employees participate in Gulf Bank 642 Marathon

KUWAIT: Alghanim Industries, one of the largest privately owned companies in the region, announced the participation of 224 employees at the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, which was held over the past weekend. The company covered registration fees for all employees who participated in the event. This year, the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon saw a total of 6,000 attendees representing over 130 nationalities.

Every year, Alghanim Industries actively encourages its employees to participate in such sports events, especially ones that support charitable initiatives and causes. For this year's 642 Marathon, Gulf Bank partnered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with the aim of raising awareness about the plight of Syrian refugees through a campaign, under the slogan "Voices for Refugees".

Commenting on the company's participation in the event, Chief Human Resources Officer at Alghanim Industries, Henning Schlutt, said: "Every year Alghanim

Industries partners with different organizations that hold sporting events aimed at supporting charitable causes. Our company promotes a Healthy lifestyle philosophy and we encourage our employees to participate in these events. We are honored to contribute to raising awareness about Syrian refugees and look forward to participating in similar events and in the future."

Ervin Galin, Assistant Branch Manager of Wendy's at Alghanim Industries who ran the 42km full marathon said: "This was my first 42km marathon, I really enjoyed running alongside my fellow colleagues from different functions in the company and most of all, running for a noble cause. The weather and energy is always great and I look forward to participating in the marathon next year".

The event kicked off on Saturday morning from Souq Sharq, and included four different categories, at different difficulty levels, for those looking to run or walk. The categories were: a 5km "beginners and family fun run", a 10km "amateur run", an advanced 21km half marathon, and the 42km full marathon.

Alghanim Industries holds employee engagement activities on a regular basis, including blood drives which the company organizes in collaboration with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank (KCB), Breast Cancer Awareness campaigns, and charity runs and marathons in which the company funds the registration fees for employees interested in joining, in addition to celebrating the national holidays in the company. Earlier this year, Alghanim Industries signed an MoU with the UNHCR which will impact the education of thousands of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.



Group photo of the employees participating.

Ashes captains continue war of words on series eve

Injuries cloud Australia’s preparations

BRISBANE: The war of words that has added spice to the lead-up to cricket’s oldest enduring Test series will give way to genuine hostilities today when bitter Ashes rivals Australia and England march out in front of a packed crowd at the Gabba.

A temporary ceasefire was called yesterday as Australia captain Steve Smith and his England counterpart Joe Root paused for photos under a blinding blue sky at the Brisbane stadium, but both captains have been looking to land a psychological blow on the eve of the first test.

The customary photo opportunity may have been the only chance to get a clear image from the entire day, with smoke and mirrors employed liberally by the captains during the pre-match media conferences. Root



Root plays cards close to his chest

steadfastly declined to name his side but the element of surprise was lost some four hours later when the England and Wales Cricket Board released the team on its website, with Nottingham bowler Jake Ball beating out Craig Overton as the fourth seamer.

Smith had earlier thrown a curve-ball by saying David Warner, his vice-captain, opener and best batsman, remained in doubt for the test as he battles to recover from a neck strain. Compounding the drama, Cricket Australia later revealed batsman Shaun Marsh had suffered a back strain at training on Wednesday and was also uncertain for the match.

As to how Australia would deal with Warner’s absence, Smith gave no answer. The board later said all-rounder Glenn Maxwell had been rushed to Brisbane in readiness to slot in if Warner failed to prove his fitness.

Quite how Marsh’s potential absence would be covered remains up in the air. Before the Marsh news



BRISBANE: Australia's skipper Steve Smith (L) and England captain Joe Root smile as they pose at a media opportunity in Brisbane yesterday, ahead of the first Test of the Ashes Series. — AFP

broke, Root had said Warner’s injury would do nothing to change his team’s preparations.

STRAIGHT BAT

Root has seemed impervious to the pressure of leading a team regarded sceptically by cricket media in both countries, and he has played a straight bat to the usual provocations from Australia’s pundits and players.

Having taken one on the chin for England after a clash with Warner at a Birmingham bar in 2013, Root has gladly stuck it out again on the tour Down Under.

Yet as calmly as he praised his players for refusing to rise to Australia’s bait, his voice strayed briefly from its dependable monotone as he chided the home side’s spinner Nathan Lyon for an attack on the team.

Taking no prisoners, Lyon said on Tuesday that England’s former wicketkeeper Matt Prior had wanted to fly home early during the 2013/14 series, which the tourists lost 5-0. He also joked that he wanted to see Root, who was omitted for the Sydney test during that series, “dropped again”.

“That’s not how I’d want my players to go about things but that’s up to him to come out and say that,” Root said in response, a hint of a frown crossing the 26-year-old’s face. “I think it’s slightly out of character. I know Nathan from playing club cricket but it doesn’t seem very real.”

The threat from Australia’s pace trio of Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood on a juicy Gabba deck is very real, however. — Reuters

Sri Lanka seeks Bangladesh coach

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka’s cricket board yesterday announced it was in talks to hire Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha subject to him securing a full release from his current contractual obligations. Sri Lanka Cricket said its chief Thilanga Sumathipala wrote to his Bangladesh counterpart Nazmul Hassan expressing a desire to hire Sri Lanka-born Hathurusingha.

The board said it would offer the 49-year-old the position of head coach “subject to the full release of his contractual obligations” with the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB). “There is no doubt that Hathuru (Hathurusingha) would be a great fit for us with the direction of both our short and long term goals,” Sumathipala said in a statement. “I have written personally to the BCB informing him of our intention (to hire Hathurusingha).”

Sri Lanka wants him to groom the national team for the 2019 cricket World Cup, according to official sources. Hathurusingha had said earlier this month that he was stepping down from the Bangladesh team after a disastrous tour of South Africa. However, there was no word from the Bangladesh board if they had agreed for him to prematurely end his contract and join the team of his native Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka’s head coach post has been vacant since South African Graham Ford quit in June.

Under Hathurusingha, perennial minnows Bangladesh made rapid strides in world cricket, reaching the semi-finals of the Champions Trophy tournament in England this year. But he came in for criticism during Bangladesh’s recent tour of South Africa, where the team failed to register a single win. His contract with the Bangladesh Cricket Board was supposed to run until World Cup 2019 and made him one of the highest-paid cricket coaches in the world on \$40,000 a month.—AFP

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Real Madrid cruise into last 16, Liverpool blow three-goal lead

Man City beat Feyenoord to win Champions League group

PARIS: Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice as holders Real Madrid thrashed APOEL 6-0 in Cyprus to reach the Champions League last 16 on Tuesday, while Liverpool blew a three-goal lead in a thriller at Sevilla.

Zinedine Zidane's Real bounced back from their 3-1 loss at Tottenham Hotspur last time out by crushing APOEL, with four of the goals coming before half-time.

"It was a very good evening for us," said Zidane. "We're on the right track. We're doing things well and we're building in strength. It's never easy but it was a complete display and we scored quickly."

The record 12-time winners had to wait until the 23rd minute to take the lead through Luka Modric, but a run of five goals in 15 minutes either side of half-time sent them through in style.

Karim Benzema put worries about his recent form to bed with a double either side of a Nacho effort, before Ronaldo got in on the act after the break.

The Portuguese climbed highest to power a header into the corner from an inviting Marcelo cross.

And the 32-year-old, who has only scored once in eight La Liga appearances this season, scored his eighth Champions League goal this term with an excellent left-footed finish from a tight angle.

Tottenham sealed top spot in Group H with a come-from-behind 2-1 victory at Borussia Dortmund.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang put the hosts ahead, but with Real's thumping win sending Dortmund out, Spurs levelled through Harry Kane and Son Heung-Min curled in a 76th-minute winner.

LIVERPOOL COLLAPSE

Five-time champions Liverpool threw away a last-16 spot as Sevilla roared back from three goals down at half-time to draw 3-3. Liverpool looked to be cruising into the knockout stage for the first time since 2008/09 when Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane both scored from flicked-on corners. A rout similar to the 7-0 thrashing of Maribor in Slovenia earlier in the group phase looked on the cards when Firmino tapped in number three, but Sevilla staged a stirring second-half comeback.

Wissam Ben Yedder beat Alberto Moreno to nod in

a free-kick, before slotting in a penalty.

And Argentinian Guido Pizarro struck in the third minute of injury-time to complete the fightback and leave Jurgen Klopp's visitors deflated. "Fantastic first half and in the second half we made the mistake that we didn't continue playing football," said Klopp.

"We have to control the game with the ball and we didn't play football." Elsewhere in Group E, Russian champions Spartak Moscow saw their chances

hit by an injury-time equaliser in a 1-1 home draw with Maribor. Sevilla will book a last-16 spot for the second straight season if they can win in Maribor on the final matchday in two weeks' time, while Liverpool have to avoid defeat at home to Spartak.

Lorenzo Insigne inspired Italian Serie A leaders Napoli to a 3-0 victory over Ukrainians Shakhtar Donetsk that kept their hopes alive in Group F.

Winger Insigne made the difference with a magnificent individual effort in the 56th minute, dancing past two defenders before curling into the top corner from 25 yards out. Further late goals from Piotr Zielinski and Dries Mertens gave their goal difference a boost.

Manchester City secured first place in the group with a 1-0 win over rock-bottom Feyenoord as Raheem Sterling scored an 88th-minute winner.

Napoli need City to beat Shakhtar in the final round of games and see off Feyenoord in Rotterdam to progress. Turkish champions Besiktas reached the last 16 for the first time in 31 years, as a goal from Talisca secured a 1-1 draw with Porto in Istanbul to wrap up top spot in Group G.

Last season's semi-finalists Monaco are out of Europe altogether, after a woeful performance and 4-1 home loss to RB Leipzig.

The French champions saw the German tournament debutants race into a 3-0 lead through a Jemerson own goal and a Timo Werner brace, and although Radamel Falcao pulled one back, Naby Keita rounded off a stunning win that keeps Leipzig in the hunt.

Leipzig need to better Porto's result on the last matchday. The Bundesliga runners-up host Besiktas, while two-time European champions Porto take on Monaco. — AFP



NICOSIA: Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo scores the fifth goal of his team during the Champions League Group H soccer match between APOEL Nicosia and Real Madrid at GSP stadium, in Nicosia. — AP

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE TABLES

PARIS: UEFA Champions League tables after Tuesday night's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Group E							Group G						
Liverpool	5	2	3	0	16	6	9	Besiktas	5	3	2	0	9
Sevilla	5	2	2	1	11	11	8	FC Porto	5	2	1	2	10
Spartak Moscow	5	1	3	1	9	6	6	RB Leipzig	5	2	1	2	9
Maribor	5	0	2	3	2	15	2	Monaco	5	0	2	3	4
Group F							Group H						
Manchester City	5	5	0	0	13	315	qualified	Tottenham	5	4	1	0	12
Shakhtar Donetsk	5	3	0	2	7	8	9	Real Madrid	5	3	1	1	14
Napoli	5	2	0	3	10	9	6	Dortmund	5	0	2	3	5
Feyenoord	5	0	0	5	3	13	0	APOEL Nicosia	5	0	2	3	2

Note: Top two from each group qualify for knockout phase

Tarasenko nets 2, gets in rare fight as Blues top Oilers

ST LOUIS: Vladimir Tarasenko had two goals and two assists and got in a rare fight Tuesday night, helping the St. Louis Blues to an 8-3 victory over the Edmonton Oilers. Brayden Schenn also had two goals and two assists, and Jake Allen stopped 26 shots for the NHL-leading Blues (16-5-1). Tarasenko's fight came in the second period. In just the third scrap of his six-year career, Tarasenko tangled with Matt Benning and landed a solid right hand much to the crowd's delight. Tarasenko was reacting to Benning's near-collision with Schenn that was almost a knee-on-knee hit. It was Tarasenko's second career Gordie Howe hat trick - a goal, an assist and a fight in the same game. The other one came three years ago against Nashville. Dmitrij Jaskin, Scottie Upshall and Paul Stastny also scored for St. Louis. Jaden Schwartz had three points, including his 100th career goal. Milan Lucic, Leon Draisaitl and Darnell Nurse scored for the Oilers. Cam Talbot was pulled in favor of Lauren Brossit after facing just three shots. Brossoit allowed six goals on 37 shots. Veteran defenseman Jay Bouwmeester, a two-time All-Star, played his first game of the season for the Blues after breaking his ankle during training

camp in September. Edmonton is 1-5 in its last six games.

CANUCKS 5, FLYERS 2

Brock Boeser scored twice and Daniel Sedin inched closer to a major NHL milestone, leading Vancouver past slumping Philadelphia. Sedin had a goal and an assist to leave him four points shy of 1,000 for his career. Sven Baertschi scored a power-play goal, Henrik Sedin had two assists and Loui Eriksson added an empty -net goal and an assist for the Canucks. Jacob Markstrom made 35 saves to earn his sixth win of the season as Vancouver improved to 10-8-3 with its second victory in six games. Ivan Provorov and Jakub Voracek scored for the Flyers, who lost their fifth straight and fell below .500 (8-9-4) for the first time this season. Michal Neuvirth took the loss, allowing four goals on 22 shots. He was replaced by Brian Elliott with 5:20 remaining in the second period.

STARS 3, CANADIENS 1

Devin Shore and Jason Spezza scored 59 seconds apart late in the second period to lift Dallas over Montreal. Shore had no goals in the first 19 games this season, but scored for the second straight game to tie it 1-1 at 18:22 of the second. Spezza, who also has scored in consecutive games after netting only one goal in the first 19, put in a rebound just less than a minute later. Shore had an assist on Spezza's goal. So did Tyler Seguin, who scored into an empty net with 27 seconds to play. Ben Bishop made 29 saves for Dallas on his 31st birthday. He allowed only a power-play goal by Brendan Gallagher at 12:04 of the second. After that, the Stars killed off all three Montreal power plays in the third period. Canadiens goalie Charlie Lindgren had 26 saves. — AP

NBA result/standings

LA Lakers 103; Chicago 94.

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	16	2	.889	-
Toronto	11	5	.688	4
NY Knicks	9	7	.563	6
Philadelphia	9	7	.563	6
Brooklyn	6	10	.375	9
Central Division				
Detroit	11	6	.647	-
Cleveland	10	7	.588	1
Indiana	10	8	.556	1.5
Milwaukee	8	8	.500	2.5
Chicago	3	12	.200	7
Southeast Division				
Washington	10	7	.588	-
Orlando	8	9	.471	2
Charlotte	7	9	.438	2.5
Miami	7	9	.438	2.5
Atlanta	3	14	.176	7
Western Conference				
Northwest Division				
Portland	10	7	.588	-
Minnesota	10	7	.588	-
Denver	10	7	.588	-
Oklahoma City	7	9	.438	2.5
Utah	7	11	.389	3.5
Pacific Division				
Golden State	13	4	.765	-
LA Lakers	8	10	.444	5.5
Phoenix	7	11	.389	6.5
LA Clippers	5	11	.313	7.5
Sacramento	4	13	.235	9
Southwest Division				
Houston	13	4	.765	-
San Antonio	11	6	.647	2
New Orleans	9	8	.529	4
Memphis	7	9	.438	5.5
Dallas	3	15	.167	10.5



LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles Lakers guard Josh Hart, left, looks to shoot under pressure as Chicago Bulls center Robin Lopez defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game. — AP

Buffon thanks Rakitic for WCup offer

TURIN: Italy and Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon has thanked Ivan Rakitic for offering to give him his spot at the World Cup, but quipped it "might not be a great idea." Barcelona midfielder Rakitic will be going to the tournament with Croatia. Buffon missed out on becoming the first player to feature in six World Cup finals after Italy lost its play-off to Sweden. "Buffon is really unique, he has the respect of everyone, I'm really

sad that he won't have a last chance to play in a World Cup. If I could, I would give him my place," Rakitic said ahead of Barcelona's Champions League match at Juventus yesterday.

"Any child creating their ultimate football team would put Buffon in goal. Seeing him in tears after Italy's game, I wanted to tell him go to the World Cup in my place." Buffon is likely to retire at the end of the season and quit international football after the playoff defeat. The 39-year-old 'keeper, who won the World Cup in 2006, thanked Rakitic on Twitter. "As a goalkeeper I might still play but playing for Croatia as a midfielder in your place might not be a great idea: I am saying it for your good sake," Buffon wrote. "Joking apart, your words have been a great gift. Thanks to you and @JordiAlba: my jersey is waiting for you." — AP

Lakers rally from 19-point deficit to beat Bulls 103-94

LOS ANGELES: Kyle Kuzma had 22 points, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 11 of his 21 in the fourth quarter and the Los Angeles Lakers rallied from a 19-point deficit in the second half for a 103-94 victory over the Chicago Bulls on Tuesday night.

Brandon Ingram had 17 points, five

rebounds and five assists as the Lakers won consecutive games for the second time this season. Los Angeles had a miserable first half and trailed 61-42 early in the second, but put together a 38-19 run. Caldwell-Pope's layup with 3:08 to play gave the Lakers their first lead since the first quarter.

Caldwell-Pope added back-to-back 3-pointers to get the LA crowd on its feet. After Ingram made a difficult layup with 1:16 left, Caldwell-Pope alertly kept a loose ball alive after Lonzo Ball missed a 3-pointer, allowing the Lakers to seal their first win over the Bulls at Staples Center in three tries.

Denzel Valentine scored 17 points and Antonio Blakeney added 15 - all in the first half - for the Bulls, who dropped to 3-12 with their

seventh loss in eight games. Kris Dunn had 12 points and six assists in his second start of the season for Chicago. Ball had eight points, 13 rebounds and four assists. After posting his second career triple-double Sunday against Denver, the touted rookie missed seven of his first eight shots against Chicago, but provided strong playmaking down the stretch.

The NBA's worst shooting team hit seven 3s in the first half while taking an 18-point lead over the step-slow Lakers. Blakeney was a rookie surprise, hitting a career-high six shots in the opening minutes while the Bulls surged well ahead. Los Angeles committed 13 first-half turnovers, played poor defense and would have been buried without Kuzma's gritty scoring. — AP

Meet the Judges to crown the winner at the 2017 Red Bull Car Park Drift Series Final in Kuwait



With the final for the Red Bull Car Park Drift series fast approaching, Kuwait is getting ready to host the largest motorsport event in the region on December 8 at SIRBB Circuit. Kuwait will welcome elite drifters competing for the crown of the 2017 King of Drift. Drifters from 15 countries, including 3 from Kuwait, will go head to head to acquire the coveted crown.

Since Red Bull's first drifting event, they have been able to bring the motorsport to new heights in the region for thousands of drifting and motorsport fans and the same holds true to the elevated judging criteria.

Red Bull Car Park Drift final is organized with the cooperation of Basel Salem AlSabah Motor Racing Club, the Public Authority for Sport, and SIRBB Circuit and is sponsored by Total, Falken, Shop & Ship, PS4, Nissan, Boubyan Bank, Drag 965, Acqua Eva and Trolley. Media partners, MBC Action, Kuwait Times and Aljarida will cover this popular event.

Meet the Judges

The judging panel will consist of four professional drifting and racing athletes: Kuwaiti racing star, Khaled Al Mudhaf, German drifting experts and brothers, Johannes and Elias Hountundji, and finally Ukrainian drifter, Aleksandr Grinchuk. To take home the title, drifters will have to impress all four.

Born in 1980, Joe has been an active participant in drifting for close to a decade. Together with his brother, Elias, they form the "Team Driftbrothers". Joe's role is more focused on the planning and strategic decisions in the team, given his ample experience. When drifting, he is at the wheel of his converted Nissan 200SX.

Born in 1985, five years junior to his brother, Elias did not find his passion for drift racing until 2009 after drifting his brother's old BMW. Immediately he was hooked on the sport, pursued tournaments, and won them all. A full-on drifting career and team was born,

alongside his brother, Joe, "Team Driftbrothers".

Alexsandr's love for drifting came from no other than the Need for Speed video game series and the Fast & Furious movies. Fueled by his interest, he kick-started his career in 2007, participating in every competition in his native city of Odessa, Ukraine.

Khaled, Kuwait's first certified FIA racing driver, first developed a hobby into racing as a student in Boston in 2001. Since then, the hobby has turned into a full-fledged career participating in races globally. His passion for the sport and cars has extended into developing his own business venture, G-force Autoworx, a workshop devoted to airbrushing artists and expert mechanics.

