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Egypt mourns more than 300 killed in Sinai mosque attack

Sisi vows forceful response • Kuwait condemns massacre • Amir sends condolences

CAIRO: Egypt mourned yesterday as the death toll from a gun and bomb assault at a mosque in the Sinai Peninsula soared above 300, including children, in the deadliest attack the country has witnessed. The army said warplanes had struck militant hideouts in the insurgency-racked North Sinai in retaliation. According to the state prosecution, up to 30 militants in camouflage flying the Islamic State (IS) group's black banner had surrounded the mosque and proceeded to massacre the worshippers during weekly Friday prayers. Twenty-seven children were among the dead, it said.

IS has not claimed responsibility for the attack, but it is the main suspect as the mosque is associated with followers of the mystical Sufi branch of Sunni Islam whom it has branded heretics. Funerals for the victims were held overnight and many were buried unwashed in their bloodied clothes, according to the Islamic burial practices for martyrs, security and medical officials said.

President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi declared three days of mourning and vowed to "respond with brutal force" to the attack, among the deadliest in the world since the Sept 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. "The army and police will avenge our martyrs and return security and stability with force in the coming short period," he said in a televised speech. Hours later Egyptian air force jets pursued the "terrorists and discovered

several vehicles used in the terrorist attack, killing those inside near the vicinity of the attack," an army spokesman said in a statement.

HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Friday sent a cable of condolences to Sisi over the victims of the attack. In the cable, the Amir condemned the attack as a terrorist act that violates Islam and all religions, norms and human values. HH the Amir reiterated Kuwait's condemnation of these criminal heinous acts, while voicing solidarity and sympathy with Egypt and full support to all measures taken by Egypt to maintain its security and stability. He wished a swift recovery of those injured in the attack. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

An official source at the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry Friday also strongly deplored the attack. The source said Kuwait stands side by side with Egypt and supports all measures it is taking in order to preserve its security and stability. It believed that such "terrorist cowardly acts" will not affect Egyptian efforts to fight terrorism. It also reiterated Kuwait's principled and firm position based on rejecting all forms of violence and terrorism, calling for doubling international efforts to wipe out this serious

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SINAI: Egyptians walk past bodies following a gun and bombing attack on Friday at the Rawda mosque, roughly 40 km west of the North Sinai capital of El-Arish. — AFP

US changes course, allows PLO office to remain open

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration has backtracked on its decision to order the Palestinians' office in Washington to close, instead saying it would merely impose limitations on the office that it expected would be lifted after 90 days.

Last week, US officials said the Palestine Liberation Organization mission couldn't stay open because the Palestinians had violated a provision in US law requiring the office to close if the Palestinians try to get the International Criminal Court to prosecute Israelis. The move triggered a major rift in US-Palestinian relations that threatened to scuttle President Donald Trump's ambitious effort to broker Mideast peace before it ever got off the ground.

Yet the United States delayed shuttering the office for a week while saying it was working out the details with the

Palestinians, before abruptly reversing course late Friday, as many Americans were enjoying a long Thanksgiving Day weekend. State Department spokesman Edgar Vasquez said the US had "advised the PLO Office to limit its activities to those related to achieving a lasting, comprehensive peace between the Israelis and Palestinians".

Vasquez said even those restrictions will be lifted after 90 days if the US determines the Israelis and Palestinians are engaged in serious peace talks. The White House, in an effort led by Trump adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner, has been preparing a comprehensive peace plan to present to both sides in the coming months. "We therefore are optimistic that at the end of this 90-day period, the political process may be sufficiently advanced that the president will

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ENT conference brings together field specialists, leading suppliers

KUWAIT: A triple dose of events at an ENT conference held over the weekend provided a golden opportunity to discuss, learn, exchange and acquire new technological knowhow. Under the patronage of Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi, the 40th Kuwaiti Otolaryngology Conference, the 8th Pan Arab Rhinology Society Conference and the 4th Otolaryngology and Cochlear Implant Symposium were held from Nov 23 to 25, 2017 at Hotel Radisson Blu Kuwait. The aim of this conference was to bring the advancements of the science of these subjects to the forefront, and gain knowledge and insight from world leaders in these fields.

The scientific program consisted of hands-on workshops on emerging high-tech surgical techniques, high-powered opening lectures, plenary sessions from an international faculty



KUWAIT: CEO of Central Circle Co Dr Ziad Al-Alyan speaks to Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi at the ENT conference.

and numerous academic presentations on all branches of otorhinolaryngology - head and neck surgery. A lively debate section with differing voices was also held. Leading companies displayed their new products and services for

all delegates at a three-day-long exhibition, providing an opportunity for international and regional suppliers, distributors and manufacturers to network and establish new business with leading experts in the field of ORL-HNS.

Oman enforces tolerance, keeps divides at bay

MUSCAT: On a November evening at Sayyida Mazoon mosque in Muscat, worshippers from different Muslim sects ascended the polished marble steps to pray together at sunset. Oman - home to Sunnis, Shiites and adherents of the Ibadi branch of Islam, the sultanate's majority sect - increasingly stands out as a bastion of coexistence in the Middle East. Respect for other religious sects is not an accident.

It is enshrined in Omani law, a legal system that has also, according to Human Rights Watch, been employed to stifle free speech, but the shuttering of the independent Azaman newspaper. But the enforced peace is a source of national pride for the country of 4.5 million (some 46 percent of whom are foreigners) as sectarian conflict rocks other parts of the region.

Sayyida Mazoon, an Ibadi mosque named for the mother of ruler Sultan Qaboos, was an oasis of calm away from the bustling streets of capital Muscat on a warm evening earlier this month. Boys in immaculate white gowns raced across its open-air courtyard before



MUSCAT: Worshippers pray on Oct 31, 2017 at the Sayyida Mazoon mosque. — AFP

Quran class and men washed their feet in elegant basins as the sun cast its last rays through the arched windows. A trickle of female worshippers filed upstairs to the women's section.

Ahmed, a 46-year-old Egyptian doctor living in Oman, says he chooses to worship at Sayyida Mazoon even though he is Sunni. "I feel very close to this mosque. The Omani brothers never make you feel like a stranger," he told AFP. "Here we are all Muslims."

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Trump claims he turned down Time 'Person of Year'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Friday said he turned down being named Time's "Person of the Year" after the magazine asked him for an interview and photo shoot but did not confirm he would be chosen. He tweeted: "Time Magazine called to say that I was PROBABLY going to be named 'Man (Person) of the Year,' like last year, but I would have to agree to an interview and a major photo shoot. I said probably is no good and took a pass. Thanks anyway!" Time responded on its own Twitter account: "The President is incorrect about how we choose Person of the Year. TIME does not comment on our choice until publication, which is December 6."

Former editor Richard Stengel went further, retweeting Trump's tweet with the comment: "Hate to tell you but that PROBABLY means you're NOT Person of the Year. They just wanted a photo shoot. But I'm sure you still have that fake TIME cover somewhere in storage." The magazine confers the distinction on the person who "for better or for worse... has done the most to influence the events of the year".



NEW YORK: Then US president-elect Donald Trump was Time's 'Person of the Year' in 2016. — AFP

Trump was named the magazine's 2016 "Person of the Year" following his election, in an edition which carried the title "President of the Divided States of America". The former real estate tycoon keeps a close eye on the award, and complained on Twitter in 2012, 2014 and 2015 about not being picked. In June, The Washington Post revealed several of his golf clubs prominently display a framed copy of a fake Time cover featuring several positive headlines and Trump as its cover. Since announcing his presidential run, Trump has had an antagonistic relationship with much of the US media, accusing critical outlets of peddling "fake news". — AFP

Local

Leaders phone
Amir to ask about
his health

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday phone calls from two leaders and UAE Crown Prince who all wanted to get reassured about his health conditions after undergoing medical checkups in wake of catching a cold. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan phoned His Highness the Amir to check on his health after the medical checkups.

President Erdogan wished His Highness the Amir perpetual health and wellbeing. In response, His Highness the Amir thanked the Turkish leader on his good sentiments that embodied the strong relations between the two countries and people. His Highness the Amir wished Erdogan, Turkish government and people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Amir also received a phone call from Lebanon's President Michel Aoun. President Aoun wished His Highness the Amir an everlasting health and wellbeing. His Highness expressed appreciation on the president's good sentiments and wished him perpetual wellbeing, further progress, and prosperity for the Lebanese people.

His Highness the Amir also received a phone call from Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. During his call, Sheikh Mohammad wished His Highness the Amir perpetual health and wellbeing. His Highness the Amir thanked Sheikh Mohammad for his good sentiments and call, which reflected the depth of relations between the two nations. He also wished Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince everlasting health and wellbeing, and further progress and prosperity for the Emirati people under the leadership of UAE's President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Amir received a phone call from head of the National Iraqi Alliance Ammar Abdulaziz Al-Hakim who wanted to get reassured about his health condition. His Highness the Amir received cables from Deputy Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament Hammam Hamoudi and Sayyid Muqtada Al-Sadr checking on his health. In return, His Highness the Amir thanked them for their warm sentiments, wishing them perpetual well-being and everlasting progress and prosperity for the Iraqi people.

On Friday, His Highness the Amir received a call from Omani Sultan Qaboos bin Said in order to inquire about his health condition following successful medical checkups. His Highness the Amir thanked the Sultan of Oman for his good sentiments which reflect the depth of historic firm relations between both countries, wishing him good health and Omani people more welfare under the wise leadership of the Omani Sultan. Ways of promoting the close relations between Kuwait and Oman, in addition to the latest regional developments were discussed during the phone conversation. —KUNA

Kuwaiti inventors contribute to
science, world development

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Dr Zeyad Abdullah Al-Kandari in this file photo. —KUNA

KUWAIT: Like the rest of their global peers, Kuwaiti inventors have contributed immensely to the advancement and development of science locally and worldwide. The success of the Kuwaiti inventors has been attributed to the leadership's keenness on supporting scientific development and it was due to the tremendous assistance provided by the Kuwait Foundation of the Advancement of Science (KFAS).

In this regard, Kuwaiti inventor Sadeq Qassem has provided valuable input during his various international participations. Qassem came up with a new technology to speed up the process of analyzing samples at laboratories and came up with a fascinating invention to

enhance the performance of vehicles' taillights. Another inventor Sheikh Al-Majd came up with a device to enable the visually impaired to write. Al-Majd won recognition for her invention from the entities in the US. Within the oil sector, Engineer Tareq Al-Buaijan came up with a mechanism to control the level of emergency shutdowns at oil facilities. Buaijan's invention helped save millions in operational expenses. Kuwaiti Inventors Adel Jum'a, Mohammad Al-Azmi, Adel Al-Wasis, Nasser Al-Jimaz, Dr Ahmad Nabil, and Laila Al-Wazan all won recognitions for numerous inventions while partaking in international events which proved that Kuwait is amongst the leading countries in the field of science.

Meanwhile, Kuwaitis excelled also in the medical field. Kuwait's Dr Ibrahim Al-Rashdan was honored by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in 2014 for his invention that help facilitate cardiac catheterization procedures. The invention gained recognition from European medical professionals. Similarly, Dr Abdulrazzaq Al-Obaid also won recognition from US medical authorities for a device to help in the treatment of spinal fractures. Medical professionals Dr Fuziya Al-Kandari, Dr Muthana Al-Sartawi, Dr Jawad Abulhassan, and Dr Abdullah Al-Kandari all received accolades for offering new methods in treating heart diseases, body aches, and other ailments. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Dr Jawad Abulhassan in this file photo.

'Hear and Obey' song released in honor of Amir



KUWAIT: Kuwait TV launched the song 'Hear and Obey' in honor of His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, which reflects the solidarity and unity of the Kuwaiti people to abide by the wise instructions of His Highness that aim to realize the best of interests of Kuwait and its people.

The song includes many expressions that reflect the love of the Kuwaiti people for His Highness the Amir and their appreciation towards his great efforts and active role in enhancing and strengthening the humanitarian bonds within the Kuwaiti society and to unite their voice in response to His Highness the Amir at all costs. Thus, answering His Highness is the national duty of Kuwait's residents.

It is noteworthy that the military, educational, medical, media, health and sport sectors all participated in this voluntary piece in order to express their loyalty to His Highness the Amir and to achieve national unity against any threat to the beloved State of Kuwait.

Many Kuwaiti talents took part in the song that was produced by the Kuwait TV and directed by Ali Al-Najjar. Also taking part in the piece were Shamayel Al-Qaoud in coordination and follow-up, Fawaz Al-Doukhi



as the Executive Director, Ahmed Al-Qallaf on the instruments and arrangement, sound engineering by Eng. Abdullah Mubarak, Saber on production management, Nazar Pomah as Director of Photography, Jerome Nato as the 1st assistant camera, hairstylist Mohamed Arjan and Production services by Manzur and Cesar.

We would like to thank everyone who participated and contributed to the success of this work; including the Ministry of Education, the Ghazia Bint Jaber School for Girls, the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the Kuwait

Fire Service Directorate (KFS), the Salmiya Fire Station, the Qadsia Sports Club, The Kuwaiti Al-Mouj band, Al Arabi Fans Club, Ahmadi Hospital and Kuwait University.

Hoping that the voice of the Kuwaiti people will be heard worldwide and achieve the desired message that the Kuwaiti people are always prepared to carry out the orders of His Highness the Amir, and that they stand strong in the face of any aggression or threat to their country.

KUWAIT BILINGUAL SCHOOL No. 2
Jahra City

Job Fair

Kuwait Bilingual School (Pre - 12) will be holding a Job Fair at their new KBS 2 Campus on Saturday December 2nd to recruit for the 2018-2019 academic year. Interviews will be walk in from 9am to 1pm.

We are looking for degree certified, native English speaking teachers to join our progressive IB World School. (Teachers with IB PYP and MYP experience preferred but not essential).

We have confirmed vacancies in the following areas:

- High School Chemistry
- Middle School Math
- Boys PE (Middle and High School)
- Primary Homeroom

Interested applicants please bring a cover letter, an up to date resume, copies of degree certificates and reference copies.

Jahra City - Road no. 80, opp. Jahra traffic office
Tel. 1877881

KIB sponsors
B2B4SME forum

KUWAIT: In line with its ongoing commitment to supporting youth-based initiatives, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) sponsored the B2B4SME forum. The two-day forum was organized by the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development, under the auspices of the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs, Hind Al-Sabeeh.

This first-of-its-kind forum aimed at building an effective communication channel between small and medium-sized enterprises and large private companies. Additionally, the forum offered a great opportunity for exchanging ideas and experiences between youth and entrepreneurs, and allowed for other entrepreneurs to connect and network.

Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia, said: "We are committed to promoting the spirit of entrepreneurship, and as such always strive to sponsor forums and initiatives such as these that truly encourage and support local, young entrepreneurs. This forum is in line with our ongoing dedication to supporting youth and developing their innovative business ideas for enterprises of all sizes."

KIB's commitment to sponsoring and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises is ongoing, as the Bank aims at creating an environment which fosters emerging enterprises and nurtures entrepreneurship; thereby motivating entrepreneurs to develop new business concepts that drive the private sector and contribute to national economic growth.



It is worth noting that KIB's role is not limited to providing its progressive banking solutions that suit the various lifestyles and needs of youth, but its role further extends to being their key supporter by participating in various youth-based activities and initiatives. Accordingly, KIB stands as one of the leading local banks which support the youth segment across the community.

Local

MP proposes special residency to Arabs who live 40+ years in Kuwait

Right to free medical treatment, education, housing

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei filed a proposal to add two new articles to the Amiri decree number 17/1959 pertaining foreigners' residency. The first proposed article states that "the interior minister will be authorized to grant residency to non-Kuwaitis, upon their own requests, without work or sponsors, on the condition that he/she should be an Arab registered in the 1965 census, has lawfully resided in Kuwait for at least 40 consecutive years, has a lawful source of living and has good conduct." The proposal states that according to this article, applicant would be given a residency of five renewable years. The second article states that non-Kuwaitis granted residencies according to the above conditions would be treated as citizens in terms of receiving free medical treatment, disabled care, free education, driving licenses of all types and owning one housing unit.

Squandering
Head of the parliamentary financial affairs committee MP Salah Khorsheed urged the government to stop squandering funds, which was been prevalent at various ministries and government establishments as documents in State Audit Bureau reports, instead of rejecting bills proposed to help citizens face soaring prices.

Khorsheed said the government had proposed a memo of strategic payroll alternatives that was not approved by lawmakers, who demanded achieving justice amongst the holders of the same qualifications in

various bodies. Khorsheed also called for protecting the incentives of citizens in the educational and oil sectors, in addition to increasing child allowance and increasing rent allowance from KD 150 to KD 275.

Insurance

The parliamentary health affairs committee is scheduled to discuss health insurance for citizens in a meeting today to be attended by local medical officials. Informed sources explained that citizens' health insurance was still being considered and studied, and stressed that the government is not very enthusiastic about it because expansions of current hospi-

tals and new medical centers will provide proper healthcare for citizens and resolve the problem of long waiting times. The sources added that launching health insurance hospitals for expats will make public ones only for citizens.

Bonds

The Central Bank of Kuwait will offer bonds in dinars for public bidding on Tuesday, Nov 28 according to tawarruq conditions. The bonds' duration will be 182 days and denominated at KD 50,000, KD 100,000, KD 500,000 and KD 1 million, with the aim of controlling liquidity in local markets.



MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei



Applicant must be registered in the 1965 census

Declare the truth

Demonizing the expatriates

By Yousuf Al-Sultan

At a preface for the article, I would like first - as rational Kuwaitis amongst other Kuwaitis - to declare that foreigners residing in Kuwait who abide by law and order are our guests, and should be given all the appropriate options of living and freedom of everything, regardless of abnormal statements by peculiar people who sleep at night with nightmares that reflect the next day on their sick attitudes. Prior to independence, Kuwait contracted and hired multinationals to assist in exploration and producing oil and its various byproducts, along with others who strived hard to establish our medical and educational infrastructure.

Prior to independence, when policymakers in Kuwait wanted to establish a modern society, and with limitations of Kuwaitis both in quantity and quality, foreign manpower was the prime source in establishing several domains - health, education, judicial affairs, all sorts of media, research, sports, etc. I have witnessed the development of Kuwait and its worldwide reputation since the 1960s. Nonetheless, I declare the truth - that without foreign participation, no parameter of progress would have been achieved.

Kuwait's Islamic and Arabian paradigms do not allow insulting or discounting the efforts and impact of any person. It would be abusive, uncivilized and unfair if we do not credit or appreciate expatriates' efforts and hard work. Last but not the least, other rational and appreciative Kuwaitis and me are grateful to all foreign efforts to build Kuwait.

DIA hosts 12th biennial Middle East Regulatory Conference

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The 12th biennial Middle East Regulatory Conference (MERC) took place recently in Millennium Hotel. The Drug Information Association (DIA) hosted the conference with support from Middle East Regulatory Network (MERN) and European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA).

Jeffrey Kemprecos, from GCC Public Policy, said that the conference reviewed and tracked medicines and licenses to make sure that the medicines' supplies are safe. "We are here to share the practices about how to regulate the medicine supply with safety and high quality, to benefit the patients and also to adopt the best recommendations," he said. He added that Kuwait is standing in a good position and has one of the most transparent regulatory systems, and excellent cooperation with the companies in the biopharmaceutical sector. Kemprecos discussed about competitiveness, innovation and investment. He said that the Middle Eastern countries can compete in the innovative biopharmaceutical sector if they shared the same vision, strategy and policy road map to drive reforms as history shows that with the right eco-system, small countries can outperform larger countries.

Frank Lichtenberg, who is a professor of business at Columbia University, the United States of America, has been studying the impact of biomedical innovation on health for the past 20 years, and completed a study on nine Middle



KUWAIT: People attend the 12th biennial Middle East Regulatory Conference.

East and African countries. Lichtenberg discussed the impact of pharmaceutical innovation on longevity, productivity, and medical expenditure. He said that real-world evidence from numerous countries indicates that pharmaceutical innovation has been the principal cause of longevity growth where in the US, the value of reductions in work loss days and hospital admissions attributable to pharmaceutical innovation was estimated to be three times as large as the cost of new drugs consumed. Also, countries where new drugs are launched earlier obtain greater benefits from pharmaceutical innovation.

MERC brings together cross-functional leaders in drug development, in a uniquely neutral forum, from across the Middle East and Europe. Over 250 leaders from over 20 different countries share insights and diverse perspectives on the progress and priorities within the regulatory landscape of the region. The event was attended by Kuwait Drug and Food Control Administration, the Ministry of Health Kuwait, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority, the Egyptian Drug Authority, the Jordan Food and Drug Administration, and the Gulf Health Council.

These regulatory authorities, together with industry experts, openly exchanged opinions and information on topics such as, facil-

itated regulatory pathways, optimizing review processes, bar coding and serialization, electronic common technical documents (eCTD), and pharmacovigilance. The goal of this conference was to learn from one another, to bring tangible steps for advancement back to every country and organization, ultimately increasing patient access to new and improved medicines and therapies, also open exchange of country-level developments, as well as challenges, generates increased opportunities for collaboration and harmonization.

Since 1964, DIA has provided a global stage for collaboration to address healthcare challenges. As a member-driven volunteer organization, professionals from 80 countries have engaged with DIA through their unparalleled membership network, educational offerings, and professional development opportunities. In a uniquely neutral environment, DIA mobilizes the best and brightest minds to engage in current healthcare challenges and to affect outcomes. Starting with the controversy over the drug Thalidomide, DIA's founders - a group of 30 pharmaceutical professionals, medical writers, and academics - came together to create a platform for necessary global communication and collaboration to solve a healthcare threat to unborn children worldwide.

(WHO). The minister delivered a speech to the conference on behalf of His Highness the Amir. In the speech, Dr Al-Harbi said "it is a humanitarian and professional responsibility for us to introduce the latest scientific and technological achievements to all medical specializations in the country."

He stressed the need of doubling the efforts to improve healthcare in order to support the country's march towards sustainable development. He praised the conferees for their great insight into upgrading the technological, scientific and technical aspects of the medical profession and sharing experience on the latest practices worldwide. He added that the ministry will tap into the outcomes of the gathering while updating its policies and protocols for healthcare and protection of patients' rights. Meanwhile, KMA chairman and head of the conference Dr Mohammad Al-Mutairi extolled His Highness the Amir for his kind patronage of the event. He noted the KMA plays a growing social role on the local, regional and international scales, and takes part in international events meant to modernize the various branches of medicine.

KMA, out of belief in the noble approach of His Highness the Amir to humanitarian action, signed an agreement with Doctors Without Borders (MSF) on cooperation to provide medical aid to victims of conflicts in several parts of the world, he noted. Dr Mutairi added that the ongoing conference gathered 600 physicians from the Arab region, the United States and Europe, with the number of doctors who registered into the webpage of the event amounting to 1,800. The agenda of the two-day gathering includes 40 lectures and 15 workshops. — KUNA

Three minutes to renew license

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Interior Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Fahad Al-Shuwaie and an accompanying delegation visited Unix Four Company in Athens, Greece to test the instant service system for renewal of smart driver's licenses. He checked the renewal process through these systems which help issue the new license within three minutes. The machines will be distributed in different malls and public service centers around Kuwait.

Officers discharged

The directorate general of supervision and inspection summoned two interior ministry personnel who appeared in video clips on social media filming an expatriate man while verbally insulting him. The two officers were discharged from service after they were interrogated.

Five rescued

Public Relations and Information Department at Kuwait Fire Service Directorate said Marine firemen rescued five people near Ouha island. Salmiya Sea Rescue team received a call about a 31-foot boat sinking near Ouha island and rescued the distressed. No injuries were reported.

Forgery

Interior Ministry said residency detectives arrested expats for forging entry visas. A company representative was arrested and told police during interrogations about an expat who forges visas in exchange of money. Both were arrested and sent to concerned authorities.

local spotlight

Congratulations, Kuwait's civil aviation!

By Muna Al-Fuzai

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

Congratulations to Kuwait's civil aviation directorate for its extraordinary achievement! Last week, Kuwait's civil aviation management announced an unexpected and positive new surprise related to development in the standards of safety and security of international civil aviation regulations in Kuwait. The latest assessment of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) showed a significant progress of 78.18 percent for Kuwait compared to the modest and embarrassing percentage of 54 percent in the past.

ICAO is a specialized United Nations agency working on the application of standards and recommended practices (SARPs) for international civil aviation and policies aimed at supporting the civil aviation sector, which provides safety, efficiency, security, economic sustainability and environmental responsibility to ensure compliance with global rules. Hence, this report and the achievement of Kuwait gains importance.

This news is important to Kuwait both on official and international levels, as it affects Kuwait's reputation and its interest to modernize local laws and regulations related to civil aviation in a way that suits the requirements of the era and matches international regulations. The news is certainly joyful and thankful to those behind the quick transformation and development, but the question is - what does this mean to us as ordinary travelers?