Judging Criteria

In order to be crowned the 2017 King of Drift, the

drifters will have to score the highest on a variety of criteria. Aiming to elevate the competition year after year, Abdo Feghali, the Guinness World Book Record holder for the longest drift, has modified the criteria to challenge the drifters. This year their performance will be determined based on Car Look & Design (10%), Tire Smoke (10%), Car Sound (7%), Section 1 Drifting (15%), Section 2 Drifting (15%), Boxes (15%), Gates (15%), and Pendulum (13%).

This challenging competition leaves no room for error, as participants will lose points if they hit obstacles, drift the wrong way, or spin their car. In case of three penalties, the drifter will be disqualified.

Haitham Al Hadidi was able to demonstrate a ravishing performance in the Series Final of the 2016 Red Bull Car Park Drift, accumulating a total of 390 points at the young age of 18, making him the winner.



12 Olympics favourite Medvedeva has broken foot, may miss GP Final



13 Ashes captains continue war of words on series eve



14 Real Madrid cruise into last 16, Liverpool blow three-goal lead



Australia coach Postecoglou quits

Saudi Arabia sack coach Bauza after five games

SYDNEY: Ange Postecoglou framed his departure as Socceroos head coach with a stereotypically Aussie scenario. He'd decided to quit last week immediately after Australia qualified for a fourth consecutive World Cup, only to be talked out of it an hour later. Five beers later, he was wavering amid the celebrations. A week later, he made the announcement yesterday that he wouldn't be taking the Australian team to next year's World Cup in Russia despite guiding them through a grueling, 22-game qualifying campaign that concluded with back-to-back, winner-takes-all playoff series.

"It's been the toughest decision. It's not the ending I envisaged," said Postecoglou, who replaced German coach Holger Osieck in 2013 and guided Australia at the 2014 World Cup. "I'll always have a sense of unfinished business, but that would probably have been the case whenever I left. 'It's just an instinct - I think it's the right time for me, for the team and for the organization.'"

Meanwhile, World Cup-bound Saudi Arabia have sacked head coach Edgardo Bauza after five matches in charge, world soccer's governing body (FIFA) said yesterday, citing an announcement by the Saudi Arabia Football Federation. The Argentine, who replaced Bert van Marwijk in September, leaves after wins over Latvia and Jamaica and defeats by Ghana, Portugal and Bulgaria in his five friendlies in charge.

Dutchman Van Marwijk helped the Saudis qualify for next-year's finals in Russia, which will be their fifth World Cup and their first since Germany 2006. Australia narrowly missed out on direct entry for Russia, finishing out of the automatic spots only on goal difference in Asian qualifying. Speculation about Postecoglou's future increased after a newspaper report in the wake of Australia's Asian playoff win over Syria suggested he would not take the team to Russia regardless of what happened in the intercontinental playoff against Honduras.

Postecoglou refused to comment on the reports at the time, and appeared to be increasingly aggravated by the continued focus on his position while the team was preparing for crucial matches in Honduras and in Sydney. Yesterday, he called a morning news conference with Football Federation Australia chief executive David Gallop to announce his decision to stand down. "It has been a privilege for me to coach my country's national team, to lead them at the 2014 World Cup, to win the Asian Cup in 2015 and now to have qualified for the World Cup next year," he said. "All this, however, has taken a toll on me both personally and professionally. It is with a heavy heart that I must now end the journey."

Postecoglou was criticized at times for persevering with a three-man defensive system, and for Australia's lack of finish in front of goal in Asian qualifying when missed opportunities forced them into the difficult playoff route to Russia. Tim Cahill, Australia's all-time leading goal scorer and a significant contributor to Australia's four World Cup qualifying campaigns, said Postecoglou's commitment and sense of national pride set him apart from many coaches.

"His leadership and beliefs are infectious and I'm proud that I had the chance to share his journey with him and witness his love for our country," Cahill was quoted as saying yesterday. "The most important part was the belief he instilled in us to play a style of football that could test any team we came up against."

National team coaches are due to attend a meeting in Moscow next week before next Friday's World Cup draw, but it's unlikely Australia will appoint a permanent replacement before then. Australia joins Serbia and Saudi Arabia as countries going to the World Cup without the coach who got them there. "We will not rush this process. The Socceroos will not play again until March next year" Gallop said. "With a guar-



SYDNEY: Australia's national football coach Ange Postecoglou speaks at a press conference to announce his resignation beside Football Federation of Australia (FFA) chief David Gallop (R) in Sydney yesterday. — AFP

anteed place in the World Cup, I am sure we will attract a strong field of candidates." Postecoglou said his main legacy would how he'd focused on playing in an Australian style and how he'd rejuvenated the national squad, starting with an inexperienced team in Brazil three years ago and ensuring they'll be competitive in 2018 and 2022. "We've changed the way we play, whether people like it or not, think it's good or not," he said. "It's undeniable we play different football today

than we played four years ago - I don't think me leaving now detracts from that. "I know everyone was hanging on the one result last week to measure whether I was successful or not. I get it, that's the nature of sport, but bigger things were driving me when I took this job.

From that perspective, I've accomplished what I wanted to do." The 52-year-old Greek-born former Socceroo was asked when he'd finally decided it was time to quit.—Agencies

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2017

19 British Airways marks 85 years of flying to Kuwait



21 Islamic banks brace to address customer needs in digital era



22 Microsoft takes cyber-security professionals inside hacker's world



LONDON: British Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond (center) poses with the Budget Box as he stands with members of his ministerial team yesterday before presenting the government's annual Autumn budget to the parliament. — AFP

UK hikes Brexit pot, cuts growth outlook

Hammond outlines cautious spending plans for economy

LONDON: Britain's Treasury chief has outlined cautious spending plans to a nation bracing for the shock of Britain's departure from the European Union amid a steady worsening in economic forecasts. Philip Hammond revealed yesterday a deteriorating outlook, as a slowing economy and stubborn deficit mean there is little money to increase public spending in the face of demands from teachers, firefighters and the military. Adding to the pressure is the government's need to preserve state coffers for potential Brexit turmoil. Hammond offered 3 billion pounds (\$3.9 billion) over two years to prepare for Brexit, and some relief for first-time home buyers, but otherwise sidestepped eye-popping initiatives. "We are at a turning point

in our history," Hammond told the House of Commons. "And we resolve to look forwards, not backwards. To build on the strengths of the British economy." Hammond, who has been nicknamed "Eeyore" because of his cautious approach, had been under pressure to appear upbeat about the economy's prospects after Brexit. Prime Minister Theresa May's weakened government was hoping for excitement without controversy - particularly since anything too revolutionary might get voted down. He tried to paint an optimistic vision of a "global Britain" that would embrace the technological revolution and capitalize on the opportunities presented by leaving the EU. He promised an

approach that would be "balanced" amid pleas to end austerity. And though Hammond did his best to sound cheerful, the section of the speech that he himself described as "economy" revealed the painful truth. The economy is slowing. The independent Office of Budget Responsibility now expects to see economic growth of 1.5 percent in 2017, 1.4 percent in 2018, and 1.3 in 2019 and 2020, before picking back up to 1.5, and finally 1.6 percent in 2022. By contrast, the neighboring eurozone is booming, with annual growth of about 2.5 percent at last count. At the same time, British public finances are weakening. Public borrowing rose more than expected in October, driven by higher borrowing

costs. Borrowing is at a similar level to that before the 2007-2008 financial crisis, the House of Commons said. Public sector net debt now totals 87.2 percent of gross domestic product, compared with less than 40 percent in 2007, the Office for National Statistics said Tuesday. The Office of Budget Responsibility has warned that it will also cut its forecast for productivity over the next five years. That is expected to mean lower tax revenues for the state and make it harder for Hammond to ease austerity and boost public sector pay. "Mr Hammond is like David throwing pebbles at the Goliath of the productivity and growth challenges that the UK faces after Brexit," Aberdeen Standard Investments chief economist

Lucy O'Carroll said. "Today could have been a golden opportunity to take a distinct, long-term view of the UK's prospects, tackling the country's productivity performance head on... Unfortunately, the Chancellor lacks the political capital to take such a dynamic approach." Opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn was quick to challenge the result. "Our country is marked by growing inequality and injustice. We were promised, with lots of hype, a revolutionary budget," he said. "The reality is nothing has changed. People were looking for help from this budget and they've been let down, let down by a government that like the economy they've presided over is weak and unstable and in need of urgent change." — AP

WTO to hear Qatar's complaint against UAE over blockade

GENEVA: The World Trade Organization agreed yesterday to hear Qatar's complaint against the United Arab Emirates over a five-month old blockade that has triggered a diplomatic crisis in the Gulf. Qatar turned to the WTO in August, insisting it was the victim of an "illegal siege" perpetrated by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, which have cut ties with Doha over its links to Iran and accusations that it supports extremists. In the initial WTO filing, Qatar requested "consultations" with its rivals, a procedural move required by the Geneva-based organization before a Dispute Settlement Body panel (DSB) can be set up. Last month Doha made an initial request for a DSB to hear its case against the UAE. Abu Dhabi rejected that bid. Qatar then made the request a second time, which according to the WTO's often quirky rules, triggered the automatic creation of a panel. "The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body agreed today, 22 November, to establish a panel to rule on Qatar's complaint regarding various measures imposed by the United Arab Emirates



GENEVA: Brazilian Roberto Azevedo, Director General of the World Trade Organization speaks during the opening session of the Global Deal and Trade, Making Globalization Work for Everyone, at the headquarters of the WTO in Geneva yesterday. — AP

restricting trade in goods and services with Qatar and the protection of Qatari intellectual property rights", a statement from the Geneva-based trade body said. It was not immediately clear why Qatar is pursuing the UAE case separately from its complaints against Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, after initially filing a joint case against the three nations. The WTO's dispute settlement process can take months, if not years, with initial rulings typically subject to appeal. Doha categorically denies that it supports extremism. The gas-rich emirate has pivoted closer to Iran through the crisis. — AFP

Turkish lira tumbles to record low

LONDON: The Turkish lira hit a record low yesterday and local bond yields rose to fresh peaks on political strains and worries about the central bank's ability to curb inflation. The lira hit 3.98 against the dollar, coming under renewed pressure ahead of the US trial of Turkish gold trader Reza Zarrab, who is accused of violating US sanctions on Iran. The Turkish government have described the case as a "clear plot against Turkey", which lacks any legal basis. Foreign investors, which Turkey needs to finance its large budget and current account deficits, are also concerned about political pressure on the central bank, which is struggling to tame high inflation. The falling lira has fuelled expectations of further central bank action as initial attempts to shore up the currency appeared to do little to stem the losses. Said Haidar, president and chief executive officer of Haidar Capital Management, a \$365 million global macro hedge fund, said Turkey had fallen substan-

tially behind the curve in terms of interest rate normalization. "We're not very positive on Turkey in the near term - eventually hopefully enough pressure is brought to bear that they push rates up and the currency then does better," he said. "It's an ugly looking situation made worse by political issues." The yield on the benchmark 10-year local sovereign bond leapt to a record high of 13.52 percent and the average yield spread of Turkish sovereign dollar-denominated bonds over US Treasuries on the JPMorgan EMBI Global Diversified index held at their widest level since March. But some Turkish banks' dollar-denominated bonds continued to trade near multi-month lows, with Halkbank's July 2021 issue at its lowest since end-March. Turkish consumer confidence fell to 65.2 points in November, the lowest level this year, reflecting a pessimistic outlook. The poor performance of Turkish assets contrasted with a rally elsewhere across emerging markets. In currencies, the South African rand was up 0.4 percent and trading at near one-month highs, benefiting from the dollar's retreat following dovish comments from US Federal Reserve Janet Yellen. South African consumer inflation slowed as expected to 4.8 percent year-on-year in October. Asian currencies were almost uniformly stronger, with Malaysia's ringgit up

0.7 percent to a more than one-year high after central bank comments that the currency was "far from reflecting its fair value". But Mexico's peso weakened 0.3 percent after the US, Mexico and Canada failed to resolve any major differences in a fifth round of NAFTA renegotiations. MSCI's benchmark emerging stocks index rose 0.5 percent to fresh six-year highs, led by Asian technology shares. Taiwan stocks touched 27-year highs and Hong Kong shares hit a decade peak. In emerging Europe, Budapest shares led the pack, up 1.4 percent. And the Hungarian forint weakened further against the euro, standing just off seven-month lows hit on Tuesday after the central bank took steps to further flatten the yield curve. A 13.5 percent surge in gross wages is not expected to deter the bank from its loose policy. The Czech crown reached its strongest levels since June 2013, buoyed by expectations for continued central bank rate hikes, whilst the Polish zloty hit four-month highs. Lebanon dollar bonds were mainly firmer and five-year credit default swaps fell 13 bps from Tuesday's close to 553 bps, according to IHS Markit after Saad al-Hariri suspended his decision to resign as prime minister at the request of President Michel Aoun to allow for dialogue, easing a major political crisis. — Reuters



Macron makes modest start on French overspending

Paris doing too little to tackle deficit: IMF, EU

GUERET, France: For two weeks in the mayor's office in the small town of Gueret in central France, President Emmanuel Macron faced the wall. His portrait which hangs in every town hall in France—showing the ex-investment banker leaning against his desk with a purposeful stare—was flipped around by local leader Michel Vergnier in an act of protest.

Like other mayors in the rural region of Creuse, Vergnier was incensed at being teargassed by police last month when he tried to meet the president along with protesting local workers to complain about job losses and budget cuts.

“We decided that since he didn't want to see us, for us it was the same. There was no reason to look at him in our councils,” the 70-year-old former school teacher said.

Vergnier, who was later invited to Paris by Macron, is a veteran whose 20-year parliamentary career ended with the rout of the Socialist party in this year's elections by the president's centrist Republic On the Move party. He echoes the growing concerns of many mayors and millions of public sector workers who are anxious about Macron's plans to tackle chronic overspending and ever-rising debt.

Cutting local council funds by 13 billion euros (\$15 billion) over Macron's term is one of the government's objectives as it seeks to reduce the deficit from just under 3.0 percent of GDP this year to nearly zero in 2022. “Targeting local councils is not the right way of doing it,” added Vergnier, who is also a senior figure in the Association of French Mayors.

A strong state

In rural places like Gueret, it's easy to understand why the government's first cuts—such as reducing the

number of subsidized jobs—and its longer term objectives worry officials and citizens alike.

France's public sector is the largest of any industrialized country bar Finland relative to the size of its economy—comprising 56.6 percent of gross domestic product in 2015, according to figures from the OECD. The equivalent figure for Germany is 43.8 percent.

The Creuse region, which is poor, isolated and with a shrinking and ageing population, struggles to attract private investment. On Gueret's central shopping street, about half of the shops are boarded up or vacant, while the region's second-biggest private employer, car parts supplier GM&S, is laying off more than half its staff.

The role of the state in the local economy is plain to see. Large separate buildings house three layers of administration—municipal, regional and prefectural. There's a publicly funded cinema and an arts association that puts on two subsidized shows a week. Mayor Vergnier

estimates that there are around 3,000 public sector jobs in his town of 16,000 people, double the number in the industrial sector. In the neat public gardens, four of the 20-strong team of municipal gardeners are preparing the flowerbeds for winter, planting bulbs and tidying up hedgerows in front of the large (state-funded) local museum.

Deferred efforts

The last time a French government balanced the budget was in the mid-1970s and Paris has broken EU budget deficit rules every year for a decade—until 2017. Successive presidents have found it impossible to deliver France's cradle-to-grave social protections without borrowing heavily.

For some in the Socialist party, as well as the radical



GUERET: A deserted shopping street is pictured in Gueret on November 7, 2017. Portrait of President Emmanuel Macron, which hangs in every town hall in France — showing the ex-investment banker leaning against his desk with a purposeful stare — was flipped around by local leader Michel Vergnier in an act of protest. —AFP

left and far right, the answer is to crack down on tax evasion and squeeze the rich. But Macron points to France's tax take—the second-highest of leading world economies, OECD figures show—and sees spending cutbacks and private sector growth as the only long-term solution. Yet, despite his pledge to produce a leaner state, France's new leader has made modest progress.

“Macron is aiming to reduce public spending but he doesn't want to do it in a brutal way,” said Mathieu Plane from the OFCE economic think tank at Sciences Po university in Paris.

Plane believes Macron is wary of jeopardizing the uptick in economic growth. As a result, cost-saving objectives for next year have been revised down to 15 billion euros—from 20 billion initially—and concessions

have also been granted to the mayors. Under a draft budget approved by MPs on Tuesday, public sector headcount will fall by just 1,600 next year—a fraction of the 120,000 jobs Macron has promised to cut over his term. “Clearly there's not much real consolidation in 2018,” Plane added. This view is shared by the HCFP public spending watchdog, the International Monetary Fund and the European Commission, which warned yesterday that France was doing too little to tackle the underlying reasons for its deficit.

Government projections currently show bigger efforts falling towards the end of Macron's term, when he and his MPs will be eyeing re-election. Unpopular measures could lead to more resistance from mayors like Vergnier in Gueret, but the head of the gardening service there offered some encouragement. — AFP

Greece upgrades 2018 growth forecast

ATHENS: The Greek government has upgraded slightly its forecast for economic growth next year, according to its final 2018 budget, tabled late Tuesday. The government is expecting the economy to grow by 2.5 percent in 2018, fractionally higher than the 2.4 percent contained in the draft budget last month.

And the country's public finances will be in the black, with Athens pencilling in a budget surplus equivalent to 3.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), excluding debt payments, the finance ministry said.

The target mandated by Greece's creditors is 3.5 percent, up from 1.75 percent this year. The Greek parliament is scheduled to vote on the budget on December 22. Greece “is entering a new period of economic stability,” the ministry said. And Athens' main target now would be to “regain access to global capital markets.” In 2017, the economy was expected to grow by 1.6 percent and register a primary

surplus of 2.4 percent, the ministry said.

Athens intends to sell state assets worth just over 1.1 billion euros in 2018. The country's debt is expected to grow to 332 billion euros (\$392 billion) from 318.3 billion euros this year, or 179.8 percent of GDP. Brussels is also confident about the outlook for the Greek economy. Speaking to the European parliament on Tuesday, European Commission Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis said the Greek economy was showing marked improvement and was capable of “durable growth”.

An ongoing review of Greek reforms could feasibly conclude by early 2018, Dombrovskis said. Greece has received three multi-billion euro bailouts since 2010. The third rescue program, currently financially supported by EU states but not the International Monetary Fund, runs to August 2018 and Athens then hopes to fully return to market financing. By the end of September, Greece had received over 221 billion euros from European institutions and a further 11.5 billion from the International Monetary Fund, the ministry said. In July, Greece made a symbolic return to debt markets after a three-year hiatus, selling three billion euros worth of five-year bonds at 4.625 percent, lower than its previous outing in 2014. — AFP

Package trips: Bikes and drones give faster delivery

MADRID: Whether bikes or drones, delivery firms are looking for ways to get packages to customers quicker as electronic commerce is revolutionizing the retail market.

Geopost, the parcel delivery unit of France's La Poste, is testing out drones and experimenting with neighborhood mini-depots and bicycle delivery to help beat urban traffic gridlock.

Its subsidiary SEUR in Madrid is developing mini-facilities where packages are brought before being distributed to customers nearby—an alternative to the current system where delivery vans are loaded at bigger centers, often located outside the city.

Parcel delivery was the first to be liberalized in Europe, but it is the former monopoly postal services of France and Germany that have come out on top. Geopost is second to leader Deutsche Post's DHL, which is also testing drones in

rural areas. US giant FedEx, trying out robots as well as drones, has bought TNT from the Dutch postal service.

While email has eroded the volume of letters, e-commerce has led to a boom in parcel delivery. “The market remains marked primarily by the growth of business to consumer, which accounts for 95 percent of the increase,” said Geopost's director Paul-Marie Chavanne.

Geopost saw its sales rise 8.6 percent last year to 6.2 billion euros (\$7.3 billion), with more than three-quarters coming from outside France. It now accounts for more than a quarter of the La Poste's total revenue. The challenges delivery firms face vary by the area, urban or rural, so do the solutions they are looking at.

“The trend, in all European countries, is to deploy these mini-depots to adapt to the constraints posed by the greater traffic” in cities, said Yves Delmas, the deputy CEO of Geopost for Europe.