For most people, the airport is still the same modest facility. Departure and arrival passengers are still mingling like at a train station, despite the existence of an auxiliary company to inspect bags and passengers, which is better than it was in the past. So what's new? These were the most prominent public observations.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation was not widely or actively mentioned in the past when talking about development and modernization of security and safety of aviation laws in Kuwait, until a year ago. This was when Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah took the lead and clearly changed this department radically for the best. Leading civil aviation away from the noise and inconvenience of the National Assembly gave him the ability to lead seriously and quietly. A qualified Kuwaiti team acts as his right hand, on which he trusts and depends to achieve the success needed for Kuwait. The success of this small department is a great achievement. The least reward is to grant them the permission to be an independent authority.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation said in a press release that ICAO completed a field visit by a specialized technical team to assess safety standards at Kuwait International Airport by announcing positive results reflecting the high efficiency of performance in various operational sectors. The team visit included a comprehensive inspection of the relevant administrations of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, which included aviation safety, air navigation, airport operations and engineering. The statement noted that ICAO commended the changes made by various departments in record time in order to meet key requirements in implementing operational safety standards at Kuwait International Airport.

The report was a joyous one to the airport administration. The airport is often criticized by the public, so news like this is a reason for them to remind everyone that it also has a positive role. The airport leadership is trying to develop, despite the modest prospects. For example, new baggage carousals will open on Jan 20 and loading of bags on airplanes will be done electronically.

The airport is a border point between countries and therefore has special importance in terms of safety and security. Modernizing the infrastructure of air transport and aviation regulations is indisputable. Kuwait aviation directorate - way to go!

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Kuwaitis make preparations ahead of a camel race at a club in Kabd, in Jahra governorate yesterday. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

NUKS 34th annual conference kicks off in the United States

Around 5,000 students attend the event

ATLANTA: The 34th National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) USA conference, kicked off in Atlanta, Georgia on Thursday evening under the slogan 'A united spirit for a brighter Kuwait.' Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States, Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah, said in a speech at the conference, which was attended by about 5,000 students, that the NUKS conference is an extension of the Kuwaiti people's relations outside the homeland and a continuation of the historical practice of the people of Kuwait to follow the democratic approach.

The interest of the political leadership in students' performance and their academic and scientific achievement is one of the priorities that is always raised during meetings with all officials in the Kuwaiti leadership specially His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and all government officials, Al-Sabah stressed.

Kuwait, in light of these accelerated events, enjoys security and stability due to the wisely leadership of His Highness the Amir, which the world has a lot of appreciation and respect, and also due to his balanced position on many issues, he said.

“A united spirit for a brighter Kuwait”

Kuwaiti students are in this friendly country for nothing but to gain knowledge and experience to build our beloved country, Sheikh Salem said. He called the students to be dedicated to their scientific

achievements and to be the best ambassadors of our homeland abroad. He also called the students to abide laws and regulations of their universities and take into account the good behaviors.

Meanwhile, head of the Cultural Office in Los Angeles, California, Dr Mohammed Al-Rashidi stressed the keenness of the Cultural Office to work diligently to employ all the possibilities available to facilitate the academic process of students and make all available ways to help them.

He also called the students to focus on the educational achievements in the first place and to be a proper representative to Kuwait in this friendly country. Rashidi stressed the importance of education and development in building a bright and productive future for Kuwait. "Adding the best way to improve society is to develop the spirit of youth and equip them with knowledge."

The annual conference of the NUKS lasts for three days and includes many political, sports, humanitarian, economic events and other issues in the presence of a number of Kuwaiti parliamentarians and prominent figures. —KUNA



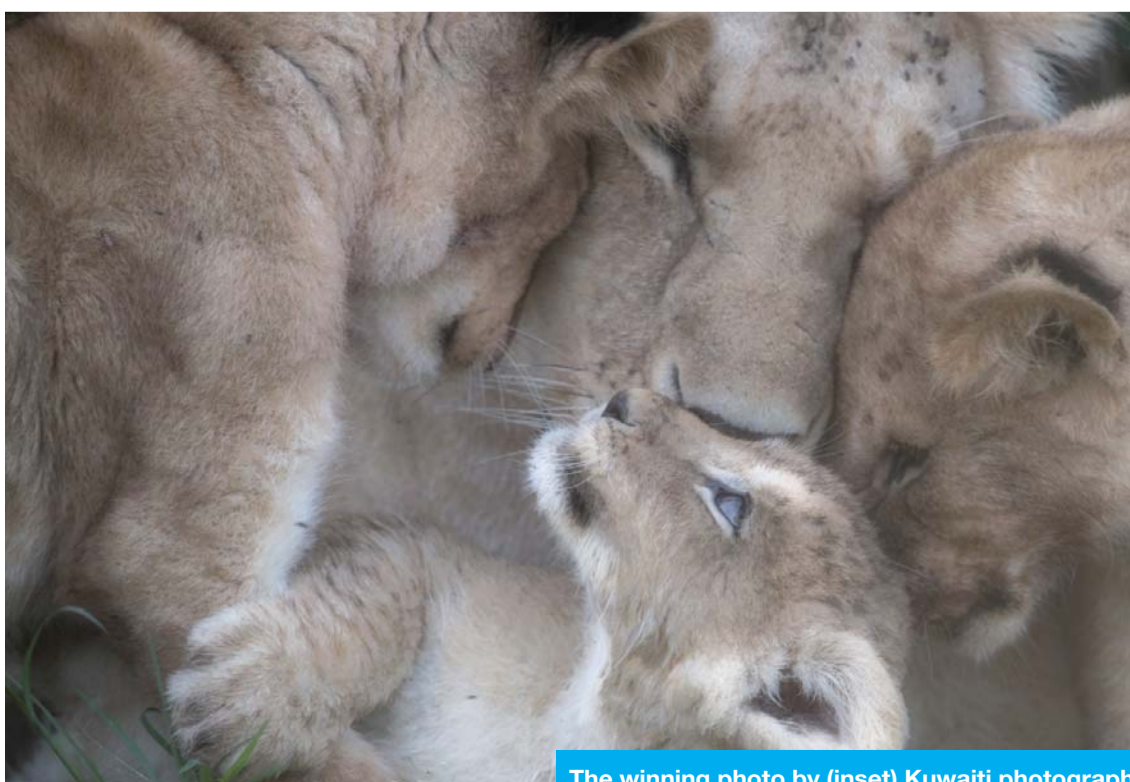
ATLANTA: Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah delivers a speech at the conference. —KUNA

Kuwaiti photographer wins first place in wildlife photo competition

VIRGINIA: Kuwaiti photographer Majid Al-Zaabi won first place at the international photography competition organized by the National Wildlife Federation of United States. Zaabi said that the winning photo was chosen among 25,000 photos that were submitted to the competi-

tion, dubbed the Wildlife National Journal of 2017, noting that the photo depicted a still moment of time. "Whatever the source of charm from this photo, or other images, they all reflect a passion for photography and professionalism throughout the world and contribute to a vision of nature in our lives," Zaabi added.

"It was at a moment that a lion cub was fondling his mother with his nose, taking the lead place in a warm family circle that attracted me due to the family affection and the love that filled this scene," Zaabi added. Zaabi won more than 100 excellent photography awards, while he was recently chosen from among 32 photographers around the world to mark the 100th anniversary of Nikon Company to test its latest photography cameras. —KUNA



The winning photo by (inset) Kuwaiti photographer Majid Al-Zaabi.

KIB sponsors 34th annual NUKS conference

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced its sponsorship of the 34th annual National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) conference, which will be held in the United States. Entitled 'A united spirit for a brighter Kuwait,' this year's conference will take place in Atlanta, and will run from November 23rd to 27th. The conference will be attended by an elite group of prominent figures and representatives from various fields, including: politics, economics, religion, sports and arts.

As General Manager of the Investment Department at KIB, Jamal Al-Barrak is invited to speak on behalf of the Bank as part of the economic seminars taking place during the confer-

ence, alongside a selection of notable speakers. On this occasion, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najja, said: "Our sponsorship of this conference comes as part of KIB's comprehensive strategy, which dedicates special attention to supporting students and student-related educational initiatives and activities. Accordingly, we participate in a number of local activities and events, as well as initiatives based outside of Kuwait. By doing so, we offer our moral support to our students who are studying abroad, making them feel close to home even when they are miles away."

Najja added that, as a key element of KIB's leading social responsibility program, the Bank continues to support and sponsor student-related educational activities and programs. This stems from its strong belief in the importance of supporting young, local talents. Additionally, the Bank continues to strengthen communication channels with Kuwaiti students across country boundaries, as it believes they are the nation's ambassadors and the shapers of its successful future.

Kuwait University accepts 222 bedoon students: Official

KUWAIT: The Central Apparatus for the Remedy of Situations of Illegal Residents said 222 male and female students, of bedoon (stateless) parents, have been accepted by Kuwait University (KU) for

first semester of academic year 2017-18. Abdullah Al-Farhan, Director of Information Department at the apparatus, said yesterday that the number was divided into 133 females and 89 males.

He explained that the fresh students were accepted in different faculties. Farhan said the number of students from the illegal residents segment has risen to 613, excluding those in colleges and private universities.

The apparatus, he added, has been working on enrolling sons and daughters of illegal residents into colleges and universities to help them continue their education. —KUNA

Local

ZGI entrepreneurs continue int'l accelerator program in London

Ambassador to UK welcomes Zain's entrepreneurs

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced the arrival of the Zain Great Idea (ZGI) entrepreneurs to London, the United Kingdom. The entrepreneurs are set to continue the second phase of the program - the international accelerator program - which commenced in San Francisco, the United States, for two weeks.

Upon their arrival, the entrepreneurs visited the Embassy of Kuwait in the UK, where the Ambassador of Kuwait to the UK Khalid Al-Duwaisan welcomed them in the embassy's headquarters in London. The ambassador expressed his pleasure in welcoming such talented Kuwaiti entrepreneurs who own bright startups and are excited about expanding to the European markets. The ambassador also listened to a quick summary about each entrepreneur's startup, and expressed his admiration of Zain's efforts in supporting and encouraging them and making this journey possible.

The ten entrepreneurs took part in an exciting and rich experience at San Francisco, specifically Silicon Valley - the international capital of technology and startup businesses - throughout two weeks, and are now continuing their training program in London, where they are mentored by Mind The Bridge and Brilliant Lab. A number of mentors, experts, and specialists will guide them through an extensive program about expansion of startups and SMEs into the European markets, the London market specifically, which is considered the third biggest global market that invests in emerging tech startups around the world.

The London program witnessed a number of field

visits that enriched the entrepreneurs' knowledge base, including a visit to London and Partners, the Mayor of London's official promotional agency. The visit covered multiple crucial topics, including legal consultation services about startup foundation, taxes in Europe, accounting services, and more. The entrepreneurs also visited the second biggest tech startup accelerator in the world, Techstars, where they will take part in one of Techstars' accelerator programs.

ZGI is a Zain initiative launched in partnership with Brilliant Lab, a startup accelerator service from Kuwait, and Mind The Bridge, a Silicon Valley-based organization specializing in entrepreneurship education for startups, enterprises and investors. The previous three successful programs has seen the empowerment, training, and investment in hundreds of creative and driven young Kuwaitis, of which many now own thriving Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

The first phase of the program, the ZGI boot camp, lasted for over two weeks at the company's main headquarters, where the participants learned about the tech startup culture and workings from leading mentors from Stanford University, IE Business school, entrepreneurs and regional and international venture capital firms.

Encouraging and providing the proper resources for the local entrepreneurial community is a top priority for Zain. Through the company's active Corporate Sustainability program, Zain is keen to contribute to Kuwait's economic and national development, much of which will be driven by the country's youth.



Kuwait's Ambassador to the United Kingdom Khalid Al-Duwaisan welcomes Zain's entrepreneurs.



ZGI entrepreneurs in London.

KFH participates in Media, Tech and Communication Forum

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the second Media, Technology and Communication Forum held under the auspices of State Minister for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Information Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdallah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

The forum was held for three days with the participation of a constellation of senior officials in technology and communication in governmental and private sectors, as well as a number of specialists and academics with expertise. The Forum on Media,

Technology and Communication is organized by Arab Media Forum, the Central Information Technology Agency, and the Arab Planning Institute.

The forum discussed how to reach the best use of media and social media in the management of lives and work through the studies and practices of specialists in the field. It introduced ways and means of working to organize the means of technology that work through the Internet space, and lay the foundations and rules of professional and legislative work, using the participants' expertise of the competencies, academic and practical experience in the areas of media and communications.

The agenda of the forum included 13 lectures with different contents. Madhi Al-Khamis, Secretary-General of Arab Media distributed the certificates of completion to KFH represented by Executive Manager Group Public Relations and Media, Yousef Al-Ruwaieh.



Yousef Al-Ruwaieh receives the certificates from Madhi Al-Khamis.



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Women 'speaking out' on sexual harassment

Mafia's tentacles extending into the virtual world

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STOCKHOLM: Protesters attend a demonstration against slavery in Libya, at Sergels torg in Stockholm yesterday. —AFP

Libya slave auctions: Activists raise alarm

Thousands of black Africans raped, tortured

PARIS: World leaders may have been quick to voice outrage over video footage of Libyan slave auctions, but activists raised the alarm months ago—and their warnings fell on deaf ears. Aid workers, rights groups and analysts say they had been shouting about rape, torture and forced work for thousands of black Africans in the war-torn north African country until they were blue in the face. But it took CNN's footage of young Africans being auctioned off near Tripoli, filmed on a hidden camera and aired on November 14, to force Western and African leaders into a flurry of condemnation.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres was "horrified"; African Union chief Alpha Conde was "outraged". France requested an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council, with President Emmanuel Macron branding the auctions a crime against humanity. But NGOs and experts have charged leaders with hypocrisy. "Ordinary people aside, everyone knew about this—governments, international organizations, political leaders," said Hamidou Anne, a Senegalese analyst at think-tank L'Afrique des Idees.

Alioune Tine, Amnesty International's West Africa director, said "hostage-takings, violence, torture and rape" were well documented in Libya. "And we've been talking about slavery for a long time," he added. Libya became a massive transit hub for sub-Saharan

Africans setting sail for Europe after the fall of dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 tipped the country into chaos. The EU has been desperate to stem the influx—more than 1.5 million migrants have arrived in Europe since 2015, according to UN figures. But leaders are at a loss to find solutions for the asylum seekers on the other side of the Mediterranean. This month it faced heavy criticism from the UN over its training of the Libyan coastguard, which the world body's rights chief said resulted in migrants being sent back to "horrific" prisons.

'Unimaginable horrors'

With EU support, Italy has been training Libyan coastguards to intercept boats as part of a controversial deal that has seen migrant arrivals down nearly 70 percent since July. But the UN charges that the policy leaves migrants returned to Libya at risk of torture, rape, forced labor and extortion. "The international community cannot continue to turn a blind eye to the unimaginable horrors endured by migrants in

Libya," UN rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said. Brussels has hit back that its coastguard training has helped save lives—nearly 3,000 people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean this year—while EU aid has helped UN agencies to send 10,000 migrants home from Libya voluntarily.

In The Gambia, Karamo Keita set up a group to warn fellow youngsters not to attempt the trip to Europe, after suffering horrific abuses in Libya including slave labor. "In Libya, black people have no right," he said back in September. "We were taken to various farms where the Libyan guy sold us as slaves. We worked on the farms for free." The International Organization for Migration had in April reported the existence of markets where migrants became "commodities to be bought". And several months later the head of medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres, Joanne Liu, wrote an open letter to European governments warning of the thriving "kidnapping, torture and extortion business". "In their

efforts to stem the influx, are European governments ready to pay the price for rape, torture and slavery?" she asked, adding: "We can't say we didn't know about this."

'Don't condemn, act'

Amnesty's Tine said that in its efforts to stop migrants arriving "at all cost", Europe bore "a fundamental responsibility" for the horrors in Libya. Yet others are also to blame, he said. "African countries do nothing to make their young people stay, to give them work," he said. Analyst Hamidou Anne also said a passive response from African leaders was in part to blame for the unfolding disaster, along with "systematic racism in the Maghreb countries". "This cannot go on," he said. "Faced with a crime against humanity you don't condemn it, you act."

Tiny Rwanda has offered, since the scandal broke, to take in 30,000 Africans from Libya. Migration commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos meanwhile said on Thursday that the EU was "working without let-up" to find solutions. Tine said slavery needed to be on the agenda at an EU-AU summit on November 29-30 in Abidjan, an idea already floated by Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou. "We need an impartial investigation to see how the trafficking is organized and who is behind it," Tine said. And, he added, "everyone must take their responsibilities." —AFP



Warnings fell on deaf ears amid outrage

Clashes erupt as Pakistan's police disperse Islamists

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani forces clashed violently with hardline religious protesters in Islamabad yesterday, with at least one person killed, more than 130 injured and small demonstrations spreading to other cities after police cracked down on an Islamist sit-in. Thousands of security forces fired tear gas and rubber bullets as the demonstrators blocked roads and burned police vehicles around the site of the sit-in, which has choked a main highway and virtually paralyzed the capital for nearly three weeks.

An Islamabad police spokesman confirmed that a policeman was killed in the fighting after he was struck in the head by a rock, and an AFP journalist saw what appeared to be the body of at least one demonstrator lying on the road in the capital. At least 139 injured people have been taken to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad, a spokesman from the hospital told AFP, adding that 93 of them were members of the security forces.

The sit-in by the little-known hardline group called Tehreek-i-Labaik Ya Rasool Allah Pakistan (TLRAP) has blocked the main road into the capital used by thousands of commuters since November 6, causing hours-long traffic snarls and enraging commuters. The protesters, who before yesterday numbered some 2,000 people, are demanding that Pakistan's law minister Zahid Hamid resign over a hastily-abandoned amendment to the oath that election candidates must swear.

Demonstrators have linked it to blasphemy—a highly contentious issue in Muslim Pakistan—and claim the oath was softened to enable the participation of Ahmadis, a long-persecuted Islamic

minority sect. The protesters come from the Bareilvi sect of Islam that has strong ties to Sufism—a mystical branch of the religion that is seen as moderate. However the execution in 2016 of Bareilvi follower Mumtaz Qadri—who assassinated liberal Punjab governor Salman Taseer over his stance on the country's blasphemy laws—led members of the group to take a more hardline stance against any moves to reform the legislation.

"These people already had a grudge against the government and the government just provided them the opportunity to vent out their anger," said political analyst Hasan Askari. Smoke and tear gas filled the air in the ongoing, hours-long bid by some 8,500 police as well as paramilitary Rangers and Frontier Corps forces to clear the demonstrators, which began soon after dawn. AFP reporters at the site said dozens more demonstrators were arriving. Fresh protests were also springing up in other cities. Police in Karachi said some 200 protesters were blocking a major road in the southern port, with at least nine injured people—including three with gunshot wounds—brought to hospital, according to doctors.

Markets and shops were closing in the megacity, Pakistan's commercial hub, as alarmed residents stayed inside while clerics called for more demonstrators to come and help protect the dignity of the Prophet Mohammed. Smaller demonstrations were breaking out in Lahore and other cities, according to local media. As the clashes intensified, Pakistan's powerful military chief phoned the prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi to urge the situation be handled "peacefully," military spokesman Major General Asif Ghafoor said on Twitter. General Qamar Javed Bajwa called for both sides to avoid violence "as it is not in national interest". Pakistan's media regulator barred local TV channels from broadcasting live images from the scene, though protesters were still using Facebook Live and other social media.

Bungled response

Authorities have hesitated to act against the sit-in, citing fears of violence as the demonstrators have vowed to die for their cause. But their weeks of inaction have sparked the wrath of residents as well as Pakistan's judiciary, with the Supreme Court issuing a blistering statement ear-



ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani protester of the Tehreek-i-Labaik Yah Rasool Allah Pakistan (TLRAP) religious group throws a tear gas shell back towards police during a clash in Islamabad yesterday. —AFP

lier in the week and the Islamabad High Court threatening to hold officials in contempt. The sit-in had previously cost the life of an eight-year-old child whose ambulance could not reach a hospital in time due to the blocked roads.

Analysts and critics have accused the government of bungling its response to the protest, and allowing a minor issue to grow into a headline-grabbing and potentially dangerous situation. "Politically driven procrastination has its own costs and this is what the government is paying," analyst Imtiaz Gul said. The government delays had "allowed all like-minded people to organize and prepare for the protests," he said, adding that whether or not the government is forced to ask for military aid "it has already become explosive". —AFP

'Disputed partition' of Palestine 70 years ago

PARIS: The UN plan that partitioned Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, was adopted 70 years ago. The resolution led to the creation of Israel, but an independent Palestinian state has yet to see the light of day. Here is a recap.

Palestine handed to UN

After World War II, Britain's grasp on power in Palestine was slipping. It had received a mandate for the territory from the League of Nations in 1922. But things had changed radically since then, following the Jewish Holocaust, mounting pressure from underground Zionist groups, the creation of the Arab League and increased US involvement in the Middle East. In February 1947 London announced it would give up control of Palestine, handing it over to the United Nations, which had replaced the League of Nations.

A three-minute vote

The UN General Assembly in New York adopted Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine on November 29, 1947. In a vote that took less than three minutes, Palestine—home to 1.3 million Arabs and 600,000 Jews—was

divided into three entities which were to be formed by August 1, 1948. The Jewish state was allocated 14,000 square kilometers of territory, while the Palestinians were to keep three regions spanning 11,500 square kilometers. A special international zone was created for Jerusalem and its surrounding areas. The land that was to become Israel represented 54 percent of mandate Palestine, though Jews accounted for 30 percent of the population. The UN plan also laid out details on citizenship, transit rights, economic union and a declaration that each of the independent states allow access to holy sites and respect the rights of religious communities and minorities.

US, Soviet Union front

Even though Britain had prompted the session that called the vote, it abstained because of the explosive nature of the text. Having regularly changed its position over the Palestinian issue, London was at this point broadly on the side of the Arabs. Arab states were against, calling for the creation of a single, democratic and independent Palestinian state encompassing the whole area. However they came up against an unexpected alliance between Cold War foes the United States and the Soviet Union which made it possible to get the two-thirds majority needed for the text to be adopted. While the Soviet Union wanted Britain out of Palestine, the United States leadership, encouraged by Jews inside the country, backed the formation of an independent Jewish state. —AFP

International

US to cut off arms supply to Kurd fighters in Syria

Syrian Kurds who battled IS feel 'alienated'

ANKARA: The United States will cut off its supply of arms to Kurdish fighters in Syria, a move by President Donald Trump that is sure to please Turkey but further alienate Syrian Kurds who bore much of the fight against the Islamic State group. In a phone call Friday with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Trump said he'd "given clear instructions" that the Kurds will receive no more weapons - "and that this nonsense should have ended a long time ago," said Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu.

The White House confirmed the move in a cryptic statement about the phone call that said Trump had informed the Turk of "pending adjustments to the military support provided to our partners on the ground in Syria." The White House called the move "consistent with our previous policy" and noted the recent fall of Raqqa, once the Islamic State group's self-declared capital but recently liberated by a largely Kurdish force. The Trump administration announced in May it would start arming the Kurds in anticipation of the fight to retake Raqqa. "We are progressing into a stabilization phase to ensure that ISIS cannot return," the White House said, using an acronym for the extremist group.

The move could help ease strained tensions between the US and Turkey, two NATO allies that have been sharply at odds about how best to wage the fight against IS. Turkey considers the Kurdish Syrian fighters, known by the initials YPG, to be terrorists because of their affiliation to outlawed Kurdish rebels that have waged a three decade-long insurgency in Turkey. Yet the US chose to partner with the YPG in Syria anyway, arguing that the battle-hardened Kurds were the most effective fighting force available.

Cavusoglu, who said he was in the room with Erdogan during Trump's call, quoted the US president as saying he

had given instructions to US generals and to national security adviser HR McMaster that "no weapons would be issued." "Of course, we were very happy with this," Cavusoglu said. Yet for the Kurds, it was the latest demoralizing blow to their hopes for greater recognition in the region. Last month, the Kurds in neighboring Iraq saw their recent territorial gains erased by the Iraqi military, which seized the oil-rich city of Kirkuk and other disputed areas from the Kurdish regional government in retaliation for a Kurdish independence referendum that the US ardently opposed.

Trump's decision appeared to catch both the Pentagon and the US State Department off guard. Officials at both agencies, who would normally be informed of changes in US policy toward arming the Syrian Kurds, said they were unaware of any changes. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity. It was unclear whether the Trump administration notified the Kurds of the move before telling the Turks. Nor was it how much significance the change would have on the ground, considering the fight against IS is almost over. The United States has been arming the Kurds in their fight against IS through an umbrella group known as the Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF, which is comprised of Kurdish as well as Arab fighters.

But the retreat of IS, which has lost nearly all its territory in Syria, has altered the dynamics in the region and a US defense official said he was unaware of any additional arms scheduled to be transferred to the Kurds, even before the Turkish announcement. Last week, Col Ryan Dillon, the chief spokesman for the US coalition that is fighting IS in Iraq and Syria, said there has yet to be any reduction in the number of US advisers working with the SDF. His comments appeared to suggest the possibility that changes in the level and type of US military support for the Syrian Kurds could be coming.