In Paris, the company sees the need for around 80 mini-depots, which in some cases could be installed in parking garages or even in post offices. A small client service area abuts the storage room lined with shelves and a small loading area used by deliverers, in particular cyclists from Stuart, a start-up delivery service for retailers that La Poste recently bought. New ventures like Stuart are trying to offer bricks-and-mortar shops a service similar to what firms like

Deliveroo do for restaurants in France.

Isolated areas

In rural areas, the challenge is the distance between clients, and Geopost is now looking towards drones. “Drones have a future in isolated areas,” said Chavanne, noting that the firm has to drive 80 kilometres (50 miles) to deliver packages to some customers in parts of the Alps. “The costs are enormous, so in the future we'll do that with drones and it will be much faster, more efficient and cost less,” he said. La Poste has been testing a drone in France's southern Var region, making a 15 kilometer daily run between stations. But Chavanne does not think it likely that we will see thousands of drones above Paris or New York delivering individual packages anytime soon. The idea promoted by some of drones delivering parcels through open windows to a client's kitchen table is a “child's dream”, he said.

“That's no more than a dream due to security concerns obviously.” There could be a role for cargo drones, however, to transport parcels from hubs outside cities to mini-depots in the centre, where they would be distributed to customers by means such as bicycles, said Chavanne.

While cargo drones haven't yet been developed, Chavanne sees them becoming available within two to three years. — AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.691
Indian Rupees	4.660
Pakistani Rupees	2.887
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.968
Nepali Rupees	2.914
Singapore Dollar	224.220
Hongkong Dollar	38.748
Bangladesh Taka	3.637
Philippine Peso	5.958
Thai Baht	9.251

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.774
Qatari Riyal	83.194
Omani Riyal	786.642
Bahraini Dinar	804.300
UAE Dirham	82.468

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.700
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.123
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.216
Tunisian Dinar	122.300
Jordanian Dinar	427.120
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.583

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.700
Euro	357.490
Sterling Pound	402.890

Canadian dollar	237.600
Turkish lira	77.520
Swiss Franc	306.840
Australian Dollar	230.510
US Dollar Buying	301.500

GOLD

20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.650
Canadian Dollar	237.700
Sterling Pound	402.570
Euro	356.885
Swiss Frank	301.435
Bahrain Dinar	803.260
UAE Dirhams	82.790
Qatari Riyals	83.615
Saudi Riyals	81.565
Jordanian Dinar	428.150
Egyptian Pound	17.188
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.968
Indian Rupees	4.678
Pakistani Rupees	2.869
Bangladesh Taka	3.678
Philippines Peso	5.974
Cyprus pound	18.010
Japanese Yen	3.695
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.925

Malaysian Ringgit	74.365
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.160
Thai Bhat	10.230
Turkish Lira	76.635

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.395653	0.403153
Czech Korune	0.005920	0.017920
Danish Krone	0.043699	0.048699
Euro	0.349930	0.357430
Georgian Lari	0.110530	0.110530
Norwegian Krone	0.032825	0.038025
Romanian Leu	0.059529	0.076379
Russian ruble	0.005109	0.005109
Slovakia	0.009034	0.019034
Swedish Krona	0.031853	0.036853
Swiss Franc	0.299122	0.310122
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.220811	0.232811
New Zealand Dollar	0.200441	0.209941

Canadian Dollar	0.231782	0.240782
US Dollars	0.298900	0.303320
US Dollars Mint	0.299400	0.303320
America		
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003301	0.003885

Chinese Yuan	0.044234	0.047734
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036696	0.039446
Indian Rupee	0.004112	0.004753
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002614	0.002794
Korean Won	0.000267	0.000282
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069552	0.075552
Nepalese Rupee	0.003023	0.003193
Pakistan Rupee	0.002649	0.002939
Philippine Peso	0.005793	0.006093
Singapore Dollar	0.218273	0.228273
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001703	0.002283
Taiwan	0.010008	0.010188
Thai Baht	0.008911	0.009461

Bahraini Dinar	0.796719	0.805219
Egyptian Pound	0.014525	0.020243
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000186	0.000246
Jordanian Dinar	0.422755	0.431755
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.023565	0.047565
Omani Riyal	0.780695	0.786375
Qatar Riyal	0.078937	0.083877
Saudi Riyal	0.079713	0.081013
Syrian Pound	0.001284	0.001504
Tunisian Dinar	0.117389	0.125389
Turkish Lira	0.071317	0.081617
UAE Dirhams	0.081071	0.082771
Yemeni Riyal	0.000985	0.001065

Business

British Airways marks 85 years of flying to Kuwait

Airline launches 22 new routes, expands network for Kuwaiti customers in 2017

KUWAIT: This year marks 85 years since British Airways' first flight to the Middle East, arriving in Kuwait in October 1932. More than eight-and-a-half decades later, British Airways now operates 93 flights a week between its hub at London Heathrow and the Middle East during its winter schedule.

Remaining a key market for the airline's global network of more than 200 destinations, British Airways has confirmed that plans to roll out its new luxurious sleep proposition by spring 2018 and revamped catering menus will be introduced to Kuwait during the year, among other investments.

"Our services in Kuwait are among one of the first regional operations to receive the new Club World sleep offering in 2018, following our £400million investment in this cabin," said Robert Williams, British Airways' Head of Sales - Asia Pacific and the Middle East during his recent visit to Kuwait.

"We have a long legacy of flying to Kuwait and will continue to invest in our product and services to ensure our customers living there enjoy the best of British hospitality in the air and on the ground."

The commitment forms part of the airline's multi-million-pound investment plans that focuses on excellence in the premium cabins and more choice and quality for all, announced earlier in the year by British Airways' CEO Alex Cruz. Set to roll out over the next five years, the UK carrier will take delivery of 72 new aircraft and introduce new interiors on 128 aircraft within its existing fleet.



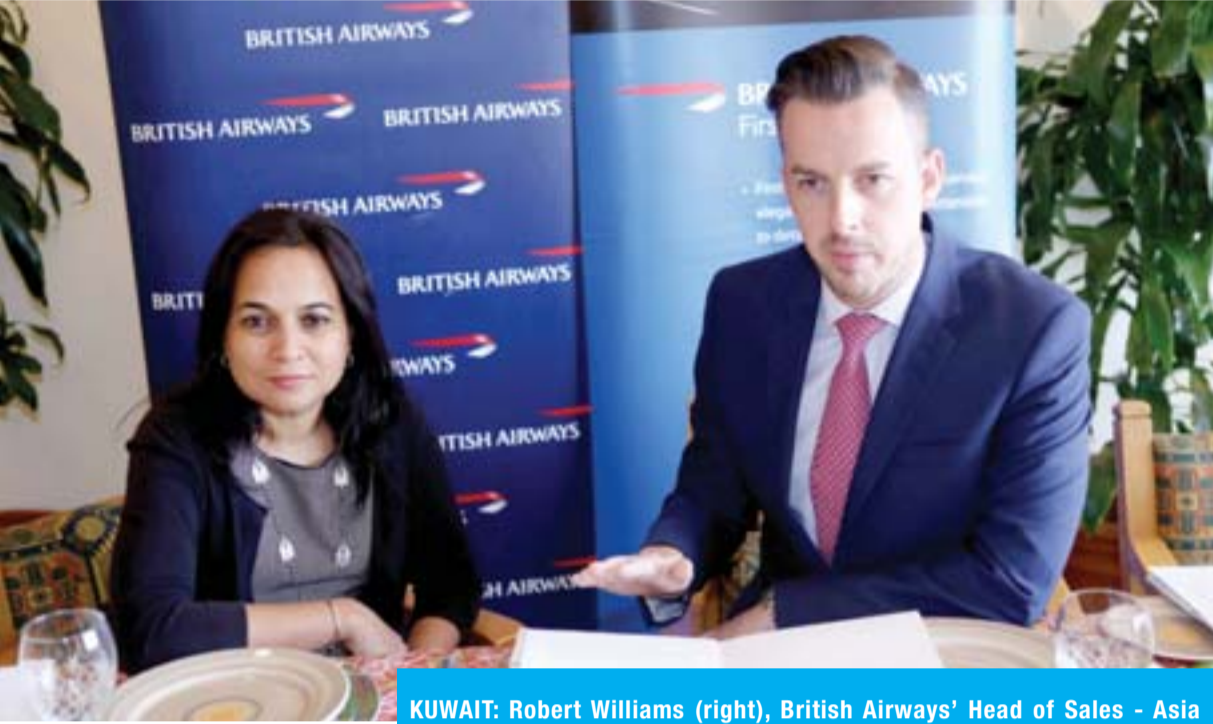
Airline launches new products for 2018

Reiterating Alex Cruz's comments shared at the recent World Travel Market in London, Robert Williams highlighted that British Airways would continue to offer more low fares, ensuring that the airline remains competitive for customers in the global market. He added that there are plans to expand its route network to destinations customers wanted.

British Airways' luxurious sleep proposition includes the airline's partnership with The White Company to offer exclusively designed bedding within its premium cabin. Club World guests will be offered a large luxuriously soft pillow and white cotton pillowcase, a super-soft woven blanket with satin trim, a specially developed luxury duvet, as well as a padded mattress cover giving an extra layer of comfort.

Additionally, The White Company has also designed new Club World amenity kits that will come in elegantly designed bags which contain products from the retailer's 'Restore & Relax Spa Collection', as well as a super-soft jersey eye-mask, offering a further touch of luxury in the sky. Enhancing the customer dining experience, British Airways will roll out a new culinary boutique service, with display trolleys allowing customers to select dishes from a choice of freshly prepared starters and desserts served on beautiful new table settings.

"While significant investment is being made in our premium cabins, we are dedicated to ensuring that British Airways is for everyone. We recognize the need to create product options that cater to different travel



KUWAIT: Robert Williams (right), British Airways' Head of Sales - Asia Pacific and the Middle East, speaks during his visit to Kuwait.

budgets to stay ahead of the new competitive forces within the aviation industry."

Economy catering will see investments to provide customers with an upgraded service on long-haul, fast Wi-Fi will be introduced across all cabins on both its short-haul and long-haul routes, and self-service check-in and biometric boarding gates will continue to be introduced at London Heathrow. Furthermore, British Airways' is also developing options for a new

Club World seat that offers direct aisle access by 2019.

"Back in 1932 our motto was 'To Fly. To Serve' and this is ethos is a living reality at British Airways," added Williams. "With a network of more than 200 destinations, we offer some of the best onward connections via London Heathrow to Europe and North America for our customers in Kuwait. We will be adding new routes to our network in 2018, widening the global access for residents in Kuwait and wider Middle East."

US core capital goods fall; business spending strong

WASHINGTON: New orders for key US-made capital goods unexpectedly fell in October after three straight months of hefty gains, but a sustained increase in shipments pointed to robust business investment and economic momentum as the year winds down.

The economy's prospects were bolstered by other data yesterday showing a decline in the number of Americans filing claims for unemployment benefits. Strong business investment and tightening labor market conditions will likely keep the Federal Reserve on track to raise interest rates next month.

The Commerce Department said orders for non-defense capital goods excluding aircraft, a closely watched proxy for business spending plans, declined 0.5 percent last month. That was the biggest drop since September 2016 and followed an upwardly revised 2.1 percent increase in September. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast orders of these so-called core capital goods increasing 0.5 percent last month after a previously reported 1.7 percent jump in September. Core capital goods orders rose 4.4 percent on a year-on-year basis.

Shipments of core capital goods advanced 0.4 percent last month after accelerating by 1.2 percent in September. Core capital goods shipments are used to calculate equipment spending in the government's gross domestic product measurement.

Core capital goods shipments have been



MIAMI LAKES: In this July 19, 2016 file photo, a job applicant attends a job fair in Miami Lakes, Florida. — AP

increasing since February, in part fueled by expectations that President Donald Trump and his fellow Republicans in Congress will push through hefty corporate tax cuts. Republicans in the House of Representatives last week approved a broad package of tax cuts, including an immediate reduction in the corporate income tax rate to 20 percent from 35 percent. Their colleagues in the Senate are advancing their own tax bill, which would also lower corporate taxes by the same rate but delay the reduction by one year.

Prices of US Treasuries rose slightly after the data while the dollar fell against a basket of currencies. US stock index futures were trading higher.

Tightening labor market Business spending on equipment has

buoyed economic growth for the past four quarters and is expected to make a solid contribution to GDP in the October-December period. The economy grew at a 3.0 percent annualized rate in the third quarter. Strong business spending on equipment is helping to boost manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy. Last month, there were increases in orders for machinery, electrical equipment, appliances and components, primary metals and computers and electronic products.

Overall orders for durable goods, items ranging from toasters to aircraft meant to last three years or more, fell 1.2 percent last month as demand for transportation equipment tumbled 4.3 percent. Durable goods orders increased 2.2 percent in September. — Reuters

Whether new dawn or another false one, eurozone economy is full of surprises

LONDON: The surprise economic star of 2017, when it wraps up next month, will have been the euro zone: growth looks set to come in at 2.2 percent compared with a forecast this time last year of just 1.4 percent. Combine this with four years of falling unemployment and inflation well out of the deflation-worry zone, and policymakers and politicians have something to crow about.

But is something substantial going on, or this another false dawn for an economy that has managed less than 1.6 percent average annual growth in its 18-year history? A skeptic might say it is all just cyclical, soon to reverse. Or that it is simply the result of 2.2 trillion euros in already-being-rolled-back European Central Bank stimulus forcing a

famously sclerotic economy to budge. Both have certainly played a role-but although there are risks that does not mean the growth impetus is not different from previous upswings or that it will end quickly. The cyclical argument, for example, stems from the euro zone's proclivity to lag the US economy, tending to start a take-off just as the latter is stalling. Indeed, the current eurozone cycle is four years behind the US one.

With some signs the long US economic recovery might be peaking-recent surveys have been flat to lower, and bonds are giving warning signals-the skeptic could claim that in typical fashion the euro zone has started just as the Top Gun has finished. But there are differences from, say, 2006 when after four years of lagging growth the euro zone surpassed the United States only to tumble as the financial crisis hurt both countries.

One, says Paola Subacchi, a senior fellow at Chatham House, is Europe's acceptance that growth sometimes needs help. "There is now an understanding-even in (fiscally hardline) Germany-that demand needs to be supported," she said. "Unlike 10 years ago, or even five years ago, there is an understanding that you can't just sit and wait for growth." It is not that austerity measures introduced after the financial collapse have been dumped wholesale, rather that some governments are more willing

to add spending to the mix- especially after many voters deserted mainstream parties. Germany, for example, has increased public spending on roads and bridges, faster internet and social housing-turning state spending into one of the most important growth drivers in the euro zone's economic powerhouse over the past two years.

Momentum

Some structural reforms have been undertaken after years of being called for in vain by central bankers, the International Monetary Fund and others. More flexible labor laws-notably in Spain and Ireland- have helped prompt growth, notes Florian Hense, European economist at Berenberg bank.

"What keeps things going are employment gains," he said. The argument here for a continuation of growth is that there is plenty of spare capacity in the work force.

Although well off its mid-2013 high of 12.1 percent, the euro zone's unemployment rate is still 8.9 percent-enough, Hense reckons, for two more years before there is any labor shortage. Attempts are also being made to keep such reform coming. In France, President Emmanuel Macron has already signed decrees to cap payouts on unfair dismissals, while also giving companies greater freedom to hire and fire. — Reuters

Sterling seismograph eerily calm on EU summit

LONDON: For a currency that has seen some of its biggest ever one-day moves on the back of Brexit, there is a peculiar calm in sterling hedging prices surrounding December's critical European Union summit. For many, the Dec 13-14 get-together marks a critical juncture in the process of Britain leaving the bloc, with some market analysts seeing it as a potential make-or-break moment for the pound.

At stake is whether Prime Minister Theresa May can satisfy other EU leaders that Britain has made enough commitments on issues like a final settlement bill and the Irish border to quickly start trade negotiations next year as the clock ticks down. Otherwise, the risk of economically-damaging 'no deal' Brexit rises dramatically. Yet, even with so much at stake, options markets that reflect expected volatility around next month's event and data on speculative sterling positioning appear largely neutral.

In fact, one-month implied volatility in sterling against the US dollar is currently less than its 8.6 percent average of the past 20 years. Traders still think the pound will be more volatile than other major currencies such as the euro and Swiss franc, though, and say the indication of calm is more reflective of the subdued price action of the most recent period, rather than of what could be in store.

"Sterling volatility has tended to

remain higher even as FX volatility has declined, which suggests markets have a greater capacity to discount negative headlines," said Timothy Graf, head of macro strategy at State Street Global Markets.

Implied volatility for sterling for one month against the dollar is higher than three-month rates and stands at a chunky 8 percent. Sterling volatility against currencies such as the Japanese yen and the Australian dollar is even higher. In comparison, three-month implied volatility for the euro against the dollar stands at a relatively tame 6 percent while overall stock market volatility is within touching distance of a record low of 9 percent hit this month. One factor making traders wary of translating signals from derivatives into trades in the cash market is that the former have thrown up some conflicting signals in recent weeks.

For example, three-month 'risk reversals' on sterling, which shows the relative pricing of puts and calls on the pound, consistently indicated a bias to further sterling weakness throughout the year even as the pound gained ground against the dollar. It is up 10 percent to date in 2017.

"As a result, betting on sterling via the options markets has been a bit of a money losing trade this year," said a trader at a global macro hedge fund in London. Still, that hasn't stopped directional bets and the cost of buying sterling puts - options to sell - remain more expensive than calls - options to buy - and show some traders at least are assuming the outcome of the EU summit will be sterling negative.

Underlying structural factors for sterling have also worsened markedly in recent months, such as a widening current account deficit, prompting some money managers to call for the British pound to be traded like an emerging market currency at a Reuters Investment Summit last week. — Reuters



LONDON: Demonstrators dressed as the Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond, and Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May pose for a photograph as they protest on Whitehall outside the entrance to Downing Street — AFP

Stocks ride tech boom to scale new highs

LONDON: World shares scaled yet another record high yesterday, propelled by a bullish growth and company earnings outlook, as well as investors' unflagging enthusiasm for technology stocks. A jump in US crude prices prodded US stock futures higher yesterday, with traders' eyes on a slide in Hewlett Packard shares after its chief executive said she would leave, as well as minutes from the Federal Reserve's latest policy meeting.

Trading volumes were thin ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday today and an early close tomorrow, but investors will scrutinize the minutes for Fed's thinking on inflation for more clarity on what it might do under a new chair next year. And with oil prices at a 2-1/2-year top adding to tech-driven bullishness, world stocks have taken just nine days to surpass their previous record peak.

Emerging markets too were on a roll, with the main equity benchmark touching new six-year highs and little sign of spillover from Turkey where the lira plumbled a new record low.

Trading generally is starting to thin ahead of the US

Thanksgiving holiday, while investors will also parse minutes from the last Federal Reserve meeting, though markets are pricing an extremely gradual policy tightening path. Ipek Ozkardeskaya, senior analyst at asset manager London Capital Group, noted markets had also shrugged off doubts that the US President Donald Trump would be able to pull off promised tax reform.

"There is some optimism in world equity markets," Ozkardeskaya said. "(But) we can't say the rally will fade soon because if you look at volatility measures there are signs of no anxiety in the market," she added, referring to the VIX index - known as Wall Street's "fear gauge" which fell to around two-week lows. A key feature of the rally has been all things tech, with the S&P technology index closing 1.2 percent higher on Tuesday, helping all three Wall Street indexes to record highs.

That has fed through to Hong Kong's Hang Seng index which added around 1 percent to vault past the 30,000-point level for the first time in 10 years. The mood was slightly less buoyant on European shares where the pan-European STOXX 600 index rose 0.3

percent to approach two-week highs and Britain's FTSE benchmark was 0.5 percent firmer as finance minister Philip Hammond presented a crucial budget to the country facing faltering economic growth.

Investors have so far shrugged off US rate rises, President Donald Trump's inability so far to pass promised tax reforms, Britain's looming European Union exit and Germany's post-election political impasse. Instead they have cited the strengthening global economy, booming trade and company earnings which are growing around 10-15 percent.

Goldman Sachs for instance raised its earnings estimate for S&P 500 companies in 2018 and 2019, citing the expected US tax reform, above-trend global and US economic growth and slowly rising interest rates from a low base. Morgan Stanley analysts also cited the cushion provided by ample global liquidity conditions.