As the fight against IS has waned in recent months, the US has pledged to carefully monitor the weapons it pro-



BAIJI, Iraq: Iraqi forces, supported by members of the Hashed Al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilization units), advance through the Salaheddin province in the western desert bordering Syria after leaving the town of Baiji, as they attempt to flush out remaining Islamic State (IS) group fighters in the Al-Jazeera region. —AFP

vides the Kurds, notably ensuring that they don't wind up in the hands of Kurdish insurgents in Turkey known as the PKK. Both Turkey and the US consider the PKK a terrorist group. But the United States has tried to draw a distinction between the PKK and the Syrian Kurds across the border, while Turkey insists they're essentially the same.

In both Syria and Iraq, the US relied on Kurdish fighters to do much of the fighting against IS, but those efforts

have yet to lead to a realization of the Kurds' broader aspirations, most notably an independent state. Washington's support for the Syrian Kurds, in particular, has been a major thorn in US-Turkish relations for several years, given Turkey's concerns about the Kurds' territorial aspirations. In particular, Turkey has feared the establishment of a contiguous, Kurdish-held canton in northern Syria that runs along the Turkish border.—AP



Move could ease tension between US and Turkey

Gold trader's trial sparks anger and concern in Turkey

ANKARA: A court case in the United States against a leading gold trader and a top Turkish banking executive has sparked anger and anxiety in Ankara, with both US-Turkey ties and the economy at risk of damage. Turkish officials have condemned as a "plot" the charges against Turkish-Iranian gold mogul Reza Zarrab and Mehmet Hakan Atilla, the deputy chief executive of Turkish lender Halkbank, of violating US sanctions against Iran. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has raised the issue repeatedly in official talks, according to a former American official, and called for their release.

US media reports have suggested in recent days that Zarrab may be seeking a plea bargain in the case and shown willingness to testify against Turkey. Turkish officials are now denouncing the case as a another conspiracy by the US-based preacher Fethullah Gulen, the alleged mastermind of the 2016 failed coup targeting Erdogan. According to Atilla Yesilada, Turkey specialist at Global Source Partners, the Erdogan-led ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is "extremely worried". That explains the pro-AKP media campaign to portray the case as "orchestrated by the American Deep State and Gulenists," he added.

Embarrassing revelations?

Zarrab was one of the main figures of a 2013 corruption scandal in Turkey that Erdogan also sees as a bid by Gulen to bring him down. Caught up in the scandal too were four ministers accused of accepting bribes from Zarrab, 34, to facilitate sanctions-busting trade and other deals. One allegation at the time was that ex-economy minister Mehmet Zafer Caglayan received a \$300,000 (255,000 euro) watch as a bribe. He is also charged in this case in absentia. Erdogan, who has dismissed the claims as a fabrication, has raised Zarrab's case "multiple times" at the highest level under former president Barack Obama and his successor Donald Trump, former US State Department official Amanda Sloat said.

"Although he (Erdogan) is not charged with any crime, corruption revelations would be embarrassing to him, his family and his inner circle," Sloat, now a senior fellow at the US-based Brookings Institution, told AFP. Former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani, who is part of Zarrab's legal team, met Erdogan in Turkey in April, joined by Michael Mukasey, a former attorney general during president George W. Bush's administration.

'Defendants held like hostages'

The trial is now set to kick off on December 4. Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdag said this week that the defendants were being "held like hostages" and subjected to pressure. Meanwhile, Turkish prosecutors even opened a criminal case against their US counterparts on charges of fabricating the case. But analysts warned that the sheer intensity of Turkey's reaction risked further damaging already brittle relations with the US, a key NATO ally. "Turkish reaction to the trial—especially accusations it is an American conspiracy to bring down the government—could be toxic to Washington's perception of Ankara," Sloat said. Heather Nauert, State Department spokeswoman, dismissed the accusations that the case was an American conspiracy, saying Washington had heard "that old same song and dance from Turkey before".

Negative impact

There are also fears over possible fines on Halkbank and possibly other Turkish banks—in the event of a guilty verdict. The Turkish lira has hit record lows against the US dollar in the last days, partly due to the uncertainty generated by the case. William Jackson, senior emerging markets economist at Capital Economics in London, said that if fines were issued, there could be an effect on credit conditions and GDP.—AFP

Mugabe's successor and the 'poisoned ice cream' plot

HARARE: On August 17, the Zimbabwean government issued an official denial that Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was vice president at the time, had eaten ice cream at a political rally. "For the record, the Vice President did not eat ice cream," Information Minister Chris Mushohwe said. "Yes, there was ice cream. I ate it, many people ate the ice cream, but he did not eat the ice cream himself." The denial was an attempt to quash reports that Mnangagwa had been poisoned by ice cream made at the large Gushungo dairy owned Robert Mugabe—who resigned as president on Tuesday—and his wife Grace. At the time, Mnangagwa and the first lady were locked in a bitter battle to succeed the ageing 93-year-old president, with hostilities erupting in public after years of behind-the-scenes plotting.

The struggle was ultimately won by Mnangagwa who was inaugurated as president on Friday after a military takeover and mass street protests which quickly brought about Mugabe's departure. The ice cream scandal was one of the more colorful details of the extraordinary fall of Mugabe, whose 37-year reign came crashing down over his efforts to promote Grace as his heir. Mnangagwa was taken seriously ill after eating at the rally and had to be urgently flown to neighboring South Africa for emergency treatment with his life apparently at risk. Rumors that he had died spread panic, and he only returned to Zimbabwe several days later, still in poor health.



HARARE: Zimbabweans make their way to the National Sports Stadium in Harare for the inauguration of interim President Emmerson Mnangagwa. —AFP

Grace on the attack

Soon afterwards, Grace Mugabe waded into the scandal, launching one of her trademark verbal fightbacks against the vice president who for decades had been one of her husband's closest allies. "How can I kill Mnangagwa?" Grace mockingly told guests at the launch of a new bank. "I am a wife of the president. Who is Mnangagwa on this earth? Who is he? I want to ask, what do I get from him?" "Killing someone who was given a job by my husband? That is nonsensical." The alleged poisoning took place in the southern town of Gwanda on August 12 at one of a series of ZANU-PF party "youth rallies" at which Mugabe spoke ahead of elections next year. State media admitted Mnangagwa suffered severe vomiting and diarrhoea at the event, but said that doctors suspected that food which had gone off was to blame. Mnangagwa and his wife were later seen at other public occasions refusing to eat food served by waiters.

'It began with an ice cream'

The Mugabes' control of lucrative dairies had been a source of deep public resentment with the couple often criticized for their corrupt business dealings and extravagant lifestyles. Mnangagwa, 75, has no doubt that he was poisoned in a failed assassination attempt which ultimately inspired him to push harder for the end of Mugabe's reign. "I was subjected to poisoning which resulted in my being airlifted to South Africa," he told supporters as he returned to Zimbabwe on Wednesday following Mugabe's ouster. "I survived (but) this time around I said to myself I should not wait for them to eliminate me." In the past week, there has been a wave of jokes, memes and viral songs that have focused on the role ice cream played in Mugabe's spectacular downfall. "Who would have thought that the soldiers would revolt," say lyrics set to a popular gospel tune. "It all started with an ice cream."—AFP

Chad keeps wary eye on shifting rebel alliances

N'DJAMENA: Chad's government is keeping a wary eye on developments along its Libyan and Sudanese borders where rebel groups are trying to pull together into a political formation to challenge President Idriss Deby. On the face of it, N'Djamena appears to be unconcerned, with the defense minister's office telling AFP troops are continuing to patrol the borders without any move to send in reinforcements. But behind the scenes, they are worried. "In order not to panic the population, the government is pretending. But everyone in Chad knows that the situation is not good," an official admitted, speaking on condition of anonymity. Deby seized power in a 1990 military coup and has kept on top of a rebellion in the east, notably foiling a bid to overthrow him in February 2008 when rebel troops reached the outskirts of N'Djamena.

That failed attempt was led by the Union of Forces of Resistance (UFR), a rebel coalition which has since been forced to operate on the fringes of Chad's northern and eastern borders. The UFR is led by

Timane Erdimi, a nephew of the president who lives in Qatar, a country with which N'Djamena broke diplomatic relations last August for "an attempt to destabilize Chad" via its northern neighbor Libya. Weaker now than it was in 2008, UFR is currently unable to be an effective fighting force, according to a source close to the group.

Forming a political force?

But it is factions allied to the UFR that are causing the most concern, sources say. The UFR "seems to have regained strength and is threatening to resume hostilities," warned an article in the local press in October. Speaking to AFP, Youssouf Hamid, the UFR's spokesman in exile who is based in Europe, said the group wanted "to gather the (armed) opposition into a political platform" in order to hold "internationally-monitored political talks with the Deby regime."

"The goal is to gather as wide a group as possible" to show that "it is Deby who is forcing people to wage war," he said. But there are other UFR-allied rebel groups based in southern Libya and Darfur, in neighboring western Sudan, who are also trying to form alliances, AFP has learned. Chad, a former French colony and one of the world's poorest nations, has vast desert borders, including with Libya and Sudan, which are notoriously difficult to police and militants can often roam between countries undetected.—AFP

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International

Mafia specter haunting Italy spreading to the cyberspace

Mafia's tentacles extending into the virtual world

MILAN: A week after the death of Cosa Nostra boss Toto Riina, key figures in Italy's judiciary and police have warned the mafia's tentacles are extending into the virtual world. Gangrenous and omnipresent in the south, the country's various criminal networks are as powerful as ever and are also developing in the wealthier, industrialized north, a major conference on the fight against organized crime was told. "The mafia has not won, but it has not lost either," Justice Minister Andrea Orlando said in the keynote speech.

The two-day gathering, which concluded Friday, was the culmination of a year of research and reflection involving more than 220 experts.

"For years we have had the most extensive anti-mafia legislation in place, we have been mounting operations non-stop for 25 years, how is it possible that the mafias can still be so powerful?" asked Franco Roberti, who was the national anti-mafia prosecutor until last week.

Thousands of mobsters are behind bars and more than 30 billion euros (\$35 billion) of ill-gotten assets have been seized in the last two decades. Yet still the clan and family-based networks of 'Ndrangheta (based in Calabria in Italy's deep south), the Camorra (in and around Naples), Cosa Nostra (Sicily) and the lesser-known Sacra Corona Unita (Puglia), continue to flourish, at home and abroad. "They accumulate money in incredible proportions, and this cash ends up in our economy, in companies, in activities that are often run by honest and respectable people," said Roberti's successor, Federico Cafiero De Raho.



Italy's criminal networks are as powerful as ever

Not just drugs

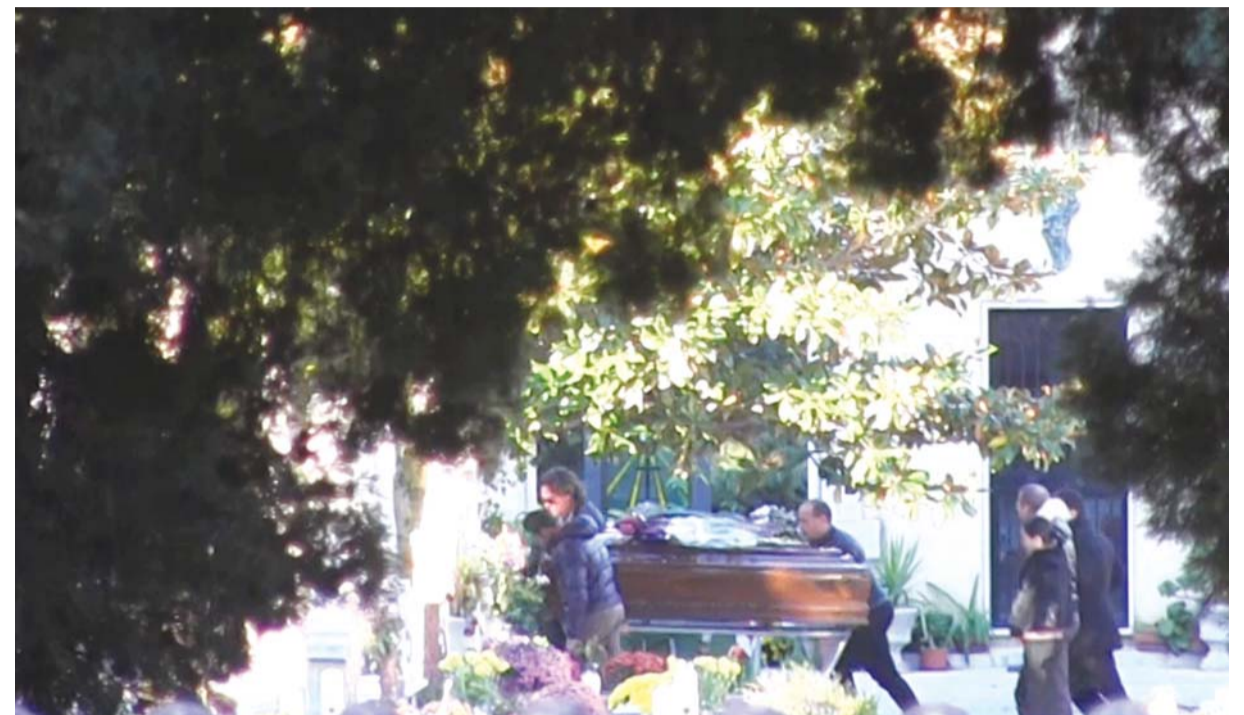
"When they move their companies into a particular sector, they grab the whole market for themselves," he adds. "That is how it works in the centre and north of the country - in the south they are everywhere." A report presented at the conference noted that Milan, economic capital of the industrial north, was now third in the ranking of areas by value of assets seized from the mafia, behind Palermo (capital of Sicily) and Naples.

"Within a few years, it is plausible to envisage Lombardy (the region including Milan) and Latium (Rome and its surrounds) overtaking Calabria and Puglia and getting to the level of Naples and Sicily (in terms of mafia infiltration)," the report warns. Drugs, from street dealing to international trafficking on a major scale, are at the core of all the Italian mafias' activities. But their tentacles also stretch into supermarkets, restaurants and bars, construction, farming and all forms of food production, sport, people trafficking and refuse management.

"The persistence of the mafia is not an accident of history," noted the Justice Minister. "It tells us something profound: it is a reflection of a social and political crisis."

'Bitcoin mafia'

"Mafia power fills a vacuum, it depends on the state withdrawing, on the weakness of civil society, on problems of integration. It slips into the fissures, taking advantage of the slightest weakness to get stronger. "Our enemies are proactive, dynamic and multifaceted. They are capable of adapting to social and economic change."



SICILY: A video grab shows relatives of mafia boss Toto Riina walking behind his coffin during the funeral at the Corleone cemetery in Sicily. Former 'boss of bosses' Toto Riina, one of the most feared Godfathers in the history of the Sicilian Mafia, died early on November 17, 2017 after battling cancer. —AFP

One example is that contemporary mobsters order the killings of fewer people than the likes of Riina, the Sicilian godfather who died last week. Aged 87, the "boss of all bosses" was serving 26 life sentences for some of the 150 murders he is thought to have ordered. Corruption, Riina's successors have realised, is more efficient than the threat of violence. "They've stopped using arms and explosives to

do their talking but they've found more insidious methods," said Pietro Grasso, a judge who presided over some of the biggest mafia trials and is now the president of the Senate.

The famous "pizzini", tiny scraps of paper used to transmit coded messages between made men, have been replaced by briefcases. Funds are now more likely to be stored in the form of Bitcoin than notes stuffed in milk churns. —AFP

News in brief

Hotel blaze kills 11

TBILISI: Georgian leaders have vowed to punish those responsible for a blaze that killed 11 people at a five-star hotel in Georgia's Black Sea resort city of Batumi. Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili, who was returning Friday to the Georgian capital Tbilisi from a summit with EU leaders in Brussels, diverted his plane to Batumi upon learning of the fire at the posh 22-storey Leograd hotel. He pledged a prompt investigation into the cause of the blaze. "All those responsible for this tragedy will be punished," he said late Friday. Officials yesterday revised down the death toll after initially putting it at 12 people. "Eleven people died as a result of the fire" in Georgia's second-largest city of Batumi late Friday, the Caucasus nation's interior ministry said in a statement. The victims - 10 Georgians and an Iranian-all died of smoke inhalation, the interior ministry said. Twenty one people were hospitalized, mostly with carbon monoxide poisoning, and were in a stable condition, it added.

Protest over murders

PRETORIA: Hundreds of white South African farmers yesterday took to the streets of Pretoria, demanding government action over a wave of murders targeting their communities in rural areas. The march is the latest protest staged over the murder of at least 72 white farmers so far this year, according to figures from campaign group AfriForum. "In the last six years, (there has been) an increase every year in farm attacks and murders," said Ernst Roets, a member of AfriForum, which advocates for its largely white membership, many of whom speak Afrikaans. Protesters marched under the rain to Union Building, seat of the South African government. "Stop farm murder" and "We are mourning", read some of the marchers' placards. Dirk Hermann, who helped organize the march, said "there is much more murder of farmers in South Africa" than of people in other professions, including the police force.

Military takeover 'legal'

HARARE: A Zimbabwe High Court has ruled that the military takeover that led to Robert Mugabe's ousting was legal, raising immediate concerns about judicial independence under the country's new administration. Army chiefs put military vehicles on the streets of Harare and placed veteran leader Mugabe, 93, under house arrest, before he resigned on Tuesday. Many Zimbabweans celebrated the end of Mugabe's 37-year rule, but fear the new government under President Emmerson Mnangagwa could also be an authoritarian regime. "Actions by the Zimbabwe Defense Forces to stop the usurping of power by those close to former president Robert Mugabe are constitutional," state-run ZBC media yesterday reported the court as saying. In an apparent reference to Mugabe's wife Grace and her supporters, it said the court ruled Friday that the takeover was "to ensure the non-elected individuals do not exercise powers that can only be exercised by (those) elected".

25 die as boat sinks

TRIPOLI: At least 25 migrants died after their boat sank off Libya's western coast yesterday and survivors were being brought back to port in Tripoli, Libyan coastguard officials said. Libya is the main departure point for mostly African migrants trying to cross to Europe. Smugglers usually pack them into flimsy inflatable boats that often break down or sink. Most migrants are picked up by international vessels and taken to Italy, where more than 115,000 have landed so far this year, although an increasing number are intercepted by Libya's European-backed coastguard and returned to the North African country. Since July, there has been a sharp drop in crossings, though this week has seen a renewed surge in departures.

Experimenting adult education in Washington

WASHINGTON: A high school dropout, Nicole Dickey adds fractions in math class at a charter school for adults, hoping to earn her high school credentials and find a good paying office job. "My life has changed, I am here to make it better," said Dickey, 39, who left high school after she became pregnant and spent the next two decades working low-paying jobs, raising five children, living on government assistance and struggling with alcoholism.

Faced with high illiteracy rates among city residents and an extremely competitive job market, the nation's capital is experimenting with adult education. The district is running more than a dozen adult schools, both charter and traditional public ones that together serve about 5,100 students, both disconnected youth and older adults. And despite the political controversy surrounding Education Secretary Betsy DeVos' push to expand school choice, the charter and the traditional public school sectors in the District of Columbia cooperate in adult learning.

Dickey's story is part of a larger picture nationwide. Even though high school graduation rates have been rising in recent years, 10 percent of American adults aged 25 or over don't have high school credentials, according to government data. With 9 out of 10 jobs today going to college graduates, not having a high school credential is strongly associated with unemployment, poverty, poor health and eventually similar problems for one's children.

Across the country, adults looking to earn high school credentials usually take classes at community colleges or community-based organizations to pass the General Education



WASHINGTON: Nicole Dickey, 39, an adult learner at Community College Preparatory Academy in southeast Washington, poses for a picture in the computer laboratory. —AP

Development test, known as the GED. Unlike those options, which often carry fees, the adult schools in the District of Columbia are free and open to residents age 16 or 17, depending on the school, and older who want to earn high school credentials or further their skills. One student hunched over a math problem at Community College Preparatory Academy on a recent morning was 85 years old.

That's where Dickey labors on math and sees new possibilities. "I want to work in an office building," she said. "I want something different. I want to have options." In the city, more than 72,000 residents 25 and older don't have high school credentials, according to 2016 census data. The first adult school in the city opened in the 1970s, and the sector has been growing in recent years. The DC Public Charter School Board has opened four new schools since 2012 and the DC Public Schools this year spent \$4 million to revamp its four adult schools.

While the adult charter schools tend to focus on older residents, traditional adult schools cater to residents aged 17-22, who receive a high

school diploma if they complete the program. The schools have had mixed success, in part because older students also are balancing families and jobs. At Luke C Moore High School, a public school that serves young adults, the average graduation rate is 49 percent, significantly below the nation -and DC - average. At Community College Prep, the GED completion rate is 50 percent.

Nationwide, GED completion can range from 39 to 80 percent, according to several studies that used different methodology for tracking success rates. Such comparisons of success rates aren't the full measure, said Julie Strawn with Abt Associates, a research and consulting firm, because many other factors count, such as students' initial skills and the barriers they face.

"Whether that's low or high depends a lot on where the students they are serving are starting from," Strawn said. This year, the district launched a leadership training program at Georgetown University for 20 principals of DC regular and adult schools, both from the traditional public and charter sectors, to study together and foster cooperation. —AP

False terror alert in London's Oxford St

LONDON: Police rushed to London's busy Oxford Street shopping district on Friday after reports that shots had been fired, sparking fears of a terror incident and leaving 16 people hurt in the panic. Armed officers locked down the area for more than an hour before the Metropolitan Police said it had not found "any trace of any suspects, evidence of shots fired or casualties". British Transport Police said they believed the security scare started with "an altercation between two men" on the platform of Oxford Circus Underground station.

They released CCTV images of the two men and appealed to the public for any information about the incident or what might have caused people to start fleeing the station. The area was packed with shoppers seeking "Black Friday" bargains and several people were injured fleeing the scene, including nine who were taken to hospital, London's Ambulance Service said. "We checked over and treated several patients who sustained injuries while leaving the Oxford Circus area," it said. "We discharged seven patients at the scene and took eight patients to two central London hospital for minor injuries. We also took

one patient to a major trauma centre for leg injuries."

Police initially said they were responding to reports of gunfire "as if the incident is terrorist related" and urged any shoppers to shelter in shops for safety. Crowds ran from the scene, reflecting the nervousness in a country that has sustained five terror attacks since March. But police later said they found no evidence of any incident, and tweeted: "Our response on #OxfordStreet has now been stood down." "If you sought shelter in a building please now leave, and follow the direction of police officers on the ground if you need assistance."

'Really a nightmare'

Oxford Circus, the junction of London's Oxford Street and Regent Street, is one of the busiest areas in London, particularly around the Tube station, where the entrance is regularly closed at rush hour in a bid to control the crowds. Ahlam Ibrahim told AFP she was pushed into a shop when people started shouting. "We didn't know what was going on, it was really a nightmare," she said. Oxford Circus station was later reopened, as was nearby Bond Street, which had been closed for fear of overcrowding. Trains were stopping at both.

In the first statement, police said they were called at 4:38 pm "to a number of reports of shots fired on Oxford Street and underground at Oxford Circus tube station... Police have responded as if the incident is terrorist relat-

Balkan women on their own against domestic abuse

BELGRADE: In a safe house in Belgrade, Aleksandra describes the violence unleashed on her by her partner. Like many women across the Balkan region, she struggled to get help from the authorities. "A policeman said he saw no evidence of abuse and that he was neither a doctor nor a psychologist, so he could not help me," the 33-year-old Serbian mother said. "It is your word against his word, there is nothing you can do," she recalled the policeman saying. Ahead of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which falls on Saturday, activists warn that the scourge of domestic abuse remains deep-seated across the Balkans-and that not enough is being done to stop it.

"Police react slowly and insufficiently, but the worst is the judiciary, which is very slow. Judges are not sensitized enough to the problem of domestic violence," said Vesna Stanojevic, who runs the Belgrade safe house. Aleksandra, whose name has been changed to protect her identity, eventually got help after she insisted that she would press charges, and social services sent her and her baby to the safe house. But others are not so lucky.

Within one week in July this year, two men killed their wives at social care centers in Belgrade, prompting calls for urgent measures to tackle such violence. One man beat his wife to death with a stone in front of their three sons, the first time he had seen his family since his release from prison. A few days later, a man stabbed his wife to death and strangled their four-year-old son, while injuring three social service workers who had tried to stop him. A new Serbian law in June threatens penalties for authorities who fail to deal with domestic abuse, but activists say police remain under-trained and legal proceedings still lag.