"It is this liquidity (which is) creating risk absorbing capacity, making markets deal with idiosyncratic risks without allowing significant spill-over effects," they told clients, predicting another leg higher in equities.

Dow e-minis rose 0.2 percent, while S&P 500 and Nasdaq futures were up 0.1 percent.

Shaping up

So far the impending December rate hike by the US Federal Reserve and expectations of more tightening in 2018 have not soured the mood and nor have markets interpreted the recent flattening of the US bond curve as a warning signal. The dollar pulled back 0.1 percent against a basket of currencies, having taken a hit this week from sagging long-dated yields that have driven the Treasury curve - the gap between two- and 10-year yields - to the flattest in a decade. The curve steepened slightly to around 60 basis points, trading just off the 57.4 bps low. The yield curve in Germany, the eurozone's benchmark government bond issuer, flattened to its lowest in more than two months, catching up with the US curve. Thirty-year German bond yields are down around 5 bps this week, according to Reuters data, as pension funds hunt for higher yields. In contrast, 2, 5 and 10-year bond yields have all risen marginally. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Global

Wednesday 22 November 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing
Price index	▼ -2.78	6,229.21	6,231.97
Weighted Index	▲ 0.12	394.89	394.77
KSX 15	▼ -1.34	903.47	904.81

Volume	45,874,626
Value (KWD)	10,291,457
Number of Trades	2,489

Trades							
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KDI)	Trades	Last	Change
IFG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	406	— 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	799	— 0.0
ENERGYH	29.9	25.5	15,400	394	7	27.9	▼ -0.5
GPI	28.9	28.4	100,000	2,875	4	28.4	▼ -0.5
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	51	— 0.0
Oil & Gas			118,400	3,270	11	942.38	▼ -6.80
KFOUC	295	255	111	31	3	295	— 0.0
BPCC	640	633	1,319,492	842,598	33	633	▼ -0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	890	— 0.0
ALQURAIN	325	323	161,764	52,456	18	324	▼ -1.0
Basic Materials			1,481,387	895,886	54	1256.97	▼ -4.20
KCEM	450	450	514	232	2	456	▲ 6.0
CABLE	418	410	81,923	25,477	19	411	▼ -3.0
SHF	205	205	75,000	15,375	2	205	▼ -4.0
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	910	— 0.0
PAPER	265	240	7,546	1,860	5	265	▼ -36.0
MRC	79	65	3,888	258	7	78	▼ -1.0
ACHCO	230	228	115,184	26,304	9	230	— 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	170	— 0.0
NICBM	190	190	48,454	9,205	3	190	▲ 5.0
EQUIPMENT	36.0	31.0	6,600	218	8	33.8	▲ 1.5
NOCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	— 0.0
GYPISUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0
SALBOOKH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	— 0.0
AOLTY	755	738	1,413,041	1,047,961	83	741	▼ -5.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	308	— 0.0
CLEANING	53	53	160,500	8,426	7	53	▲ 0.5
KGL	65	62	812,389	51,302	25	64	▲ 5.8
KCPK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	145	— 0.0
HUMANISOFT	3,800	3,510	36,894	139,427	7	3,000	— 0.0
NAFAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	649	— 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0
SHOOTING	19.8	18.0	245,002	4,608	14	19.7	▼ -0.3
CGC	474	462	950	441	2	474	▲ 4.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	585	— 0.0
ALAFQ	360	355	203,509	72,507	12	360	▲ 2.0
MUBARRAQ	73	71	15,000	1,081	3	73	▲ 3.2
LOGISTICS	55	53	2,501,942	135,487	89	53	▲ 1.1
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	81	— 0.0
GCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	81	— 0.0
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	— 0.0
FCM	74	69	50,200	3,500	7	74	▲ 3.0
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0.0
SPEC	71	67	184,701	12,681	24	71	▲ 0.9
Industrials			6,943,037	1,596,421	328	917.23	▼ -0.80
PAPCO	70	70	15,700	1,099	2	70	▼ -5.0
CATTL	235	235	1,877	253	2	235	▼ -1.0
DANAH	68	65	174,736	11,418	12	65	▼ -3.1
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,699	— 0.0
Consumer Goods			191,513	12,770	16	917.72	▼ -8.80
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	— 0
VIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	— 0
Health Care			9	8	5	1510.51	— 0.00
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,300	— 0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	— 0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	— 0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	27.5	— 0
QIAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	299	— 0
QULAFUEL	112	112	107,014	11,988	13	112	— 0
MUNTAAHAT	72	72	78,100	5,623	2	72	▼ -5
JAZEERA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	649	— 0
SOOR	111	110	12,814	1,411	13	110	▼ -1
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	— 0
ALRAI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	109	— 0
Jiyad	51	59	2,834,650	169,634	149	61	▲ 1
Meezan	770	770	125,010	96,258	22	770	— 0
Consumer Services			3,157,588	284,901	199	911.33	▼ -8.90
ZAIN	444	436	1,427,100	618,970	177	441	▲ 1
QORREDOO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,108	— 0
AAN	30.0	29.5	70,000	2,065	3	29.5	▲ 1
VIVA	717	671	136,140	94,675	41	705	▲ 25
Telecommunications			1,513,240	715,710	221	533.41	▲ 19.30
NEK	723	718	2,987,239	2,149,318	135	719	▼ -1
GBK	239	238	446,232	106,213	20	238	▲ 1
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0
ABK	305	295	14,595	4,406	5	305	▲ 1
ALMUTAHED	345	338	145,610	49,789	18	338	▼ -7
KIB	222	219	532,290	117,426	39	222	▲ 2
BURG	307	301	417,584	126,299	35	305	— 0
KFIN	544	538	2,284,859	1,233,450	160	539	▼ -1
BOUBYAN	410	406	247,322	101,006	57	410	▲ 2
AUB	197	195	2,073,911	405,967	79	196	— 0
ITHMR	28.5	28.1	1,338,100	37,736	65	28.2	▼ 0
WABASBANK	215	212	260,113	55,556	61	214	— 0
Banks			19,747,856	4,387,166	872	880.38	▲ 0.30
KINS	253	252	7,645	1,932	2	252	▼ -27
GINS	700	700	1,005	704	2	700	▲ 50.8
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0
WINS	62	56	86,922	3,784	13	56	▼ -1.9
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	187	— 0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	— 0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.9	— 0
BKOWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0
Insurance			75,572	6,419	17	1006.68	▼ -2.30

Trades							
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KDI)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKDUR	49.0	48.1	309800	14,929	11	48.1	▼ -1.7
KRE	56	54	304,557	16,683	18	54	▲ 0.7
URC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	74	— 0.0
NRE	118	115	364,303	42,620	12	118	▲ 2.9
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	345	— 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0.0
AREEC	159	159	10,000	1,590	1	159	▼ -6.0
MASSALEH	37.0	37.0	2,500	93	1	37.0	▼ -0.9
ARABREC	30.2	29.8	480,800	14,416	39	29.8	▼ -0.2
ERESCO	33.7	33.2	135,200	4,516	12	33.6	— 0.0
MABANEE	730	720	847,767	611,331	50	723	▼ -6.0
BLAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	— 0.0
INVESTORS	16.9	16.5	1,563,862	26,247	58	16.9	▲ 0.5
IRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	28.8	— 0.0
ALTUARGA	93	88	212,620	18,971	12	88	▼ -3.7
SANAM	31.0	31.0	1,501	47	1	31.0	▲ 1.3
AAYANRE	77	76	21,500	1,639	5	76	▼ -2.4
AGAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0
ALAQARIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	30.0	— 0.0
MAZAYA	108	105	698,088	74,062	56	107	— 0.0
TUARA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	58	— 0.0
TAMEER	28.0	27.0	81,200	2,272	8	27.0	▼ -0.5
ARKAN	81	80	228,000	18,301	8	80	▼ -1.8
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	— 0.0
ABYAR	21.0	20.7	515,836	10,761	22	20.9	— 0.0
MUNSHAAT	74	72	616,560	44,918	24	73	▼ -1.1
FIRSTDUBAI	40.9	38.2	70,219	2,736	16	40.9	▲ 2.9
KBT	45.7	45.2	72,000	3,271	9	45.3	▼ -0.1
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0.0
MENA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	29.3	— 0.0
ALMUDON	33.0	33.0	20,801	666	1	33.0	— 0.0
MARAKEZ	34.0	34.0	100	3	1	34.0	— 0.0
REMAI	58	50	41,050	2,136	7	55	▲ 7.8
Masher	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	— 0.0
Real Estate			6,599,564	912,262	372	878.69	▼ -2.00
KINV	112	109	1,129,571	124,735	57	110	▼ -1.8
FACIL	161	160	282,802	45,498	5	160	▲ 1.0
IFA	29.9	28.5	151,484	4,718	23	29.8	▲ 0.8
NINV	101	99	2,353,050	235,309	31	100	▼ -0.5
KPROJ	292	285	539,253	155,052	64	286	▼ -7.0
COAST	32.4	31.8	891,400	28,416	57	32.3	▲ 0.6
BECH	49.5	48.8	1,400	69	2	48.5	▲ 1.7
ARZAN	30.9	29.6	125,200	3,738	8	30.9	▼ -1.1
MARKAZ	104	104	4,000	416	1	104	▼ -6.0
KMEFIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	24.0	— 0.0
ALAMAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	47.5	— 0.0
ALOLA	41.7	41.1	437,600	18,086	12	41.2	▲ 0.2
ALMAL	29.4	29.0	28,800	833	8	29.4	▲ 0.4
GRH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	— 0.0
AAYAN	37.7	37.0	3,406,291	126,523	82	37.0	▼ -0.7
BAYANNIV	38.9	37.0	198,873	7,547	11	38.9	▲ 0.9
OSOKL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0
KFIC	45.4	45.0	26,250	1,182	7	45.4	▲ 0.4
KAMCO	68	68	4,350	296	1	68	▼ -1.8
NBH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	— 0.0
UNICAP	37.0	36.9	11,110	411	3	37.0	▼ -0.1
MADAR	26.0	25.5	150,000	3,655	5	25.5	▲ 0.8
ALDEERA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	29.4	— 0.0
ALSALAM	39.8	37.7	25,210	954	7	39.0	▼ -0.6
EKTTITAB	32.5	32.0	230,000	7,375	6	32.0	▲ 0.1
ALMADINA	39.1	36.6	96,289	3,705	10	36.6	▼ -0.4
NOOR	59	59	300	18	1	59	▲ 1.0
TAMINV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	— 0.0
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	— 0.0
KSHC	30.1	29.5	231,200	6,937	11	30.0	▼ -0.2
ASIYA	39.5	39.0	150,000	5,854	13	39.3	▲ 0.4
GNAMC	36.8	36.8	265,000	9,752	11	36.8	— 0.0
AMWAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	37.5	— 0.0
ALMTIAZ	160	159	2,427,045	386,137	41	159	— 0.0
MANAZEL	29.3	29.0	335,200	9,721	24	29.0	▼ -0.7
NIND	141	140	580,947	81,338	21	140	▲ 1.9
BINC	35.0	35.0	10	0	1		

Business

Islamic banks brace to re-engineer itself to address customer needs in digital era

24th World Islamic Banking Conference to take place in Bahrain

KUWAIT: Middle East Global Advisors, a leading financial intelligence platform facilitating the development of knowledge-based economies in the MENASEA markets, will convene the 24th edition of their flagship offering - The World Islamic Banking Conference (WIBC), the largest and most prestigious gathering of Islamic banking and finance leaders in the world, on December 4th, 5th & 6th in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Based on a strategic partnership with the Central Bank of Bahrain, the three-day-long forum will take place at the ART Rotana Hotel in Amwaj Islands.

The theme for WIBC 2017 - "Drivers of Economic Growth & Risks: Policymakers & Regulators", is in line with the conference's steady vision to serve as a compass for the global Islamic finance and banking industry, and is expected to draw participation from over 1,300 global industry leaders, policy makers, innovators and stakeholders, all focused on generating breakthrough insights that help navigate through the complexities of the global financial system.

Touted as a catalyst for unprecedented change, digitization has resulted in constant disruption to existing business models, processes and services for Islamic Banks. The advent of the digital revolution has brought with it a gamut of new improved user experiences resulting in a paradigm shift in customer behavior, that's made customer engagement all the more hard. With the rapid change in technology in the banking sector, and other non-bank players entering the market, the intermediary link between institutions and customers has become less direct. Enhancing customer value and establishing a direct control of customer relationships has emerged as a key differentiator in a stiff competitive environment. Interestingly, according to the World Islamic Banking Competitiveness Report 2016 by EY, Islamic banks still have a lower customer penetration in mobile banking compared to conventional banks and the digitization efforts need to catch up.

While in the past, Islamic Banks were behind their conventional banking counterparts in terms of innovation and technology, however, now many in the Gulf and the Middle East, especially those that have performed well over the past few years, have realized the power of re-engineering their business models and adopting a more

agile approach to digital banking.

Speaking on behalf of WIBC's Islamic Banking Technology Partner, Mohammed Kateeb, Group Chairman & CEO, Path Solutions, said, "The Islamic finance industry is going through drastic changes as a consequence of evolving customer behavior, channel proliferation and the digitization of operations in general. However, it's important to recognize the common challenges and opportunities facing the industry at large. The Islamic finance industry has a lot of catching up to do in terms of placing an emphasis on customer and market evolutions and process change requirements. In this relation, I look forward to contributing to the critical discussion on digital banking at the 24th World Islamic Banking Conference next month."

Speaking ahead of taking part in the digital banking focused panel, Ahmed Albalooshi, Group CIO, Al Baraka Banking Group, said, "It is a privilege to participate in the 24th World Islamic Banking Conference as part of the CIO panel on Digital Banking. In this age of technological disruption, CIOs are poised to tackle external and internal challenges effectively whilst enabling business growth and increasing the overall profitability. As a leading Islamic bank operating in 15 countries, I look forward to sharing our experience in digital banking with the participants and benefitting from their own."

Speaking on behalf of WIBC's Associate Partner, Andrew Sims, Chief Executive Officer, NEC Payments, said, "NEC Payments are proud to be supporting the 24th World Islamic Banking Conference. We are living in an era when change happens faster, and when our customers' opinions are influenced more quickly and by a broader range of media and information channels than at any time in the past. I am delighted to be able to participate in the Digital Banking panel, and to discuss with my peers how financial institutions may harness the benefits of transformative technologies to deliver next-generation products and services that delight and engage customers, while increasing efficiency and profitability."

In light of the technological disruption of Islamic Banks, the 24th WIBC will pioneer a panel session focused on harnessing digital technologies to stay relevant and address the evolving customer preferences. The session will feature

Digital technologies key to retaining competitive edge



Gulf Bank announces 3 winners of its 11th monthly red account draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank is pleased to announce the three lucky winners of its eleventh monthly red account draw for year 2017, which was held at the bank's head office on 20 November 2017, under the supervision of Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The red account draw resulted in the announcement of three students who won prizes ranging from an iPhone 7 plus to an Apple Watch and they are:

- * Mahjouba Muolaye Ely - iPhone 7 Plus
- * Danah Abdulkarem alshikh abraham - iPad Pro
- * Meshal Ibrahim Zayed Al-Harbi - Apple Watch

Gulf Bank's red is a dedicated account for high school, college and university students aged between 15 and 25, which does not require a minimum deposit. Eligible customers will get the chance to enter the draw automatically and on monthly basis, upon transferring their student allowances.

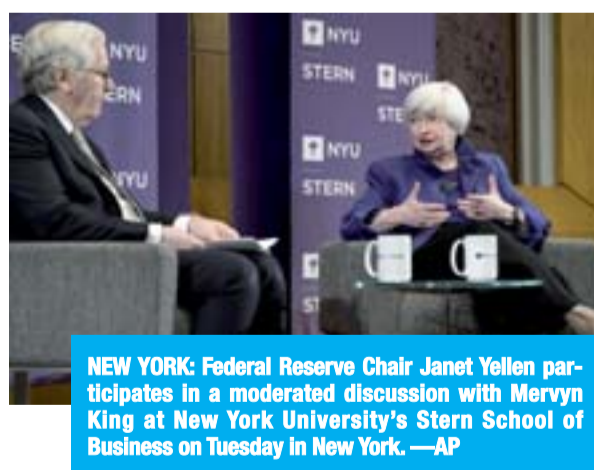
Each month, an iPhone 7 plus, an iPad Pro, and an Apple Watch will be gifted to three lucky winners, final campaign draw will be held on 11 January 2018. In addition to the Apple prizes, students will have the opportunity to win a Fiat 500c-Model 2017 at the annual car



Gulf Bank team with the representative from Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

draw, upon transferring their allowance. Also, movie tickets at all Cinescape theatres will be available for only KD2 seven days a week. red customers can also shop from the USA or the UK with a dedicated company (edfa3ly), which provide a mail box for internet shopping services from their website <https://kw.edfa3ly.co/GulfBank>

red customers can now also transfer money from anyone, from any local bank into their Gulf Bank account through the all new e-pay service, which also allows customers to pay their mobile bills for Zain, Ooredoo, and Viva and buy iTunes and Google Play cards, instantly using the new 'e-Pay' service available on Gulf Bank's Online Banking and Mobile Banking App.



NEW YORK: Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen participates in a moderated discussion with Mervyn King at New York University's Stern School of Business on Tuesday in New York. —AP

Frank Wall Street reforms, noting that these had raised banks' capital strength and liquidity and improved their risk management through stress-testing.

"And we've required them to engage in resolution planning so that a firm that encounters trouble, rather than being bailed out again, actually could be resolved," Yellen said. "It's important that those things stay in place so we have a sound and resilient financial system." President Donald Trump this month broke with tradition by denying Yellen a second term as central bank chief, appointing Fed Governor Jerome Powell to replace her.

Observers said Yellen hurt her chances at reappointment with a vocal defense over the summer of Wall Street reform legislation put in place after the financial crisis-something Trump has vowed to roll back. Yellen announced Monday she would leave the Federal Reserve Board altogether in February after her four-year term as chair expires. Her term as a board member was due to run until 2024. —AFP



WIBC panel session on digital banking.

key insights from Mohammed Kateeb, Group Chairman & CEO, Path Solutions; Ahmed Albalooshi, Group CIO, Al Baraka Banking Group; Esam Alkheshtam, CEO, International Turnkey Systems (ITS); Fadi Hani, VP MEA & Turkey, Avaya & Andrew Sims, Chief Executive Officer, NEC Payments, as they probe attendees to rethink their approach towards digital banking and dole out pointers on addressing the evolving customer preferences by means of rewiring existing business models.

Key features for WIBC 2017 include: Governors' Addresses: High-profile Regulatory Debate among Central Bankers; a conversation with a distinguished Islamic finance veteran - Adnan Ahmed Yousif, Chief Executive and President, Al Baraka Banking Group on the future course of the Islamic economy; an exclusive WIBC Knowledge-Sharing Series touching upon a number of topical issues like Leveraging Islamic Capital Markets for innovative solutions that will focus on Aviation Financing, Alternative/Renewable Energy Financing; Panel discussions focusing on dynamic capital markets, sustainable, equitable & inclusive growth, new horizons for Islamic finance, ESG Investing and the influence of energy prices,

VAT, the effect of the recent global economic & political developments and much more.

Industry leaders will also be recognized for their excellence through the WIBC Performance Awards 2017, the winners of which will be honored at the Gala Dinner on December 05. Confirmed partners at WIBC 2017 so far include: Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Khaleeji Commercial Bank (KHCB), Bahrain Islamic Bank (BISB), Al Salam Bank -Bahrain, Ibdar Bank, Bank ABC Islamic, Bank of Khartoum (BOK) International, Boubayan Bank, Avaya, Wahed Invest, Alvarez & Marsal, Al Baraka Banking Group, Ithmaar Bank, Thomson Reuters, Path Solutions, Labuan IBFC, Shariyah Review Bureau, Luxembourg for Finance (LFF), Oracle Financial Services, Baker McKenzie, DARKTRACE, The Benefit Company B.S.C, Infosys Finacle, Sadad, NEC Payments, Eiger Trading Advisors Ltd, G4S, Department for International Trade - British Embassy Bahrain, CBX Unit LLC, Deloitte, DDCAP, Fitch Ratings, Crestbridge Bahrain, The Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), Bahrain Institute of Banking & Finance (BIBF) & International Islamic Financial Market (IIFM).