According to Serbia's Women Against Violence Network, a coalition of NGOs, 33 women were killed last year in the country-home to about seven million people-by abusive partners or male family members. Bosnia's human rights ministry says more than half of women and girls over the age of 15 have been victims of some form of violence. Nearly 70 percent of women have suffered domestic violence in Kosovo, according to a 2015 survey by the Kosovo Women's Network. And in Albania, police recorded nearly 3,000 cases of domestic violence and issued 1,643 protection orders across the population of 2.8 million between January and September. Across these countries, activists say they believe the true extent of abuse is under-reported owing to the lack of support and awareness. "Mentalities in Albania today are still largely influenced by the patriarchal model, putting the man in a position of dominance over the submissive woman," said Ana Ruci of Refleksione, a women's association in Tirana. —AFP



LONDON: Armed police patrol near Oxford street as they respond to an incident in central London. —AFP

ed". They later said there were "numerous 999 (emergency) calls" reporting shots fired in a number of locations in the area. British security forces are on high alert after a string of attacks this year which have left scores of people dead. The most recent involved a bomb on a packed London Underground train in southwest London in September, which injured 30 people. A teenager is facing trial for attempted murder. —AFP

International

Bangladesh and Myanmar agree to safely repatriate Rohingya Muslims

Myanmar to issue identity cards to Rohingya

DHAKA: Bangladesh and Myanmar have agreed to take help from the UN refugee agency to safely repatriate hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims who had fled violence in Myanmar, Bangladesh said yesterday. More than 600,000 Rohingya sought sanctuary in Bangladesh after the military in mostly Buddhist Myanmar launched a brutal counter-insurgency operation in their villages across the northern parts of Rakhine State following attacks by Rohingya militants on an army base and police posts on Aug 25. Faced with a burgeoning humanitarian crisis, the two governments signed a pact on Thursday agreeing that the return of the Rohingya to Myanmar should start within two months.

Uncertainty over whether the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) would have a role had prompted rights groups to insist that outside monitors were needed to safeguard the Rohingya's return. Addressing a news conference in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali gave assurances that the UNHCR would play some part. "Both countries agreed to take help from the UNHCR in the Rohingya repatriation process," Ali said. "Myanmar will take its assistance as per their requirement."

The diplomatic breakthrough came just ahead of a visit by Pope Francis to Myanmar and Bangladesh from Nov 26 to Dec 2 that is aimed at promoting "reconciliation, forgiveness and peace". While the violence in Rakhine has mostly ceased, Rohingya have continued to stream out of Myanmar, saying they have largely lost access to sources of livelihood such as their farms, fisheries and markets. Thousands of Rohingya, most of them old people, women and children, remain stranded on beaches near the border, waiting for a boat to take them to Bangladesh.



Rohingyas to be housed in 'temporary' camps

From camp to camp

Ali said a joint working group, to be formed within three weeks, will fix the final terms to start the repatriation process. After leaving the refugee camps in Bangladesh, Rohingya who opt to be voluntarily repatriated will be moved to camps in Myanmar, the minister said. "Most houses were burnt down. Where they will live after going back? So, it is not possible to physically return to their homes," Ali said. Myanmar officials have said returnees will be moved to camps only temporarily while so-called "model villages" are constructed near their former homes.

Win Myat Aye, the minister for social welfare, relief and resettlement who heads a Myanmar government panel on rehabilitation in Rakhine, said India and China had offered to provide "modular houses" for returnees. The UN and the United States have described the Myanmar military's actions as "ethnic cleansing", and rights groups have accused the security

forces of committing atrocities, including mass rape, arson and killings. The United States also warned it could impose sanctions on individuals responsible for alleged abuses.

Led by Nobel peace prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar is in the early stages of a transition to democracy after decades of military rule. But civilian government is less than two years old, and still shares power with the generals, who retain autonomy over matters of defense, security and borders. The commander of Myanmar's armed forces, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, has denied that soldiers committed any atrocities. On Friday he met China's President Xi Jinping in Beijing having been told earlier in the week by a top Chinese general that China wanted stronger ties with Myanmar's military.

Under the deal struck with Bangladesh, Myanmar



COX'S BAZAR: Rohingya Muslim refugees carry grass stalks used for thatching roofs as they walk along a path inside the Thankhal refugee camp yesterday. —AFP

agreed to take measures to see that the returnees will not be settled in temporary places for a long time. Myanmar plans to issue them an identity card on their return, although most Rohingya have so far rejected a scheme to give them "national verification cards". While the agreement says Bangladesh would seek the UN refugee agency's assistance on the process, Myanmar - which has largely blocked aid agencies from working in northern Rakhine since August - only agreed "that the services of the UNHCR could be drawn upon as needed and at the appropriate time".

Win Myat Aye said yesterday that Myanmar would discuss "technical assistance" with the UNHCR, but had not reached a formal agreement with the agency. There were already hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh before the latest exodus, and the Bangladesh minister said they could also be considered for the repatriation, under the terms of the agreement. The agreement, however, says they will be "considered separately on the conclusion of the present agreement." Some independent estimates suggest there are still a few hundred thousand Rohingya remaining in Rakhine.—Reuters

Women 'speaking out' on sexual harassment

UNITED NATIONS: The avalanche of sexual misconduct allegations that has rattled Hollywood, US media and beyond is just beginning, says the head of UN Women, who expects many more women to come forward before behaviors change. The wave of scandals in the United States has felled the careers of some of the most high-profile men in entertainment and compelled companies to take a second look at their policies against sexual harassment in the workplace.

"It has just started. I think we are still going to see many more women coming out," Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the executive director of UN Women, told AFP in an interview. "There are going to be many more women who are going to find their voices." The former South African deputy president who has been the top UN official on gender equality since 2013 said the groundswell of allegations had yet to reach a tipping point to bring about a definite shift in attitudes.

"We probably haven't reached that point where there is a strong belief, among enough people, that this is profoundly traumatizing, that it creates a pain for many women that never ends." Mlambo-Ngcuka said she was surprised by the fact that the recent cases have involved a single man who preyed on many women. "To actually see that you have one man who is a serial harasser, occupying a very senior position, and it goes undetected for years," she said, shows a "real weakness" of workplace policies and law enforcement.

A cascade to reach other women - Charlie Rose, a well-respected US television news host, was sacked this week after eight women accused him of unwanted advances including walking around naked in their presence. Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein faces accusations from around 100 women since a New York Times expose in early October, with allegations ranging from harassment to rape. Comic Louis CK, actor Kevin Spacey, politicians in the United States, France and Britain have also faced serious allegations of misconduct while a social media campaign with the #metoo hashtag has drawn millions of posts.



NANTES: Photo shows red-painted shoes, symbolizing all the women victims of domestic violence, harassment, rape, sexual assault or femicide, during a demonstration near the courthouse of Nantes. —AFP

Mlambo-Ngcuka points to the presence of more women in leadership positions as a factor for victims who come forward "knowing that there would be somebody on the other side of the table who would believe them." Most of the attention on sexual misconduct has been in the United States, but the head of UN Women said she hoped that it will spread beyond borders and reach women who are not Hollywood actresses. "It's been a perfect storm, but it needs to cascade so that other women who are not famous, who

are not celebrities can also find their healing and the perpetrators in other societies can also face consequences."

Mlambo-Ngcuka said she was disturbed by the "loud silence of men" who she said have yet to stand up, distance themselves from the predatory men, and "preach about the importance of behavior change." Men must declare "never under my watch will I allow that" while "the bad ones" should repent and say "never again will I do this," she said. —AFP

Pope Francis to visit Myanmar; Buddhist nationalism burns

YANGON: A fiery brand of Buddhist nationalism is burning brighter than ever as Myanmar braces for its first ever papal visit, posing a challenge to the message of religious tolerance Pope Francis is expected to preach next week. A wing of extremist monks have been stirring Islamophobia in Myanmar for years, earning a reputation as incubators of "Buddhist terror". But their cause has received new support since August, when the army launched a brutal crackdown on the Muslim Rohingya, expelling more than half a million from the country.

Global outrage over the violence - which the UN and the US have called ethnic cleansing - has triggered an ultra-nationalist reflex inside Myanmar, pushing the public towards firebrand monks who have long cast the Rohingya as ill-intentioned outsiders. "Our ideas have now won the vast majority of the population," said Ottama, a prominent monk in Buddhist nationalist circles.

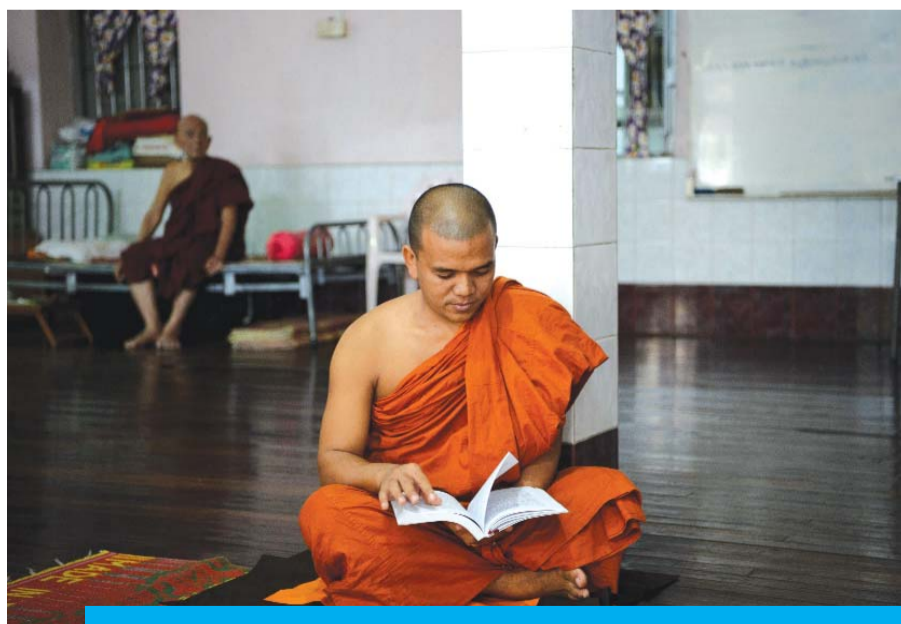
Speaking to AFP in a temple in Yangon, the saffron-robed monk repeated a well-worn falsehood that Muslims are poised to "swallow the nation" in a demographic assault on Myanmar's Buddhist majority.

"Fifty years ago, only 12 percent people in Myanmar were Muslim. Now their population is about 38 percent," he said. Census figures show Muslims make up less than five percent of the overwhelmingly Buddhist nation. That fraction has been chiseled down further by the latest violence in Rakhine state, which has pushed over half of the 1.1-million Rohingya into Bangladesh.

The pope, who will head to Bangladesh after Myanmar, has thrown himself into the centre of the crisis rippling across the two nations' border. In Yangon he will press for peace in masses expected to draw hundreds of thousands from the country's Catholic community. But he will also meet with Myanmar's civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi and army chief Min Aung Hlaing - a highly symbolic sit-down between a peace icon and a general whose troops are accused murder, rape and arson.

All in the name

Francis is already in the crosshairs of Buddhist hardliners for expressing sympathy for the Rohingya, whom he has referred to as "brothers". His public comments in Myanmar will be closely scoured for any mention of the group by name - the term is rejected by the army, government and many in the Buddhist public, who insist the Muslims are "Bengalis". "I do not understand why the Pope is coming in the middle of a conflict, many people say he's coming for the Bengalis," Nyo Nyo Aung, a follower of an ultra-nationalist monk said.



YANGON: Ottama, a prominent monk in Buddhist nationalist circles, reads a book at the temple in Yangon. —AFP

Myanmar's Catholic leaders have advised the Pope not to use the 'R-word', a path Suu Kyi has also taken to avoid triggering backlash from Buddhist nationalists, a powerful political bloc. Myanmar's Buddhist clergy has taken some steps to rein in radical members, including banning notoriously Islamophobic monk Wirathu from giving sermons for one year, though

with little enforcement. A few days before the pope's visit, another prominent ultra-nationalist abbot, Parmaukka, was detained over an anti-Rohingya protest he organized in 2016. But those moves have done little to draw the toxicity from anti-Rohingya hatred pinballing across social media in the form of rants, memes and grotesque cartoons.—AFP

News in brief

Woman 'abusing kids'

BEIJING: Authorities in China detained a woman yesterday suspected of abusing children at a Beijing kindergarten run by a US-listed company in a case that has caused nationwide anger. Police in Beijing's Chaoyang district said in a statement that an investigation into a kindergarten run by Beijing-based RYB Education has led to the criminal detention of a 22-year-old female teacher on suspicion of abusing children. The statement, posted on the district police's account on the Sina Weibo microblog platform, identified the woman only by her surname, Liu, and did not provide further details. The scandal in Beijing erupted after the influential newsmagazine Caixin and other Chinese media quoted some parents as saying their children were forced to strip as punishment and were found with unexplained apparent needle marks on their bodies. The reported claims could not be independently verified. Chaoyang police said separately that a 31-year-old Beijing woman has been detained after admitting to allegedly spreading false information about the involvement of a military regiment in sexually abusing the children.