Burgan Bank launches revamped cards website

KUWAIT: As a dynamic and innovative institute, Burgan Bank recently revamped its cards website with a new look and feel to accommodate customers with enhanced digital banking solutions. This new advanced site will benefit the customers through the provision of easier transactions and ensure high levels of protection locally and internationally while ordering and loading their cards online.

With the new user-friendly interface, Burgan Bank delivers a secure and convenient experience for both Burgan Bank and other Bank customers while navigating through the website and using different services such as ordering a new card, reloading and checking individual balance. The site additionally includes a new service for all Burgan Bank



customers namely "Credit Card Payment" which will enable customers to pay their Burgan Bank credit card dues using any of the local Bank debit cards via the Knet payment gateway.

Offering renewed peace of mind, the website upgrades are testament of Burgan Banks commitment to safeguarding consumers growing needs and demonstrating leadership through a customer centric strategy. As Burgan Bank continues to progress and integrate state-of-the-art solutions, it is worth noting that Burgan Bank had been recognized as The 'Best Digital Banking Initiative of the year' by the renowned Asian Banking & Finance Magazine in 2016.

Gemstone jewelry festival at Malabar Gold & Diamonds

KUWAIT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the BIG 5 jewelry retailers globally unveils the new Gemstone Jewelry Festival in GCC showrooms to celebrate this festive season. This festival gives customer a chance to sense the rare precious gems, diamonds and uncut diamonds in a whole new collection of jewelry making their shopping experience memorable. These stunning creations crafted in gold perfectly capture the essence of every occasion and elevate its splendor.

This new collection is created in pure gold and studded with Blue Sapphires, Emeralds & Rubies, beautifully complemented with the magnificence of diamonds and uncut diamonds. This festival also offers its customers to get free 1 gram gold coin on every purchase of Mine- diamond jewellery, Era- Uncut Diamond jewelry and Precia- gem jewelry worth KD 250 and above. These offers are valid until 25th December, 2017.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds offers exquisite and



beautiful jewelry as a part of various brands presented at Malabar Gold & Diamonds' namely Ethnix- Handcrafted Designer Jewelry, Era- Uncut Diamond Jewelry, Mine- Diamonds Unlimited, Divine- Indian Heritage Jewelry, Precia - Gem Jewelry, Solitaire One - An exclusive solitaire brand, Ago Bay - Pearl jewelry and Starlet - Kids Jewelry. This season, Malabar Gold & Diamonds' provides customers with the most attractive offers, definitely not worth a miss. Their mesmerizing collection and exclusive offers can be availed in all outlets of Malabar Gold & Diamonds' in the GCC.

by imposing road tolls, spending massively on public transport and becoming one of the world's most expensive places to own a car.

It now plans to embrace self-driving technology to further reduce reliance on cars and improve how people get around. Driverless buses will be deployed during off-peak traffic hours in three new suburban towns designed to accommodate the vehicles in a pilot project, said Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan. "The autonomous vehicles will greatly enhance the accessibility and connectivity of our public transport system, particularly for the elderly families with young children and the less mobile," he said at the launch of a test center for self-driving vehicles. —AFP

Singapore to deploy driverless buses from 2022: Minister

SINGAPORE: Driverless buses will appear on some roads in Singapore from 2022 as part of plans to improve mobility in the land-scarce city-state, its transport minister said yesterday. Singapore has so far avoided the massive traffic jams that choke other Asian cities like Manila and Jakarta

Yellen gives passing grade to US balance-sheet drawdown

WASHINGTON: Efforts to unwind the US Federal Reserve's multitrillion-dollar investment holdings are going well so far, outgoing central bank chief Janet Yellen said yesterday. Nearly a decade after the global financial crisis, the Fed last month marked the beginning of the end of its bond-buying economic stimulus program, allowing its \$4.5 trillion balance sheet of assets to taper down as the economy continues to recover.

In public remarks at New York University, Yellen said Tuesday that policymakers had begun talking a year in advance about how to ensure the public and markets understood the Fed's actions. "Knock on wood," she said, "so far, so good." Markets have taken the balance-sheet unwinding in stride, with Wall Street continuing to rally since procedures began despite widespread expectations for the central bank to increase interest rates next month for the third time this year. Rather than sell its assets, the Fed is simply allowing debts to mature and fall off its balance sheet, a "normalization" process designed in part to avoid roiling markets.

In the final three months of this year, the Fed is due to reduce its investment holdings by \$10 billion per month, increasing the monthly rate by \$10 billion every quarter until the drawdown rate hits \$50 billion per month in October. Yellen also reiterated her defense of Dodd-

Technology

Microsoft takes Kuwaiti cyber-security professionals inside the hacker’s world

Kuwaiti CISOs urged to ‘level up’ in battle against ‘cyber troublemakers’

KUWAIT: Microsoft yesterday introduced Kuwaiti cyber-security professionals to the world’s foremost industry experts, in the second edition of its CISO Executive Series, designed to support chief information security officers in their fight against malicious digital actors.

This year’s event, called “A Hacker’s Guide to Security Strategy”, was held at the JW Marriott, Kuwait City, where the country’s CISOs networked with peers, and heard in-depth analysis on the current and future threat landscape from a world-renowned cyber-security specialist. The summit comes amid continuing and frequent global media reports on high-profile attacks involving private- and public-sector organizations. Recent years have seen a marked rise in targeted and sophisticated attacks, as businesses try to figure out how to secure their digital estates.

“You can barely turn your head nowadays without being confronted by a statistic or scenario that confirms the importance of a CISO’s role,” said Cyril Voisin, Executive Security Advisor for France, Italy, the Middle East and Africa at Microsoft’s Enterprise Cybersecurity Group. “Last year, for example, it was found that spear-phishing campaigns had targeted more than 400 businesses every day, at a cost of \$3 billion to the private sector over the previous three years. Kuwaiti organizations need to understand that the global threat landscape is evolving, and adjust their security posture accordingly.”

“Microsoft’s CISO Executive series encourages

organizations to ask, ‘What are cyber-attackers likely to go after, once they have breached our corporate perimeter?’ The answer to that question is the start of a coherent, in-house security strategy. Coupled with the power of the intelligent cloud and the perspective of seasoned White Hat experts like those heard here yesterday, organizations should be in great shape to take the fight to the cyber-criminals.” He added.

A live survey of Kuwait-based PCs, conducted by Microsoft throughout 2015, showed a fourth-quarter peak of 30 percent of computers experiencing malware of some kind, compared with a worldwide average of about 21 percent. Around 4.5 percent of monitored machines faced infections that had to be cleaned, against a global average of 1.7 percent. The data suggests Kuwait, like many Gulf nations, has higher-than-average rates for both encounters and infections.

Microsoft’s innovations, such as Microsoft 365 and the Azure cloud, are built from the ground up with industry-leading, AI-driven protection incorporated into every layer. Data is encrypted at rest and in transit, and 24-hour event-remediation services are provided by a dedicated team of experts.

Also, speaking at the Kuwait CISO Executive event, Paula Januszkiewicz, CEO and Founder of CQURE Inc, and a world-renowned cyber-security expert said “As the game intensifies, it’s time to level up, and venues such as Microsoft’s Kuwait CISO Executive forum are the ideal way to do it. Cyber



troublemakers are devious and creative. Kuwaiti businesses and government agencies have to think like hackers, to anticipate their attack vectors and behaviors; only then can they secure what matters most: their precious digital assets.”

Januszkiewicz stressed the importance of upskilling security professionals to meet the changing needs of the digital era. “According to industry statistics, by 2019 we will need 6 million security profes-

sionals, but only 4 to 5 million of them will have the required qualifications,” she said. “Hence, it is also very important to address this gap, by leveling up.”

The Microsoft CISO executive forum concluded with key takeaways from all perspectives of cyber security, and proved to be a strong platform for security professionals from across Kuwait to network with peers and engage with subject matter experts.



Second CISO Executive summit in Kuwait

Skype joins list of apps on China’s blacklist

SHANGHAI: Skype has apparently joined the lengthening list of internet tools on China’s blacklist, disappearing from download stores with Apple saying yesterday it was ordered by the government to remove certain apps. Skype is no longer available for download from the Chinese Apple Store or popular Android sites, with Chinese web-users saying it had been gone for weeks. “We have been notified by the Ministry of Public Security that a number of VoIP (voice over internet protocol) apps do not comply with local law, therefore these apps have been removed from the App Store in China,” Apple said in an emailed statement.

“These apps remain available in all other markets where they do business.” The company did not specify which laws such apps were found to have violated.

China has tightened its already stringent online policing this year, including enacting new rules that require tech companies to store user data inside the country as well as imposing fresh restrictions on what is permissible content. Chinese authorities appeared to severely disrupt the WhatsApp messaging app as they ratcheted up security ahead of a Communist Party congress in October that saw President Xi Jinping consolidate his hold on the country. The moves have prompted speculation on the Chinese internet that authorities were moving against services with effective encryption, like WhatsApp and Skype, that make them less vulnerable to government monitoring. The change does not seem to have affected use of previously downloaded versions of Skype, which appeared to work normally. Also, Skype Business, a separate app tailored for corporate use, was still available for download in China.

Great Firewall

Skype’s removal follows Apple’s August decision to strike out so-called VPN apps, or virtual private networks, which allow users to skirt the so-called “Great Firewall of China” system of online censorship. Both cases underscored the dilemma faced by US tech companies seeking to uphold principles of web freedom while holding on to their Chinese market shares.

“We would rather not remove the apps, but like in other countries, we obey the laws where we do business,” Apple chief Tim Cook said after the VPN move.

China has for years blocked leading foreign websites or services including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and a number of news organizations, largely to prevent content that could challenge party rule. Slamming the door on foreign tech leaders has allowed Chinese champions like Tencent to prosper in the vacuum. The market value of the Chinese social media and video game giant surpassed that of Facebook on Tuesday as investors sent Tencent soaring into the world’s top five biggest firms.

By the end of trading Tuesday, Tencent’s Hong Kong-listed shares were worth \$523 billion, surpassing Facebook’s \$519 billion at the time. China this year also ordered the country’s internet platforms to verify the true identity of users before letting them post online content. The move could make it more difficult to post online anonymously, often one of the only avenues for honest debate in the country. Skype’s removal from app stores comes as China prepares to host its fourth World Internet Conference next month.

The annual event in eastern China is used by Beijing to promote its views about web policy, but has been criticized by rights groups. On Tuesday the ruling Communist Party’s anti-graft agency said China’s former internet czar Lu Wei, who stepped down last year after overseeing a tightening of online censorship, was under investigation for suspected “severe disciplinary violations,” which typically means corruption. —AFP

HUAWEI Mate 10: A green, safe smartphone in your hands

KUWAIT: Smartphones are our most personal devices. We carry them everywhere and rely on them to connect with others and do almost everything. Knowing that technology must be safe for all consumers, Huawei designed the HUAWEI Mate 10 and HUAWEI Mate 10 Pro with safety in mind, so you can have a seamless experience. Here are 4 things you should know about the safety of our phones, so you can rest assured that you’re using one of the safest smartphones in the market.

1. The HUAWEI Mate 10 and Mate 10 Pro are built with the TUV certified Super Charge Technology

The speed of your smartphone is nothing without safety. If battery safety is not taken seriously, the consequences can be devastating. This is why Huawei puts its smartphones under rigorous and strict testing to make sure they are safe for you. In order to improve the efficiency and safety of its smartphones without compromising on speed, Huawei designed the Super Charge technology, which uses a 15-layer safety system to charge your phone; this technology can provide a whole day’s use with a single 20-minute charge and it’s totally safe as it is certified by TUV Rheinland.

2. The design of the HUAWEI Mate 10 and HUAWEI Mate 10 Pro is done using safe, non-flammable materials

Security starts with the manufacturing process. Leveraging on its advanced craftsmanship, Huawei used the best and safest materials to bring you the HUAWEI Mate 10 and HUAWEI Mate 10 Pro. The smartphones are unbreakable as they feature a strong and robust glass casing both front and back. Huawei also used an innovative technique to heat the toughest rear glass 700°C before shaping, to deliver the ultimate style.

3. The HUAWEI Mate 10 AND HUAWEI Mate 10 are environment-friendly

Huawei designed the HUAWEI Mate 10 and the HUAWEI Mate 10 Pro with a stringent commitment to environment: the company has selected the materials very carefully and elimi-



nated hazardous substances such as brominated flame retardants, chlorinated flame retardants, PVC, phthalate, etc. As a testament to Huawei’s green manufacturing methods, the Huawei Mate 10 and Huawei Mate 10 Pro were granted the HUAWEI Alps/Blanc certification. Huawei was also granted the Forest Stewardship Council TM certified packaging for Alps/Blanc’s sales packaging. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC™) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organization committed to promoting responsible forest management worldwide. For sales boxes and manual printing, Huawei chose eco-friendly soy ink, which is safer for users due to its organic compounds.

4. The HUAWEI Mate 10 Pro is Water and Dust Resistant The HUAWEI Mate Pro is IP67 Water and Dust Resistant for everyday use.



Uber reveals cover-up of hack affecting 57m riders, drivers

SAN FRANCISCO: Uber is coming clean about its cover-up of a year-old hacking attack that stole personal information about more than 57 million of the beleaguered ride-hailing service’s customers and drivers. So far, there’s no evidence that the data taken has been misused, according to a Tuesday blog post by Uber’s recently hired CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi. Part of the reason nothing malicious has happened is because Uber acknowledges paying the hackers \$100,000 to destroy the stolen information.

The revelation marks the latest stain on Uber’s reputation. The San Francisco company ousted Travis Kalanick as CEO in June after an internal investigation concluded he had built a culture that allowed female workers to be sexually harassed and encouraged employees to push legal limits.

It’s also the latest major breach involving a prominent company that didn’t notify the people that could be potentially harmed for months or even years after the

break-in occurred.

Yahoo didn’t make its first disclosure about hacks that hit 3 billion user accounts during 2013 and 2014 until September 2016. Credit reporting service Equifax waited several months before revealing this past September that hackers had carted off the Social Security numbers of 145 million Americans.

Khosrowshahi criticized Uber’s handling of its data theft in his blog post. “While I can’t erase the past, I can commit on behalf of every Uber employee that we will learn from our mistakes,” Khosrowshahi wrote. “We are changing the way we do business, putting integrity at the core of every decision we make and working hard to earn the trust of our customers.”

That pledge shouldn’t excuse Uber’s previous regime for its egregious behavior, said Sam Curry, chief security officer for the computer security firm Cybereason. “The truly scary thing here is that Uber paid a bribe, essentially a ransom to make this breach go away, and they acted as if they were above the law,” Curry said. “Those people responsible for the integrity and confidentiality of the data in-fact covered it up.”

The heist took the names, email addresses and mobile phone numbers of 57 million riders around the world. The thieves also nabbed the driver’s license numbers of 600,000 Uber drivers in the US. Uber waited until Tuesday to begin notifying the drivers with compromised



NEW YORK: In this March 15, 2017 file photo, a sign marks a pick-up point for the Uber car service at LaGuardia Airport in New York. —AP

driver’s licenses, which can be particularly useful for perpetrating identity theft. For that reason, Uber will now pay for free credit-report monitoring and identity theft protection services for the affected drivers.

Kalanick, who still sits on Uber’s board of directors, declined to comment on the data breach that took place in October 2016. Uber says the response to the hack was handled by its chief security officer, Joe Sullivan, a former federal prosecutor whom Kalanick lured away from Facebook in 2015.

As part of his effort to set things right, Khosrowshahi extracted Sullivan’s resignation from Uber and also jettisoned Craig

Clark, a lawyer who reported to Sullivan.

Clark didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment sent through his LinkedIn profile. Efforts to reach Sullivan were unsuccessful. Uber’s silence about its breach came while it was negotiating with the Federal Trade Commission about its handling of its riders’ information.

Earlier in 2016, the company reached a settlement with the New York attorney general requiring it to take steps to be more vigilant about protecting the information that its app stores about its riders. As part of that settlement, Uber also paid a \$20,000 fine for waiting to notify five months about another data breach that it discovered in September 2014. —AP

Portuguese cattle farmers desperately wait for rain

Portugal enduring ‘extreme or severe’ drought conditions

ALPALHAO: Antonio Granadeiro, a cattle farmer who has already lost 20 cows this year, surveys with sadness the fields of his ranch in Alentejo in central Portugal, which have yellowed from the lack of rain. “I have never seen a drought like this,” he says as cows graze nearby at his farm near the village of Alpalhao, about 30 kilometers from the Spanish border. “I check the weather forecast every day hoping it will finally rain but I am despairing,” the 64-year-old adds as he chain-smokes under a blazing sun.

“Look!” Granadeiro says, pointing to the dry bed of the Figueiro River, a tributary of the Tagus which runs through his land. “I have never seen that. Not a drop of water!” As in the Alentejo region, the rest of Portugal is enduring “extreme” or “severe” drought conditions, according to the national weather service. Average temperatures in October were the highest they have been since 1931, when comparable records started being kept. With no water in the river, Granadeiro has had to bring water for his roughly 800 cows by tanker trucks. “But my main worry is feeding my animals. I bought hay to last until February. But they have almost run out,” he says.



Temperatures hit the highest since 1931

summer succumbed to diseases picked up from ticks. “The land is dry but the ticks don’t die and they continue to spread diseases,” he says. A neighboring farmer has similar complaints. “This is a completely different year! We are wearing T-shirts. Normally at this time of the year, we are much more covered up,” Joao Curvo says. “Look at these olives-Many matured at the beginning of October when normally this happens at the end of November, but it’s not the case for others.”

To save his harvest he had to collect his olives much earlier than normal, using a machine that shakes the branches to make mature olives fall onto a net spread under the trees. But since not all olives matured early, he will have to repeat the process or use a stick to shake the branches and pick the olives by hand from the ground. “This is going to take us double the time,” Curvo says. The drought conditions have continued into November, especially in the south of the country where some water reservoirs are at less than 20 percent of their storage capacity.

‘Dramatic situation’

Bishops have called on the faithful to pray for rain while the government has rolled out a media campaign urging people to conserve water. “The problem of this



ALENTEJO: Antonio Granadeiro, a 64 years old farmer, stands by a dry creek on his property in Alpalhao, Alentejo, central Portugal. Portugal, hit by a severe drought, had the hottest October since 1931, the year of the first comparable data. — AFP

drought is that it will have repercussions beyond this year,” says Fremelinda Carvalho, the president of the farmers’ association of Portalegre in central Portugal. “Last year there was already very little rain. The water reserves are disappearing,” she said, adding that it would have to rain heavily for several months for water levels to return to normal. “It’s a dramatic situation. I

don’t even dare imagine that it doesn’t rain in the coming days.” The drought has also disrupted the water supply for urban residents. Officials in Viseu, a city of about 100,000 people about 300 kilometers north of Lisbon, have hired tanker trucks to bring water from a distant dam to the one that supplies water to their city, which is running low. — AFP

Self-taught rocket scientist to launch over ghost town

CALIFORNIA: The countdown to launch creeps closer and there’s still plenty for self-taught rocket scientist Mad Mike Hughes to do: Last-second modifications to his vessel. Pick up his flight suit. Leave out enough food for his four cats - just in case anything happens. Hughes is a 61-year-old limo driver who’s spent the last few years building a steam-powered rocket out of salvage parts in his garage. His project has cost him a total of \$20,000, which includes Rust-Oleum paint to fancy it up and a motor home he bought on Craig’s List that he converted into a ramp.

His first test of the rocket will also be the launch date - Saturday , when he straps into his homemade contraption and attempts to hurtle over the ghost town of Amboy, California. He will travel about a mile at a speed of roughly 500 mph. “If you’re not scared to death, you’re an idiot,” Hughes said . “It’s scary as hell, but none of us are getting out of this world alive. I like to do extraordinary things that no one else can do, and no one in the history of mankind has designed, built and launched himself in his own rocket. “I’m a walking reality show.”

The daredevil/limo driver has been called a little bit of everything over his career - eccentric, quirky, foolhardy. Doesn’t bother him. He believes what he believes, including that the earth is flat. He knows this thought is a conundrum,

given that he’s about to launch himself into the atmosphere. Down the road, he’s intending to build a rocket that takes him to space, so he can snap a picture and see with his own eyes. “I don’t believe in science,” said Hughes, whose main sponsor for the rocket is Research Flat Earth. “I know about aerodynamics and fluid dynamics and how things move through the area, about the certain size of rocket nozzles, and thrust. But that’s not science, that’s just a formula. There’s no difference between science and science fiction.”

This will actually be the second time he’s constructed and launched a rocket. He jumped on a private property in Winkelman, Arizona, on Jan. 30, 2014 , and traveled 1,374 feet. He collapsed after that landing - the G-forces taking a toll - and needed three days to recover. That distance, though, would’ve been enough to clear the Snake River Canyon, which is a jump daredevil Evel Knievel made famous when he failed to clear it during his attempt in 1974. Stuntman Eddie Braun did successfully rocketed over the canyon - using Knievel’s original blueprints - in September 2016.

Just don’t mention Knievel around Hughes. He’s not a fan. “He was an average stunt guy,” said Hughes, a former motorcycle racer. “He stole his look from Elvis.” Hughes constructed his latest rocket at the “Rocket Ranch” in Apple Valley, California. It’s a five-acre property he leases from Waldo Stakes , the CEO of Land Speed Research Vehicles who’s currently working on a project to make a car travel 2,000 mph. Their relationship formed a few years ago when Hughes approached Stakes about building a rocket. Stakes receives plenty of these sorts of requests, but this one stood out because Hughes was building it himself. — AP

Turning poop into power: Kenyans are cooking up a cleaner climate

LONDON: Millions of Kenyans, without toilets in their homes, are forced to endure their neighbors’ unsavoury smells and habits in a shared pit in the ground or nearby fields. Worse still, they spread germs that cause diarrhoea - one of the leading killers of children under five in Kenya. “This is the 21st century and we are unable to create decent sanitation solutions - why is that?” said Andrew Foote, the 29-year-old founder of Sanivation, a socially-motivated business that is turning poop into profit.

“As a global community that’s embarrassing,” he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Only three in ten Kenyans have access to a decent toilet, according to the charity WaterAid, with the remainder dumping their faeces in drains or rivers or burying it. Some 5,000 children in Kenya die every year from diarrhoea caused by dirty water and poor sanitation, it says. Sanivation installs “blue box” plastic toilet containers in customers’ homes for free, and then charges a monthly fee of 700 Kenya shillings (\$6.78) to collect the waste, which it turns into odourless charcoal.

The idea is not new, said Foote, pointing to the fact that cow dung has been used as fuel in India for years. Sanivation removes the waste from the free-standing toilets, heats it to kill dangerous bacteria and turns it into charcoal balls, sold in supermarkets under the brand Eco Flame. This means less trees are felled to cook food for Kenya’s 44 million people, who are rapidly depleting its forests by illegal settlements, logging and charcoal production. Eight out of ten urban homes use charcoal, according to Kenya Forest Service. Sanivation provides toilets to 800 households in Naivasha, some 100 kilometers north of the capital, Nairobi. Most customers are tenants who live in one-room and now have their own toilet curtained off in a corner, rather than sharing one pit latrine with about 20 other families, said Sanivation’s business manager Tyler Karahalios. “We’re in the middle of the rainy season and a lot of these pit latrines will overflow,” she said. — Reuters

CLINIC PAGE

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فهد علي المخيزيم

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The winners of the "Celebrate #Canada150" art competition organized by Kuwait Times were feted at an awards night held at the Four Seasons Hotel on Monday. Education Minister Dr Mohammed Al-Fares was the chief guest at the event, along with other dignitaries. The art competition drew hundreds of participants from both private and public schools in Kuwait - students aged 6 and above and art teachers.



STUDENT ART COMPETITION

Special Needs Category



H.E. Dr Mohammed Abdulatif Al-Fares, Minister of Education and Higher Education, Martine Moreau, Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait, Mrs. Jeanette Jenson, Jury member and Mr. Adnan Saad, Kuwait Times Deputy General Manager are posing with the Special Need students. — Photos by joseph shagra



Salman Dawoud Salman - Nibras Ideal School



Mousa Abd Al Aziz Hussian - Nibras School



Hebh Edrees Ghloom - Dasman B. School



Tharowah Sultan Al Saad - Anfai Group



Said Al Wuhaib - Al Bayan school



Hajer Al-Dosari - Al Kharafi



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STUDENT ART COMPETITION

Winners from 9-11 years old



Layla Abd Al Aziz - Salma Bent Malek



Fida Ancy-Indian Educational School



Rana Khaled Al Shahat - Al Salmiya



Harigovind Sajith- IES



Mohamed Hitham Al-Faris - Omeer Bin Said



Anagha Panicker - FAIPS-DPS



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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY NIGHT: Clouds will decrease with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h causing rising dust over open areas with a chance for scattered rain over southern areas.

BY DAY: A significant decrease in temperature with light to moderate northerly wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART
KUWAIT CITY	27 °C	15 °C	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	28 °C	12 °C	
ABDALY	24 °C	15 °C	
BUBYAN	24 °C	16 °C	
JAHRA	26 °C	12 °C	
FAILAKA ISLAND	24 °C	18 °C	
SALMIYAH	24 °C	18 °C	
AHMADI	23 °C	19 °C	
NUWAISIB	26 °C	18 °C	
WAFRA	25 °C	16 °C	
SALMY	24 °C	13 °C	

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Thursday	11/23	A significant decrease in temperature and some scattered clouds will appear	23 °C	12 °C	N-NW	12 - 35 km/h
Friday	11/24	Mostly Sunny	22 °C	10 °C	VRB	06 - 20 km/h
Saturday	11/25	Sunny and some high clouds will appear	22 °C	10 °C	NE-NW	10 - 32 km/h
Sunday	11/26	Partly cloudy with a chance for scattered rain later on	21 °C	09 °C	NE-VRB	08 - 30 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:54
Sunrise	06:17
Zuhr	11:34
Asr	14:31
Sunset	16:51
Isha	18:11

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	28 °C
MIN. Temp.	17 °C
MAX. RH	82 %
MIN. RH	29 %
MAX. Wind	SE 36 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	.2 mm

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Arrival Flights on Thursday 23/11/2017					Departure Flights on Thursday 23/11/2017				
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05		AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05	NIA
KAC	504	Beirut	00:30		JZR	528	Asyut	00:15	WAN
JZR	267	Beirut	00:40		JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30	MEA
KAC	102	London	00:50		WAN	341	Dubai	00:30	VIZ
PCT	858	Cairo	00:55		FDB	072	Sohag	00:30	FEG
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55		PIA	240	Sialkot	00:35	JZR
RJA	642	Amman	01:05		MSC	412	Asyut	00:40	FDB
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30		JAI	571	Mumbai	01:00	MSR
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45		JZR	502	Luxor	01:05	FDK
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45		JZR	142	Doha	01:30	UAE
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50		KAC	677	Dubai	01:45	AXB
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00		KAC	417	Manila	02:00	JZR
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15		THY	773	Istanbul	02:30	Luxor
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:15		PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30	Doha
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20		DLH	442	Lahore	02:30	KNE
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30		AXB	396	Frankfurt	02:45	KAC
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30		ETH	621	Kozhikode	02:55	FDB
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55		KAC	351	Addis Ababa	03:05	KAC
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55		UAE	854	Dubai	03:05	QTR
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05		QTR	1087	Doha	03:40	SVN
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10		KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:40	KNE
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15		KKK	1269	Istanbul	03:55	KAC
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50		OMA	644	Muscat	03:55	KAC
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00		THY	765	Istanbul	04:00	PAL
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15		MSR	607	Luxor	04:05	ETD
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25		ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05	OMA
KAC	418	Manila	04:25		MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	KAC
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35		LMU	511	Cairo	04:15	ABY
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55		QTR	1077	Doha	05:00	RJD
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20		FDB	070	Dubai	05:30	KNE
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25		KAC	303	Mumbai	05:45	SAW
JZR	143	Doha	05:25		JZR	1330	Al Najaf	06:05	KAC
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40		JZR	560	Sohag	06:20	QTR
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40		THY	771	Istanbul	06:25	KAC
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50		RJA	643	Amman	06:50	JZR
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:20		GFA	212	Bahrain	07:05	JZR
KAC	362	Colombo	06:25		JZR	1334	Al Najaf	07:15	KAC
KAC	678	Dubai	06:30		KAC	167	Paris	07:30	FDB
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:30		JZR	1336	Al Najaf	07:35	KAC
WAN	342	Sohag	06:35		JZR	902	GYD	07:45	UAE
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50		KAC	501	Beirut	07:50	RJA
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50		KAC	413	Bangkok	08:00	KAC
BAW	157	London	07:10		FDB	054	Dubai	08:10	KAC
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10		KAC	791	Madinah	08:35	JZR
QTR	851.1	Doha	07:35		KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40	SVN
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35		KAC	613	Bahrain	08:55	GFA
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35		BAW	156	London	08:55	JZR
KAC	503	Luxor	07:45		KAC	117	New York	09:00	WAN
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00		QTR	851.2	Doha	09:05	KAC
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35		JZR	534	Cairo	09:10	JZR
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:00		KAC	561	Amman	09:40	UAE
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05		KAC	671	Dubai	09:45	MSR
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05		KAC	741	Dammam	09:45	QTR
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10		ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45	ABY
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40		KAC	101	London	09:45	RBG
SVN	512	Riyadh	10:00		KAC	515	Tehran	10:00	GFA
JZR	1331	Al Najaf	10:00		KAC	541	Cairo	10:00	FDB
IAW	157A	Colombo	10:00		UAE	856	Dubai	10:00	KAC
IRA	673	Ahwaz	10:10		IRA	668	Mashhad	10:00	NIA
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40		KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10	KNE
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00		ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10	KAC
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00		KAC	617	Doha	10:15	KAC
JZR	1337	Al Najaf	11:10		QTR	1071	Doha	10:20	OMA
JZR	1335	Al Najaf	11:10		KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25	DLH
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15		JZR	778	Jeddah	10:30	DHX
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20		FDB	056	Dubai	10:35	QTR
NIA	161	Cairo	11:35		RSB	7684	Baghdad	11:00	KAC
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55		SVN	513	Riyadh	11:00	KAC
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10		IAW	158A	Al Najaf	11:00	ETD
FEG	933	Sohag	12:40		JZR	1332	Al Najaf	11:00	MEA
FDB	075	Dubai	12:45		IRA	672	Ahwaz	11:10	ALK
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45		GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25	GFA
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50		JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00	KAC
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50		SYR	342	Damascus	12:00	KAC
FDK	803	Damascus	13:00		JZR	786	Riyadh	12:00	KLM
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00		MSC	404	Alexandria	12:15	UAE
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15		QTR	1075	Doha	12:30	ETD
KAC	792	Madinah	13:20		VIZ	205	IOA	12:30	QTR

What's On

Treat yourself to a luxurious stay at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa



Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa, Kuwait's idyllic resort, invites guests to benefit from this month's enticing room offer with breakfast for two persons in Garden Cafe Restaurant. Award-winning hospitality and luxurious dining await as guests can also enjoy a 50% discount on lunch and dinner at the vibrant all-day dining venue Garden Cafe.

Located within the heart of the hotel, Garden Cafe serves indulgent international buffets and local specialties while overlooking spectacular vistas of the resort's pristine gardens. Guests will savor a multi-cultural breakfast and freshly-prepared lunch and dinner buffets either indoor with an open kitchen featuring live cooking stations or in the spacious outdoor terrace under the restaurant's captivating architecture.

Discover a Stay Experience offering a home away from home, complete with the resort's Stay Different services, warm Arabian hospitality and luxurious variety of accommodations fitted to the highest standards to exceed every guest's expectations and ensure that every moment is special.



NBK's 2017 Walkathon Centre opens today

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) opens today a specialized center next to the Scientific Centre to assist the registrars in its annual walkathon and distribute assigned T-shirts with numbers to the participants. The center will be opened daily until December the 7th, 2017 from 1:00 pm to 10:00 pm. This year, NBK's Walkathon is marked by a variety of fun, entertaining and health awareness-raising activities. Titled "We're stronger... with every step", the Walkathon will take place on the 9th of December 2017. NBK will be giving



away two new Renault cars from Al Babbain Group during the Walkathon along with many other valuable prizes. Participants of the age 12 and above can participate by registering online. Applicants who are registered can visit NBK walkathon center daily until December 7th, 2017 to receive their assigned T-shirt and number.

Ten winners will be selected from each of the 10 categories of participants. The walk for both the female and male participants will

start from the Green Island on the Gulf Road to the Shuwaikh Beach Park, parallel to the Gulf Road, next to KPC building for a distance of 11 km. NBK strongly supports sporting events and encourages various sporting activities as means to promote a healthier and more active lifestyle for members of the community. Throughout the years, NBK also organizes several social awareness programs including Educational, Environmental, Health and many other active initiatives.

Marina Hotel Kuwait welcomes guests this winter to relax & enjoy!



Marina Hotel Kuwait is ready to receive this winter with a special package tailored to fit everyone's taste. All the guests are invited to spend a memorable time with their families in this beautiful weather. The package includes a one night stay in one of the hotel's spacious rooms or luxurious suits at special rates with a great complimentary breakfast buffet. The buffet will contain wide variety of quality foods for all tastes.

The offer will also avail 20% discount on lunch and dinner buffets. The hotel's best chefs went above and beyond to prepare a large array of international dishes to serve at the extraordinary Atlantis restaurant which is the perfect place to dine overlooking a magnificent sea view. Additionally, our guests will enjoy a free access to our state-of-the-art Health Club and its diverse

range of activities which includes a well-equipped fitness area, outdoor heated pool and indoor courts for basketball and squash. The club is open daily from 06:00 - 22:30 so guests may fit it into their schedule when it is convenient for them.

Apart from the comprehensive hotel facilities, our guests can break the daily routine by visiting Marina Mall, which is among the best shopping malls in Kuwait and is only walking distance from the hotel. They can also visit Marina Crescent which is an ideal location for family leisure in this lovely weather. Marina Hotel Kuwait offers the perfect venue for the winter under the twinkling lights and the cool breeze of the Arabian coast. The Package is valid for locals & residents from November 29 to January 2 excluding December 31st, 2017.

KNES celebrates Remembrance Day



Remembrance Day is a day for Kuwait National English School population to remember and honor those who have sacrificed themselves to secure and protect our freedom. Members of our Student Council were busy promoting the Poppy's Appeal campaign on campus. The Poppy is the symbol of Remembrance, Hope and Fraternity and the money collected is used to help veterans of wars. This was followed by an official Educational field trip to the Cenotaph (one of the world memorials) at the British Embassy in Kuwait to ensure that no one is forgotten as Kuwait National English School population unites to honor all who have suffered or died in war.

In order to further promote the culture of peace, heritage and cooperation within the school, Kuwait National English School also held

its annual Assembly to celebrate Remembrance day which was combined with Tolerance day. Madame Chantal Al Gharabally, School Director, lit a candle of peace and gave a somber narration of her Grandfather's participation in the front line in the battlefield of one of the wars. Students stood for one minute of silence in the Al Farabi Theatre to pay respect, remember and honor those who have paid the price for our freedom. Our students listened to a presentation on Tolerance and had a chance to read their own emotional poems followed by some songs from KNES Music Department. This is an annual celebration and serves as an excellent occasion to debate on the important issue of Tolerance. The act of remembrance rightly has a place in - and impact on - our lives, no matter which nationality, race, belief, gender we belong to.

Orientation seminar held for new Toastmasters

The Division I wing of Toastmasters International Kuwait conducted an orientation seminar for new Toastmasters in association with Division D on November 10 at Australian College of Kuwait. "A true leader is one who creates more leaders!" This is exactly what two of the most experienced and exceptional Toastmasters in the Middle East did during the four hour seminar - Distinguished Toastmasters (DTM) Dr Mohammad Makhlof, District 20 Director and Ali Shahbaz

Ali, Immediate Past District 20 Director.

The event was professionally hosted by Division I Director Fatima Abdulla and Division D Director Alfiya Lakdawala. One of the most senior Toastmasters in Kuwait Alka Kumra moderated the Q & A session, clearing doubts of the new bees regarding the structure and benefits of the Toastmasters program. The entire Toastmasters fraternity of Kuwait is eagerly waiting to host the Toastmasters Annual Conference of the three countries Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait clubbed as District 20 which will be held in Kuwait on May 11th and 12th 2018. Toastmasters is a worldwide voluntary educational organization which has helped members evolve as better leaders and communicators over the last 90 years. The Toastmasters fraternity in Kuwait is very active with both English and Arabic clubs.



Birthday wishes

Our warmest birthday greetings to our cute little Princess Laksha who turns 1 today. Wishing you happiness and joy on this auspicious day and for countless more years to come. Best wishes from your sisters, brother and Grandma.

Lifestyle | Features



This photo taken on November 7, 2017 shows Japanese master shoemaker Yohei Fukuda posing in his workshop in Tokyo. — AFP photos



Master shoemaker Yohei Fukuda works in his workshop.



Japanese master shoemaker Yohei Fukuda poses in his workshop.

Japan fills its boots with bespoke shoes

When Yohei Fukuda left for England more than a decade ago to learn his trade as a master leather shoemaker, he could hardly have imagined that his native Japan would one day become a leader in this traditionally European art. “The number of bespoke shoe workshops has been booming in Japan in the past few years,” explained the elegant-looking bald and mustachioed 37-year-old, sporting a smart shirt and tie under a dark-blue work apron. “There are at least 40 in Tokyo today and maybe as many as 100 in the whole country,” Fukuda told AFP.

Bespoke leather shoemaking has historically been dominated by European artisans but Japan developed a taste for the luxury footwear at the beginning of the 2000s and local manufacturing classes quickly took off. Fukuda’s own workshop is located close to the upmarket area of Ometesando in Tokyo, often described as

Japan’s answer to the grand Champs Elysee avenue in Paris. A narrow staircase leads up to his old-fashioned workspace that smells strongly of leather and glue, the basic tools of the trade. There is not one machine in the whole place—everything is done by hand, from the precise measurement of a client’s feet to the delicate business of attaching the soles to the shoe. “Each pair of shoes takes between 120 and 140 hours of work and we produce around 80 a year,” explained Fukuda. He does not want to go at a faster pace: “I want to make good shoes,” he stressed. Fortunately, his customers are in no hurry and willing to pay a hefty price for the bespoke quality—a 100-percent made-to-measure pair costs 480,000 yen (\$4,200) at least.

‘Japanese spirit’
Why Japan? Mari Yamaguchi, who teaches this meticulous trade in a private school in the

trendy Harajuku area of Tokyo says that bespoke shoes “speak to the Japanese spirit, with its sense of detail.” At Yamaguchi’s school, dozens of young students are bent over workbenches, carefully learning each one of the individual painstaking steps required in the manufacturing process. “A foot is something very special. Each foot is unique, like each piece of leather. When making bespoke shoes by hand, the challenge is to get close to perfection by bringing together these two imperfect but magic elements,” she said.

Maybe Japanese people think about shoes more than in other cultures because most people put them on and take them off several times a day—whenever entering a house,” mused the 43-year-old teacher. Not for the first time, the Japanese have travelled abroad to adopt the skills and then improved them, said Jesper Ingevaldsson, Swedish author of a specialist



blog on shoemaking. “They have done with shoes what they have done with other things, like denim for example: they learn from the

west, come home, and perfect it and evolve it” said Ingevaldsson. The Japanese have developed such a good reputation in the field that Western apprentices are now heading east to learn the trade. In Fukuda’s workshop, five young apprentices labor on workbenches made from old 1920s English chests of drawers.

One scrutinises the quality of a new delivery of leather, another sews on a sole, making sweeping gestures with his arm every time he pulls the thread.

And these interns are in turn bringing their own Japanese-inspired creativity to the ancient tradition. Clemence Rochard, a 27-year-old French apprentice, created a pair of hand-made shoes made partly of leather and partly from material from a sparkling and flowery kimono she found in Kyoto. “In Japan nobody would have thought about it,” acknowledged Fukuda. — AFP



Fans watch as 80 players simultaneously fight for survival in an eSports match of upstart shooter game “PlayUnknown’s Battlegrounds” at an Intel Extreme Masters tournament in the Oracle Arena in Oakland. — AFP

BOOMING LIFE FOR ‘PUBG’ DEATH-MATCH PC GAME

Scores of virtual warriors faced off in a Hunger Games-style death match in a massive, real-world eSports matchup of upstart shooter game “PlayerUnknown’s Battlegrounds.” The computer game’s rise has been epic, with some industry trackers branding this the year of ‘PUBG’ even though it is technically still in trial mode with a final version yet to be released. In a colossal two-day event that ended Sunday, 80 players hunched over computers in a warren of cubicles set up in an arena where the champion Golden State Warriors usually play home basketball games. Shooter games played as spectator sports typically pit one team against another, and such was the scene nearby in the Oracle Arena in Oakland where a “Counter-Strike Global Offensive” tournament was taking place as part of the overall Intel Extreme Masters event.

Brendan Greene of Ireland, the creator of “PUBG,” released an early-access version of the game online at Steam in March, referring to it as a “very special day” in a blog post. That was more than 20 million copies ago, according to data service Steamspy. A Steam chart showed PUBG was the most played PC game on Monday, with nearly 2.7 million people simultaneously taking part at a peak point. “With PUBG’s growing popularity, we really wanted to incorporate it into this event,” Electronic Sports League vice president of pro gaming Michal Blicharz said. “The interest in the game from the industry and growing PUBG community is greater than I can remember.”

Hints of Hunger Games

It’s a dizzying rocket to success for a game born of frustration with eSports titles seeming to play it safe and predictable with tight maps, established lanes for action, and reliance on hectic action and hair-trigger reflexes. Greene had a different vision for competitive game-play, and began to make it real by modifying source code of military-style games Arma 2 and 3 to create a modification or “mod” called “Battle Royale.”

Often likened to blockbuster book and film series “The Hunger Games,” game play created by Greene takes place on large virtual islands where players drop in, scavenge for resources and weapons, then battle rivals and the environment to be the sole survivor. Success of the “mod” earned Greene a job working on a similar project with Sony Online Entertainment in 2015, then South Korean developer Bluehole hired him to be creative director of his own original “Battle Royale” game. The result was PUBG.

Intel Extreme Masters was a rare time when PUBG matches played out live in a stadium instead of online with competitors squirreled away at home or other private settings. “It is exhilarating,” said 23-year-old Ewan Tindale of Britain, a member of team Digital Chaos which won the first PUBG round in a tournament which boasted a total prize pool of \$200,000. “We are used to sitting in the dark at the PC gaming, then all of a sudden you have thousands of people watching, cameras and lights, but once you are in the game you kind of tune out.” — AFP

‘France is a Feast’: Photo exhibit celebrates Julia Child

Mention Julia Child and the image that comes to mind is a tall woman with a spoon in one hand, saying in a high voice, “Bon appetit!” That was Child in her heyday as a 1960s TV show host teaching Americans the art of French cooking. But a new photo exhibit at California’s Napa Valley Museum Yountville documents her life in France in the years before she hosted one of America’s most popular TV cooking shows.

Child, a graduate of Smith College, worked during World War II for the agency that was the predecessor of the CIA. In 1946, she married Paul Child, who worked as a cultural attache at the U.S. embassy in Paris



while his wife learned how to cook at the famed Le Cordon Bleu cooking school, subsequently studying with several famous chefs.

That period of her life was documented by Paul Child and is the subject of the show, “France is a Feast: The Photographic Journey of Paul and Julia Child.” The exhibit was inspired and shown in conjunction with the release of the book “France is a Feast” by Paul Child’s great-nephew, Alex Prud’homme, and Katie Pratt, the Childs’ longtime friend, who also curated the exhibit. The exhibit features 60 rarely seen black-and-white photographs taken between 1948 and 1954 along with notebooks, logs, letters and a Rolleiflex camera that Paul Child liked to use because it allowed him to look down and capture people unobtrusively. “Julia and Paul loved France, especially Paris,” said Pratt. She



Photos from the exhibit “France is a Feast - The Photographic Journey of Paul and Julia Child,” at the Napa Valley Museum in Yountville, California.



explained that the couple often took walks on weekends, and Paul would look for subjects that appealed to him, including architecture, rivers, fisherman, children and cats. Since Julia was 6 foot 2, she could help him take pictures by blocking the sun. Her role, as she told Pratt, often was that of a prop.

‘Right place at the right time’

Other pictures range from her early cooking years to art shots like one of her legs in a telephone booth beneath a bright

light. Photos of daily life show her looking down from the top of a spiral staircase, sitting in their living room with their cat, picnicking, and on their many trips traveling the countryside visiting castles. On the back wall of the exhibit is a large “selfie” of Paul and Julia sitting on their porch in Marseille, having a lunch of wine and mussels. Also in the exhibit is a cameo (nude) silhouette of Julia looking out a window with a reflection in a mirror.

Through his work at the embassy, Paul met and was influenced by many photographers of the day including Edward Weston, Man Ray and Brassai. Through Pierre Gassmann, the master printer who founded Pictorial Service and did Paul’s darkroom work, he met and was influenced by Henri Cartier Bresson and Robert Capa.

Prud’homme said Paul was “talented, methodical in his work and happened to be in the right place at the right time.” He said his best pictures “combine abstraction and reality with a narrative behind them. For example, a photo of hanging laundry represents the people that wear the clothes even if the people aren’t in the clothes in the photo. On the one hand, they are a formal study of shape and texture and light and

dark, but on the other hand, they tell a story about the people that used that laundry - looking at laundry is like peeping through a keyhole.”

Both Pratt and Prud’homme said the Childs - he died in 1994, she in 2004 - would have loved the exhibit. “Paul was a modest guy, but I think he was ambitious for his work,” said Prud’homme. “He had several shows. Edward Steichen picked some of his pictures for MOMA,” New York’s Museum of Modern Art.

The Yountville museum is in the heart of the Napa Valley and not far from Thomas Keller’s French Laundry restaurant and just above the Domaine Chandon winery. “Being in Yountville, which is one of the top culinary destinations in the world, that there’s such interest and passion for it here, we thought it was the perfect subject matter,” said museum director Laura Rafaty. Plans are under way to take the exhibit to 10 other cities. “Julia felt he never got the credit he deserved in his lifetime, and so when Katie suggested to Julia near the end of her life that we do a book of photos as a tribute to Paul, she immediately said yes,” said Prud’homme, “and she would be thrilled to see this.”

German police retrieve 100 stolen John Lennon items

German police recovered around 100 items that belonged to late Beatles star John Lennon that were stolen from his widow in New York, including three diaries, two pairs of his signature metal-rimmed glasses, a cigarette case and a handwritten music score. The retrieved possessions were displayed Tuesday at Berlin police headquarters. “This was a spectacular, unusual criminal case,” police spokesman Winfrid Wenzel told reporters.

German authorities first became aware of the items, stolen from Yoko Ono at her

New York home in 2006, when a bankruptcy administrator for the Berlin auction house Auctionata contacted them in July. The administrator had found the memorabilia in the company’s storage.

Police confiscated the items from the auctioneers two weeks later, and on Monday arrested a suspect and raided his Berlin home and cars. They said another suspect, who is living in Turkey, is currently “not available,” but they would try to get him extradited to Germany.

During their investigation, police officers

and prosecutors also flew to New York, where they met Ono to have her verify the stolen goods’ authenticity. “She was very emotional and we noticed clearly how much these things mean to her and how happy she would be to have them back,” prosecutor Susann Wettley said of the moment they showed Ono some of the recovered items and pictures of some others. Wettley said that Ono’s former driver, who is now living in Turkey, is one of the suspects. He has a previous conviction in New York related to the stolen items, she said. — AP



A cigarette case of John Lennon displayed at the police headquarters.



A screenshot from the Kuwaiti film 'Muneera'



A screenshot from the Kuwaiti film 'Sandarah'

5th Ajyal Youth Film Festival to Pay Tribute to Kuwaiti Acting Legend Abdulhussain Abdulredha

Inaugural edition to focus on Kuwaiti cinematic voices in 'Made in Kuwait'

Following the presentation of a posthumous honorary award to the late acting legend Abdulhussain Abdulredha, Ajyal Youth Film Festival presented by the Doha Film Institute will launch "Made in Kuwait" program. In fitting celebration of Abdulredha's illustrious career, who charmed millions with his inimitable acting prowess and endearing personality, the inaugural edition of the new section will focus on Kuwaiti cinematic voices in Made in Kuwait, which illuminate the unique perspectives of the country's filmmaking talents.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "Abdulhussain Abdulredha has been a guiding star for artists across the Arab world. Beyond his sterling arts and cinematic contribution, he was a benevolent man who made a positive connection to the minds of audiences. He demonstrated through his life and works how art can transcend all differences and

unite people. As we mourn his sad passing, we pay tribute to him by showcasing the works of young Kuwaiti talents that he would have been proud of."



Six short films by Kuwaiti filmmakers will be screened

Six short films by Kuwaiti filmmakers will be screened in tribute to the great actor, who touched the lives of people across the Arab world through his comedy and inspired genera-

tions of creative artists. The 'Made in Kuwait' program includes six compelling short films that will undoubtedly touch a chord with all filmgoers. The program includes:

- 'Muneera' by Oscar Boyson is a cautionary tale that warns of paying attention to the mystical while ignoring the truth in front of us. It dreamily and seamlessly moves between Kuwait City and Venice.
- 'I Wasn't Cheating' by Mousaed Khaled is about Suleiman, who is wrongly accused of cheating in an Arabic exam. Part morality tale, part gentle comedy, it takes us all back to those tense days of academic success.
- 'Sandarah' by Yousef Al Bagshi is a tribute to human benevolence, and deep with emotions brought about by conflict through a story set during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, when a detachment of soldiers is sent to arrest a family.
- 'The Best Life' by Meqdad Al Kout is an

amusing take on the obsession for online living, and presents how a man is glued to his smartphone, following his favorite social media guru over the course of a day.

- 'Bird Watch - Health' by Zahra Al-Mahdi is a charming episode that features wonderful line-drawn animation and whimsical handmade models, and explores the marvelous imagination of children.
- 'A Picture' by Dawood Shuail is about Abdullah, whose father gives him a new camera. But while he is out and about taking shots, he inadvertently takes a picture of a crime in progress.

Tickets for the 5th Ajyal Youth Film Festival are available for purchase for QR25 for general screenings online at www.dohafilminstitute.com and from Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet at FNAC (Doha Festival City) or the Ajyal Katara Box Office in Katara Building 12. For up-to-date information or more details on the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, please visit www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival. The Ajyal Youth Film



Late acting legend Abdulhussain Abdulredha

Festival is made possible thanks to its partners: Cultural Partner, Katara Cultural Village, Principal Partners Occidental Petroleum Corporation and Ooredoo and Strategic Partner Qatar Tourism Authority.



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Timothee Chalamet, left, and Armie Hammer in a scene from "Call Me By Your Name." — AP photos

'Call Me by Your Name' tops Spirit Awards nominations

Coming-of-age tale "Call Me by Your Name" led the pack of independent films tipped for Oscars glory as the Film Independent Spirit Awards nominations were announced on Tuesday. Set in 1980s Italy and starring Timothee Chalamet and Armie Hammer, it tells the story of 17-year-old Elio as he begins a relationship with his father's American research assistant, Oliver. The film was nominated in six categories, including best feature, best director for Luca Guadagnino and best lead and supporting male for Chalamet and Hammer, respectively.



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Daniel Kaluuya in a scene from "Get Out."

Breakout horror satire "Get Out," written and directed by debutant filmmaker Jordan Peele and starring Daniel Kaluuya and Allison Williams, secured five nominations, including best screenplay and directing for Peele and male lead for Kaluuya. Josh and Benny Safdie's heist thriller "Good Time" tied in second place with nods for directing, editing and three actors, including for its star Robert Pattinson.

"Twilight" actor Pattinson, 31, earned the best reviews of his career for his portrayal of a New York bank robber, shedding his heartthrob looks in favor of a shaggy bleach-blond mane and a torso full of tattoos. Greta Gerwig's comedy "Lady Bird" and Chloe Zhao's "The Rider," which picked up the Art Cinema Award at Cannes, each earned four nods. The nominations

were announced on Tuesday morning by actresses Lily Collins, and Tessa Thompson, and Film Independent chief Josh Welsh at the plush Jeremy Hotel in West Hollywood.

"There's an excitement particularly because Film Independent acknowledges people that are just starting out for their first features," Thompson, who won acclaim for her recent performance in "Thor: Ragnarok" and for 2015's "Creed," told AFP. "There's a hopefulness, there's something sort of-and I mean this in the best sense of the word-renegade about it, surprising about it."

'Positive vibe'

Asked if she thought Hollywood had improved on gender equality since the last awards season, Thompson highlighted the "incredible importance" of getting more women to direct and write movies. "I've had a fantastic year. I've gotten to play an incredible superhero and I've gotten to celebrate from afar people like Gal (Gadot) who had the incredible success of 'Wonder Woman,'" the 34-year-old star told AFP.

"We're getting there but I think we have to have women in all realms, not just in front of the camera. That's the thing I really feel eager about us accomplishing in the next couple of years." Collins, 28, picked out "The Florida Project," which was nominated for best feature and director, among her favorite Spirit Awards contenders, and said she was excited for Hammer, her co-star in the 2012 Snow White movie "Mirror Mirror."

She told AFP she saw the ceremony, which takes place on the beach in Santa Monica, California, as "totally more chill" than other awards season landmarks such as the Oscars and Golden Globes. "There's just a very positive vibe that goes into this event. Everyone's there to celebrate smaller films and create larger conversations out of that subject matter." The Spirit Awards are seen as an strong indicator of independent movies that could be winners on Oscars night. — AFP

Teen idol David Cassidy, 'Partridge Family' star, dies at 67

David Cassidy, the teen and pre-teen idol who starred in the 1970s sitcom "The Partridge Family" and sold millions of records as the musical group's lead singer, died at age 67. Cassidy, who announced earlier this year that he had been diagnosed with dementia, died surrounded by his family, a family statement released by publicist JoAnn Geffen said Tuesday. No further details were immediately available, but Geffen said on Saturday that Cassidy was in a Fort Lauderdale, Florida, hospital suffering from organ failure.



In this Aug 8, 2009, file photo, actor-singer David Cassidy arrives at the ABC Disney Summer press tour party in Pasadena.

"David died surrounded by those he loved, with joy in his heart and free from the pain that had gripped him for so long," the statement said. "Thank you for the abundance and support you have shown him these many years." "The Partridge Family" aired from 1970-74 and was a fictional variation of the '60s performers the Cowbells, intended at first as a vehicle for Shirley Jones, the Oscar-winning actress and Cassidy's stepmother. Jones played Shirley Partridge, a widow with five children with whom she forms a popular act that travels on a psychedelic bus. The cast also featured Cassidy as eldest son and family heartthrob Keith Partridge; Susan Dey, later of "LA Law" fame, as sibling Laurie Partridge and Danny Bonaduce as sibling Danny Partridge.

Oversea success

It was an era for singing families - the Osmonds, the Jacksons. "The Partridge Family" never cracked the top 10 in TV ratings, but the recordings under their name, mostly featuring Cassidy, Jones and session players, produced real-life musical hits and made Cassidy a real-life musical superstar.

The Partridges' best known song, "I Think I Love You," spent three weeks on top of the Billboard chart at a time when other hit singles included James Taylor's "Fire and Rain" and Smokey Robinson and the Miracles' "The Tears of a Clown." The group also reached the top 10 with "I'll Meet You Halfway" and "Doesn't Somebody Want to be Wanted" and Cassidy had a solo hit with "Cherish."

"In two years, David Cassidy has swept hurricane-like into the pre-pubescent lives of millions of American girls," Rolling Stone mag-



In this July 13, 1993, file photo, former Partridge Family cast members David Cassidy, from left, Danny Bonaduce and Shirley Jones reunite on the Arsenio Hall Show, Los Angeles.

azine noted in 1972. "Leaving: six and a half million long-playing albums and singles; 44 television programs: David Cassidy lunch boxes; David Cassidy bubble gum; David Cassidy coloring books and David Cassidy pens; not to mention several millions of teen magazines, wall stickers, love beads, posters and photo albums." Cassidy's appeal faded after the show went off the air, although he continued to tour, record and act over the next 40 years, his albums including "Romance" and the awkwardly titled "Didn't You Used To Be?" He had a hit with "I Write the Songs" before Barry Manilow's chart-topping version and success overseas with "The Last Kiss," featuring backing vocals from Cassidy admirer George Michael. He made occasional stage and television appearances, including an Emmy-nominated performance on "The Police Story."

Meanwhile, "The Partridge Family" remained popular in re-runs and Cassidy, who kept his dark bangs and boyish appearance well into middle age, frequently turned up for reunions and spoke often about his early success. "So many people come up to me and talk to me about the impact it (the show) had," he told Arsenio Hall in 1990. Fans shared memories of Cassidy online after his death Tuesday evening, with some sharing photos, others sharing remembrances of him being their first crush and video clips of his songs.

Bonaduce tweeted early Wednesday that he had "loved and admired David Cassidy for 48 out of my 58 years." He added Cassidy was as kind to him as any real brother could have been, and said they had been through a lot, with Cassidy always there for him. He closed, "This loss is huge. RIP my dear friend." Even while "The Partridge Family" was still in prime-time, Cassidy worried that he was mistaken for the wholesome character he played. He posed naked for Rolling Stone in 1972, when he confided that he had dropped acid as a teenager and smoked pot in front of the magazine's reporter as he watched an episode of "The Partridge Family" and mocked his own acting.

Personal troubles

Cassidy maintained an exhausting schedule during the show's run, filming during the week and performing live shows over the weekend, but had plenty of time to indulge himself. In the memoir "Could It Be Forever," he wrote of his prolific sex life and of rejecting Dey's advances because she lacked the "slutty aspect of a female that I always found so attractive."

Cassidy would endure personal and financial troubles. He was married and divorced three times, battled alcoholism, was arrested for drunk driving and in 2015 filed for bankruptcy. Cassidy had two children, musician Beau Cassidy and actress Katie Cassidy, with whom he acknowledged having a distant relationship. "I wasn't her father. I was her biological father but I didn't raise her," he told People magazine in 2017. "She has a completely different life." Cassidy himself was estranged from his father. Born in New York City in 1950, he was the son of actors Jack Cassidy and Evelyn Ward and half brother of entertainer Shaun Cassidy. David Cassidy's parents split up when he was 5 and he would long express regret about Jack Cassidy, who soon married Shirley Jones, being mostly absent from his life. David Cassidy stayed with his mother and by the early 1960s had moved to Los Angeles.

Kicked out of high school for truancy, David Cassidy dreamed of becoming an actor and had made appearances on "Bonanza," "Ironside" and other programs before producers at ABC television asked him to audition for "The Partridge Family," unaware that he could sing and intending at first to have him mime songs to someone else's voice. Cassidy, who only learned during tryouts that Jones would play his mother, worried that Keith Partridge would be a "real comedown" from his previous roles. "I mean, how much could an actor do with a line like, 'Hi, Mom. I'm home from school,' or 'Please pass the milk?'" he wrote in his memoir. "I didn't see how it could do much for me. After all, I wasn't the star of it. Shirley had top billing; I was just one of the kids." — AP

The dream of opening my own salon



Even before starting social media, I always wanted to open my own salon. At that time, I didn't have the capabilities since I was still a student and didn't have the financial means to open a facility as big as I have now, which is around 700 square meters in size. Creating my salon "The Real Fouz Beauty" is one of the biggest achievements I've ever accomplished for myself. Although it was a very long and complicated process it was definitely worth it.

The process started by choosing the perfect location. I found a really beautiful location, which I chose specifically because of the fact that it's close to a university and a couple of hotels, since I know that a lot of my followers who visit from abroad come to Kuwait and stay at hotels located on or near the Gulf Road. I found that this location would be very convenient for visitors as well as for students that attend the nearby university. They can visit the salon during their breaks or time off and relax and pamper themselves. Another aspect of the location that was important is that I wanted it to be in a mall because I felt that it was a more luxurious feel for customers when they visit.

When we got the keys to the salon, it was an empty space with no ceilings or flooring, so we had to create and design everything from scratch. I was part of the entire process and I actually learned a lot from it.

There were also some set-backs with choosing the right designer and finding a team that understood my vision and implemented exactly what I had in mind, which is why the whole process took nearly two years to complete. As for the atmosphere of the salon, I wanted to create a place that felt like my own

home. I wanted it to have a cozy yet elegant feel and make my followers and customers feel like they are visitors in my home.

As for the services available at the salon, you will find everything from hair and extensions to nails to eyebrows and everything in between. We also have a spa center where you can get a facial, massage, and even a luxurious Moroccan bath. We even have private rooms including a VIP room and bridal room that you can book for an event or wedding that's located in a separate part of the salon, so it's completely private and away from other customers. These rooms include a shower, TV, nail chairs and you can get all your treatments done as well as VIP treatments. I wanted everything to be affordable so everyone can enjoy from students to workers to busy moms. I tried to make The Real Fouz Beauty especially convenient for

moms as we made a kids room where moms can drop their kids off for an hour or two while getting their services done.

I know it can be a struggle and a hassle for moms to find time to just take a break and pamper themselves without feeling guilty about leaving their kids behind, which is why I came up with this idea. For staff, I handpicked every staff member and personally sat down and interviewed the m all. I even tried out each staff members work on myself just to be completely sure that their work fits the standard that I'm looking for.

I can't wait to welcome all my beautiful followers to my second home, The Real Fouz Beauty, and pamper you like crazy!

Love,
Fouz x

Pixar guru's glittering resume takes big hit over 'unwanted hugs'

One of history's most successful and important animators, Disney animation chief John Lasseter is considered a legend by fans, but his reputation could take a heavy hit over an admission that he enjoyed "unwanted hugs" with his staff. The Oscar-winning executive, who oversees the output of Disney Animation and Pixar, went on a six-month sabbatical Tuesday after apologizing for making staff feel "disrespected or uncomfortable" over his behavior.

He apologized to "anyone who has ever been on the receiving end of an unwanted hug or any other gesture they felt crossed the line in any way, shape, or form," in an internal memo forwarded by Disney to AFP. The news will come as a huge blow to Disney, as Lasseter is widely credited with rescuing its animation division from closure when he arrived from its new stomateme Pixar in 2007 to become chief creative officer for both studios.



In this Feb 28, 2016 file photo, Pixar co-founder and Walt Disney Animation chief John Lasseter arrives at the Oscars in Los Angeles. — AP

It hardly seems conceivable now—with "Frozen" (2013) among the 10 highest grossing movies in history—but Disney was reeling from the derision heaped on "Atlantis: The Lost Empire" (2001), "Brother Bear" (2003) and "Chicken Little" (2005). Outgunned for years by Pixar, Disney's animation division was on the verge of being put out to pasture when the studio regained its mojo under Lasseter and started producing classics like "Tangled" and "Wreck-It Ralph" that harked back to its glory days.

"I grew up loving Disney films. They were meaningful to me, there was a magic to them, a beauty," the 60-year-old told a gathering of international media at Disney's D23 fan convention in July in Anaheim, California. Lasseter's impact on the world of animation cannot be overstated. Pixar's various achievements are well rehearsed but bear repeating: 13 Oscars and \$11 billion in box office receipts from 18 movies since Lasseter's "Toy Story," the world's first computer-generated feature film, opened in 1995.

Since Lasseter came on board, Walt Disney Animation Studios has picked itself spectacularly out of the doldrums to amass \$5 billion across eight movies, picking up four Academy Awards.

No favorites

Raised in the city of Whittier, Lasseter was seduced by the Mouse House's magic early on via regular trips to the nearby Disneyland and one memorable cinema visit to see a rerun of "The Sword in the Stone" (1963). "Those moments, those feelings stay with me. Walt Disney, in his movies and Disneyland, entertained people like nobody else in the world," recalled the filmmaker, who has two Oscars of his own.

Lasseter enrolled in the California Institute of Arts in 1975 and, with contemporaries Tim Burton and Brad Bird, was taught by Disney's legendary "Nine Old Men" team of core animators. After graduating, he was picked from thousands to join Walt Disney Feature Animation—but was fired soon after

for working on an early version of computer animation without clearing it first with his bosses. He joined Lucasfilm's groundbreaking CGI team, The Graphics Group, in 1984 before it was sold to Apple boss Steve Jobs, who renamed it Pixar and transformed it with Lasseter's help from an IT company into a fully-fledged animation studio. The Walt Disney Company bought Pixar in 2006 and Lasseter has since overseen all output from both studios. His directing credits include "Toy Story" (1995) and its first sequel, "A Bug's Life" (1998), "Cars" (2006) and "Cars 2" (2011).

'Brain trust'

Lasseter—whose successes have paid for a vineyard, a fleet of classic cars and a collection of 1,000 Hawaiian shirts—has developed a collaborative approach to filmmaking that sets him apart from other studio chiefs. His creatives are part of a company-wide "brain trust," each encouraged to generate ideas for one another's films and help out with solving problematic plot points.

He fosters a culture of intensive research, granting filmmakers years to make sure they get their subjects right—especially on culturally sensitive projects like "Moana" and "Coco," due to be released on Wednesday, which centers around Mexico's Day of the Dead. Perhaps the most striking innovation introduced by Lasseter was doing away with the old damsel-in-distress model of Disney princess in favor of a more interesting, unselfconsciously feminist version to which young girls could aspire.

"It's hard work what we do, but we don't take the easy route. We don't just carbon copy another sequel with exactly the same story just to print money. We throw it out, we start from scratch and we get a new emotional heart," he said. "And we want to say something to the world that is meaningful. And right now, I'm so proud that we put joy out into the world." — AFP



This image released by CBS shows, from left, Norah O'Donnell, Charlie Rose and Gayle King on the set of "CBS This Morning." — AP photos

Credibility at risk, media cuts stars loose over sex claims

The consequences came swiftly after the allegations emerged against Charlie Rose. Within hours, the veteran news host was suspended by CBS and his PBS interview show was pulled off the air. The next day, he was fired. Rose became the latest in a string of prominent journalists felled abruptly by accusations of sexual misconduct. While news organizations aren't the only companies taking prompt measures against the accused, they face particular pressure to act because of the risk of losing the audience's trust as they cover the sex scandals coursing through politics, Hollywood and the media itself.



File photo shows Bill O'Reilly of the Fox News Channel program "The O'Reilly Factor" in New York.

"Our credibility in that reporting requires credibility managing basic standards of behavior" inside the network, CBS News president David Rhodes told staffers Tuesday in a memo announcing the firing of Rose, the "CBS This Morning" co-host and "60 Minutes" contributor. PBS also cut ties to Rose. Rose's downfall came after he was accused in The Washington Post of groping women, walking naked in front of them or making lewd phone calls. He apologized for his behavior while questioning the accuracy of some of the accounts. He wasn't even the only big-name journalist whose career was rocked Monday by sexual misbehavior allegations. The New York Times suspended White House reporter Glenn Thrush after he was accused of making drunken, unwanted advances on women. Thrush disputed some of the accusations but apologized for "any situation where I behaved inappropriately" and said he had had a drinking problem. In recent weeks, journalist Mark Halperin was fired from NBC News and lost a book contract amid allegations he partially denied, and NPR news chief Michael Oreskes was ousted over behavior he acknowledged as "wrong and inexcusable."

The disciplinary actions inside the media unfolded as news organizations have been busy covering the explosive accusations against such figures as Hollywood studio boss Harvey Weinstein, comedian Louis CK, actor

'Credible allegations'

"Especially in the news business, where it's our job to ferret out the truth and hold powerful people accountable, executives realize that they must investigate reports about their own employees swiftly, and that means promptly suspending alleged perpetrators when there are credible allegations," said Indira Lakshmanan, a journalism ethics scholar at the Poynter Institute, a media think tank in St Petersburg, Florida. The fever over sexual misconduct involving media figures began in the summer of 2016 with Gretchen Carlson's accusations against Fox News Channel founder Roger Ailes. Within two weeks, Ailes was out of a job. Similarly, Bill O'Reilly's career at Fox imploded quickly in April when The New York Times reported on how much had been paid to settle misconduct allegations against him. — AP

Barbra Streisand concert film a gooey lump of blah

The point of paying for a baby sitter, fighting traffic and paying huge ticket prices to go see your favorite music act in the flesh is to see them working hard - to see them sweat. But you'll never catch even a bead of perspiration in the new Barbra Streisand concert film. An icy Babs efficiently runs through various hits in her vast catalog without a hint of strain or unscripted patter in the tedious "Barbra: The Music... The Mem'ries... The Magic!" on Netflix.

Filmed in Miami, the last stop in her 2016 tour, we see Streisand often sitting on a chair and delivering her songs while staring in the middle distance or simply with her eyes closed. The audience mostly sits reverentially. She kicks it off with "Memories" and then goes down memory lane with classics such as "Everything" and "Evergreen" from "A Star Is Born." "No More Tears (Enough Is Enough)," an overwrought "Being at War With Each Other," "You Don't Bring Me Flowers," "Being Alive" from "Company" and an alarmingly over-the-top "Papa, Can You Hear Me?" from "Yentl."

After an intermission 6 and a costume change 6 it's on to "Pure Imagination" from Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory" and a video about how so many Hollywood stars were freaked out to be able to perform on her latest duets album. There's also "Losing My Mind" from "Follies," "Isn't This Better" from "Funny Lady," then "Don't Rain on My Parade" and "People." The concert gets progressively more drowsy until Jamie Foxx adds a jolt of pure electricity as its only special guest. He revs up the crowd and sings an awesome "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" with Streisand, delivering a 7-minute tour de force. He's badly missed as soon as we're back to just Babs. She sings "Jingle Bells" and "With One More Look at You." Her encore, "I Didn't Know What Time It Was," comes after awkward patter. Then we see Barbra eat a post-concert dinner of crabs. Seriously. It's all so very slick and calculated, right down to the digital petals that fall on a projection screen behind Streisand, the film montages or the elegant tea



This image released by Netflix shows Barbra Streisand in a scene from her concert special, 'Barbra: The Music ... The Mem'ries ... The Magic!' debuted yesterday on Netflix. — AP

set on a side table with perfect flowers in a vase. Yes, her voice is superb, a perfectly calibrated sports car. But there's no soul. Her small fluffy dog has more charisma.

On auto-pilot

A self-serving Streisand likes to name-drop Bill Clinton and remind the crowd about her vast success, including a CD of Broadway tunes she insisted on recording despite contrary advice and a history of her No 1 albums over six decades. The audience roars at that but Babs coolly responds: "It's OK. Didn't mean to have applause there. It's just a fact." At one point she plugs her upcoming book if we want more details on some stories.

Over 100 minutes, Streisand manages to say nothing provocative, insightful or even very interesting. She insists old Broadway show tunes will never be out of date, hopes red states and blues states can "come together"

and laments that climate change is real but her prescription is to make a wish and go into her mind to create the world the way she wants it to be. (The polar bears will love that one.) "I've been blessed that so many of my dreams have come true," she says at one point. "So all you little girls out there, even if you want to be president of the United States, don't stop dreaming. Nothing's impossible."

At no point does Streisand really interact with the crowd. In fact, she barely listens to their shouted requests or adorations. "I'm feeling the love," she tells them but it feels like a lie. One suspects she'd perform exactly like this in a completely empty arena, a ballgowned, straight-haired superstar on pure autopilot. Give it to Barbra: She never lets you see her sweat. "Barbra: The Music... The Mem'ries... The Magic!" a Netflix release, is rated TV-14. Running time: 1:48 minutes. One star out of four. — AP

Gallagher widens sound on 'Who Built the Moon?'

His younger brother Liam's new album has been heaped with praise, he turned 50 in May and a recent TV appearance featured a French mandrake playing scissors, earning Liam's ridicule. Who said Noel Gallagher has it easy?

Not that he's had it too bad lately, either. The birthday bash had a mariachi band, Bono and Madonna; his previous HIFB album - "Chasing Yesterday" from early 2015 - was very well received; and his Oasis hits like "Champagne Supernova," "Wonderwall" and "Don't Look Back In Anger" are unforgettable classics.

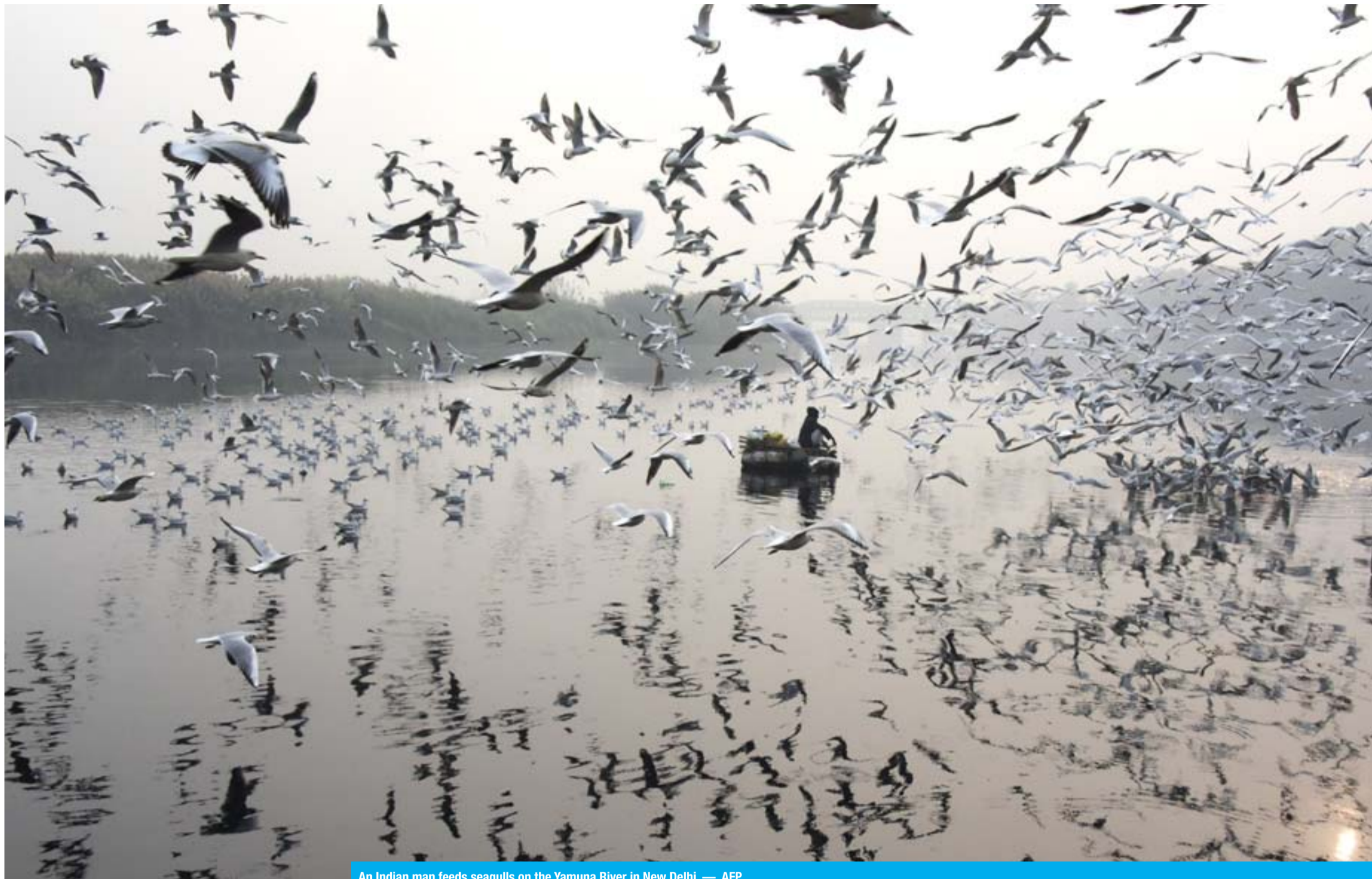
Gallagher's third album with the High Flying Birds stretches some boundaries, digs a few new grooves, darkens the atmospheres and adds an extra degree of psychedelia to the rhythms. Produced by David Holmes, perhaps best known for his soundtracks like "Out of Sight" and George Clooney's "Ocean's" films, "Who Built the Moon?" is an unforced progression that sounds fab.



Opener "Fort Knox" has few lyrics but heaps of chanting, plenty of percussion, irritating alarm clocks, and energy to spare. It's a fearless start to the album but probably better experienced live. "Holy Mountain" keeps up the vitality with a touch of Beach Boys backing vocals and some Bowie/T. Rex glam traits built on a Phil Spectorish wall of sound. — AP

Lifestyle

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2017



An Indian man feeds seagulls on the Yamuna River in New Delhi. — AFP

St Helena tourism takes off as new airport opens

Cut off from the rest of the world for centuries, St Helena, which lies isolated in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, is now reachable by plane for the first time. The aviation breakthrough promises to lift the British-run territory from obscurity and bring it within reach of international tourists. The arrival of the first commercial flight was also a relief for islanders frustrated by a delay to the opening because of high winds.

After years of procrastination, London gave the green light in 2011 a full runway on the island. The ambition was to bring it within six hours of mainland Africa instead of the five days previously needed to make the ocean voyage from Cape Town. British officials hoped that 30,000 tourists a year would visit the island, which is home to just 4,500 residents-known as "Saints". Just don't expect white sandy beaches and palm trees.

Rather, the island is known as a paradise for hikers and divers with dramatic scenery and its volcanic origins, and boasts history as rich as its flora and fauna.

The British have detained various opposition forces on the island over the centuries, including the defeated Napoleon after the Battle of Waterloo who died in exile on St Helena in 1821. It was also temporarily home to 25,000 former slaves after they were released in the 19th century on the island, which lay on the slave-trading route from Africa to America and the Caribbean.

'We had already invested'

Encouraged by London's upbeat estimates, islanders began investing in tourism, sensing an opportunity in an economy where the average annual salary is just £7,280 (8,150 euros, \$9,600). Local businessman Johnny Herne runs a pleasure boat that he imported from Scotland 8,000 kilometers away on which guests can spot humpback whales and dolphins along the craggy coastline. He has so far invested £182,000 in his business but now is drowning in debt as a result of the airport delay, which he says contributed to his divorce. "It ruined my life," he said.

Entrepreneur Paul Hickling produces a cactus liqueur and a local coffee and has invested more than £100,000. "The government said: 'Invest because the airport is coming... all these people are going to come'," he said. "Unfortunately the airport got delayed-but we had already invested the money." In April 2016, just three weeks before the £285-million airport's grand opening, disaster struck. Unforeseen winds meant that takeoffs and landings were ruled too dangerous, leaving islanders dismayed.

'Big relief'

Hazel Wilmot, a hotelier in the capital Jamestown, had had large quantities of food and drink shipped to St Helena and her property was fully booked. But with the delay, tourists cancelled their trips. "I had four containers at



This file photo taken on October 14, 2017 shows a general view of Saint Helena's capitol Jamestown on the day of the first inaugural commercial plane from Johannesburg in the volcanic tropical island of Saint Helena. — AFP photos

sea full of food, full of booze that I could not use," she said. In 2016 she says she lost at least £200,000.

Local officials set up a scheme to help businesses affected by the delay-but no one has yet claimed, according to the island's trade board. But overly strict criteria and a complex claiming

process have deterred claimants, locals say. After the 18-month delay, the first commercial flight finally touched down on October 14 this year. A sense of euphoria swept through the cabin as champagne was served and the island edged into view. On the ground, islanders celebrated the long-awaited arrival. "It was a big

relief when the airport finally opened. It has not been easy," said Craig Yon, a manager of a hotel that opened in 2012. But the island may never experience a tourism boom on the scale that was promised. For safety reasons, the passenger capacity of the aircraft serving the island is far smaller than planned. And the single weekly flight from Johannesburg will serve the island at a cost of about £800 return. "South Africans would prefer to go for three weeks in Thailand than to go to St. Helena," said one South African travel agent, who organizes trips to the island.

For this Christmas, Wilmot has just five bookings so far. "Where are all these tourists we were told were going to swamp the island?" she said. Tourism chief Helena Bennett now thinks the goal of 30,000 visitors was "unrealistic"-indeed the small plane can bring less than 4,000 people, including residents, to the island each year.

Even today, the island has just 121 guest beds including a new hotel funded by the local government. None of the properties have a website, while roads are so small that often only one car can pass. But with the air link, the flow of tourists will at least be more constant. "During the two-week period when the Royal Mail Ship is away, the island is dead," said Bennett, referring to the passenger and cargo vessel that calls at the island. "With the plane, we are going to have visitors every week. The island is not going to stop anymore." — AFP



Photo shows a general view of the Consulate Hotel in Jamestown.



A general view of Saint Helena's capital Jamestown.



This file photo taken on October 14, 2017 shows travelers leaving after disembarking from the first inaugural commercial plane from Johannesburg.