Saudi-Iran dialogue

BEIRUT: Top Lebanese Druze politician Walid Jumblatt yesterday called on Saudi Arabia to enter dialogue with Iran and said that the Kingdom's modernization plans could not work while Riyadh was engaged in a war in Yemen. Lebanon was thrust back onto the frontline of a regional power tussle this month between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The two regional powers back competing factions in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen, the last of which has become a central arena of the proxy battle. "A settlement at minimum with the Islamic Republic (of Iran) gives us in Lebanon more strength and determination to cooperate to enforce the policy of disassociation," Jumblatt wrote in a Tweet yesterday. "Disassociation" is widely understood in Lebanon to mean its policy of staying out of regional conflicts, which Hariri has been stressing since his resignation, a reference to Hezbollah whose regional military role is a source of deep concern in Saudi Arabia.

Gay film festival

ANKARA: An Istanbul district authority has banned a one-day festival that had been set to showcase short films on gay issues yesterday, claiming the event posed a threat to public order. The ban came after a similar decision on all LGBT cultural events in Ankara province. The Istanbul event, co-organized by Turkish gay rights group Pink Life LGBT Solidarity Association and the British Council, had been set to screen 10 short films at Pera Museum in the popular district of Beyoglu on the European side of the city. But the Beyoglu district governor's office said on Friday the event would not be allowed to take place, in a bid to "protect public order and safety, others' rights and freedoms, and to prevent crime". In a statement, the governor's office said the planned "events may be against constitutional order or public morality".

Mexico mayor murdered

COATZACOALCOS: A municipal mayor in Mexico's violent eastern state of Veracruz was killed Friday, local authorities said, just four days after a mayor-elect was murdered in the same state. Victor Manuel Espinoza - mayor of Ixhuatlan de Madero, located some 270 kilometers north-east of Mexico City - was killed with four others including his wife in the attack, the state prosecutor's office said in a statement. Authorities did not provide details concerning a possible motive for the attack, which occurred Friday night on a dirt road in a neighboring municipality near the state's capital Xalapa. The murders came days after a group of at least 30 armed men murdered Santana Cruz Bahena, mayor-elect of the municipality of Hidalgotitlan.

Analysis

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Washington Watch

Palestinians:
Victims of an
unjust US law

By Dr James J Zogby

Imagine that you are a victim of a violent crime or theft but are forbidden from reporting it because Congress has passed a law that not only prohibits you from reporting the crime, but threatens punishment if you dare to do it. This is the situation in which the Palestinians find themselves today.

The Palestinians have been told that the US government is on the verge of decertifying their right to maintain an office in Washington because they had the audacity to complain to the International Criminal Court (ICC) about Israel's land theft and settlement activity in the occupied territories. (The Trump administration on Friday backtracked on its decision, instead saying it would merely impose limitations on the office that it expected would be lifted after 90 days.)

The story behind this nightmarish situation began in 1987 when Congress passed a law prohibiting the Palestine Liberation Organization from operating an office in the United States. This legislation which was pushed by AIPAC, the pro-Israel lobby, was designed to ensure that the Palestinians would have no presence or voice in either Washington or at the United Nations. It was an effort to put into law a secret commitment Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had made to the Israelis a decade earlier that the US would not recognize or dialogue with the PLO. The Israelis had insisted on this "no-talk" policy for the simple reason described by Israeli Labor Party leader Yitzhak Rabin: "Whoever agrees to talk to the PLO means he accepts in principle the creation of a Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan, and this we can never accept".

In 1993, after Israel and the PLO signed the Oslo Accords, in which both sides recognized each other's national rights, Congress met to reassess their 1987 legislation. Instead of doing the right thing and simply canceling it, once again pressed by AIPAC, Congress chose to keep the law in place. The one concession found in new bill gave the President the right to waive the anti-Palestinian provision every six months on the condition that the State Department could certify to Congress that the Palestinians were adhering to the provisions of the Oslo Accords.

This legislation, termed the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act (MEPFA) imposed a series of requirements on the Palestinians. Among them were: renouncing the Arab boycott, nullifying the PLO Charter, not opening offices in Jerusalem, ending terrorism, and taking no steps to change the status of Jerusalem, West Bank, or Gaza pending the outcome of negotiations with the Israelis. Because Congress chose to only impose these conditions on US aid to the Palestinians and their right to operate an office in the US aid, while placing no such requirements on Israel's adherence to the terms of Oslo, it was clear from the very beginning of the so-called "Oslo process" that the US could not play the role of "honest broker" in the search for peace.

Impunity

Every six months, Israel's lobby would raise issue with Palestinian compliance, documenting alleged Palestinian infractions and then protesting when the State Department would certify them. All the while, Israel, operating with complete impunity, continued: expanding Jewish-only settlements, roads, and infrastructure in the West Bank and what they called "Greater Jerusalem" creating new "facts on the ground"; imposing new humiliating conditions on Palestinian life in the occupied lands; and repeatedly violating their obligations under Oslo and the follow-up Cairo and Paris Economic Accords.

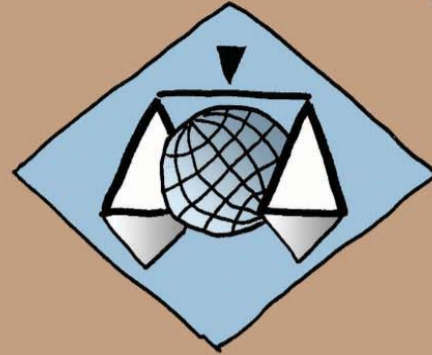
While Israel had recourse to go to the US Congress to complain about allegations of Palestinian non-compliance, the Palestinians could not. Their only recourse was to bring their case to the United Nations where the US would, in the end, veto any and all resolutions critical of Israel. In this context, I have always found it irritatingly disingenuous when the Israeli side expresses its contempt for what they call the UN's "automatic majority" for the Palestinians, while refusing to acknowledge the "automatic majority" Israel has in the US Congress.

Over the next two decades, the terms of the MEPFA were modified to include a suspension US aid for the Palestinians and decertification of their right to operate in the US if the Palestinians were to join any international body with the equivalent status of a "member state"; or if they were to receive full member state recognition at the UN; and, more recently, if they were to bring a case against Israel's violations of international law before the International Criminal Court.

When, this fall, Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas, addressed the United Nations General Assembly he spoke these words: "We have also called on the International Criminal Court, as is our right, to open an investigation and to prosecute Israeli officials". Abbas specifically cited Israeli settlement activity as the crime, in question. Israel's settlement policy is, in fact, in violation of international law. The Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits an occupying power from both moving its population into "territories occupied in time of war" and dispossessing the occupied population of their land and properties.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute.

INTERNATIONAL CAUCASIAN COURT

LIFE SENTENCE TO
RATKO MLADIC FOR WAR
CRIMES AND GENOCIDE
IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA!NOW, CAN WE
GO BACK TO THE
PROSECUTION OF
AFRICAN LEADERS
PLEASE ?

STEPHANO

Mladic falls, but Milosevic loyalists rising

The last Serb to stand trial over the conflicts that ripped apart Yugoslavia will finish his days in prison, but in Belgrade, men closely linked to wartime strongman Slobodan Milosevic are returning to high-profile jobs. UN judges in The Hague sentenced former Bosnian Serb military chief Ratko Mladic to life in jail on Wednesday, after finding him guilty of genocide during the 1990s fighting. But almost 20 years after the last war in the Balkans, some of Milosevic's men who served time for their roles in the violence or who remain open admirers are regaining prominent positions.

"If anyone wondered how far Serbia progressed (after Milosevic), now there is a clear answer: It has moved backwards," said Dubravka Stojanovic, a historian at the University of Belgrade. "There is no conscience about war crimes, so neither are there reasons to avoid returning Milosevic's people" to senior positions, she said.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic was an ultranationalist information minister under Milosevic, though he has since tried to distance himself from the strongman, portraying himself as a reformist leading Serbia towards European Union membership. But other former associates have remained openly loyal to Milosevic, who was indicted by the former Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal but died in custody in 2006 during his trial at The Hague.

'Slobo's comrade'

Milorad Vucelic, who was an active war propagandist in the 1990s as head of the state broadcaster Radio Television of Serbia (RTS), was named editor in chief of Vecernje Novosti, a newspaper partly owned by the state, in September. An organizer of Milosevic's funeral, Vucelic still calls himself "Slobo's comrade". And in an interview with the Telegraf news site in 2014, he said the "demonizing" of Milosevic was a result of "foreign powers' pressure".

How 'princess'
of Angola lost
her oil crown

On Oct 6, with the dust still settling on Angola's first change of power in 38 years, new President Joao Lourenco sat down with international oil majors at the presidential palace in Luanda. The top executives in Angola of Chevron, Total, BP, Eni and Exxon said the oil sector was being devastated by delays in project approvals at Sonangol and a backlog of payments owed by the state oil company, according to four oil industry sources with knowledge of the meeting.

They warned Lourenco that Angola's production would decline from 2019 unless swift action was taken to tackle problems at the firm, which was headed by Isabel dos Santos, daughter of his presidential predecessor, the sources said. They declined to be named because the discussions were confidential. Six weeks later the president fired dos Santos, Africa's richest woman who is nicknamed the "princess" in Angola. The oil majors all declined to comment on the meeting. Lourenco's office and Sonangol did not respond to requests for comment.

It was a highly unusual gathering: foreign oil firms operate nearly all of Angola's production and hold huge sway, but meeting the president as a united group was almost unheard of. The nature of the discussions has not been previously reported. The talks, and subsequent events leading up to dos Santos' dismissal, shed light on the reasons behind her ouster - a decision never officially explained.

They offer new insight into the current state of the most important company in Angola, which relies on oil for a third of its economic output and over 95 percent of exports, and the big challenges facing the new management of the debt-laden firm. The dismissal also points to the waning power of the dos Santos family, which has dominated Angolan politics and business for decades. Isabel dos Santos' father Jose Eduardo had ruled the country since 1979, amassing wealth for his relatives who own companies in almost every part of the economy.

'Near paralysis'

Billionaire dos Santos, who had been Sonangol chair since June 2016, has said she was in the process of restructuring to root out waste and corruption at a company that was struggling even before oil prices plunged in mid-2014. Her representatives declined to comment for

also in September, Milovan Bojic, once a deputy prime minister under Milosevic and a close aide of his wife, Mira Markovic, was reappointed chief of a prestigious state-run cardiology clinic in Belgrade - a post he held in the 1990s. Just a few months earlier, in March, Bojic was photographed paying his respects at Milosevic's grave. Also present at the graveside was Defense Minister Aleksandar Vulin, another former aide of the strongman's wife, who has repeatedly

“ Revival of the
zombies a
balancing act ”

said he is an "admirer of what (Milosevic) was doing".

Vulin said in March that he fought with the former president for "valuable and important ideals", and "as long as I live it will be that way". Dejan Anastasijevic, a prominent Serbian journalist, wrote in October that he felt "scared" since "every day more and more of Milosevic's old buddies are being reinstated". "They believe that Milosevic did everything well and that authorities today should take the same road," Anastasijevic told AFP.

'Zombie revival'

Men who have served prison sentences for their roles in

the war crimes of the 1990s have also made their way back to leading posts. Nikola Sainovic, another deputy prime minister in the Milosevic era, was appointed two years ago to a top body of Serbia's Socialist Party, the junior partner in the governing coalition. The move came after his release from jail in 2015 after serving two-thirds of an 18-year sentence for crimes against ethnic Albanians in the 1998-1999 Kosovo war.

And in October, local media reported that Vladimir Lazarevic, a Serbian commander during the Kosovo conflict, was named a lecturer at Serbia's military academy - two years after spending a decade in jail for war crimes. The move was criticized by the European Union, with Maja Kocijancic, a foreign affairs spokeswoman, saying political leaders should foster "trust, dialogue and tolerance" to overcome the legacy of war. But when contacted by AFP, the academy said Lazarevic had only been invited to give a lecture, and had not been given a full-time position.

Eric Gordy, a professor at University College London who specializes in southeast Europe, suggests this "revival of the zombies" from the Milosevic period could be part of a "balancing act" performed by Vucic to appease his rightwing supporters. The appointments of hardliners contrast with what appear to be more progressive moves by Vucic, such as the selection this year of Ana Brnabic, a technocrat with a business background to be Serbia's first female - and gay - prime minister.

But Gordy also said the revival of Milosevic's old guard could simply be "a sign of just how unproductive the field of political power is". "The constant return to old ideas and figures, no matter how discredited or, in some cases, convicted, indicates how few new ideas and people have been produced in Serbian politics in this century." —AFP

this story, and instead pointed Reuters to two statements, issued in the days after her exit, when she outlined her achievements including reducing debt to \$7 billion from \$13 billion, raising annual revenue to \$15.6 billion from \$14.8 billion and cutting costs.

In her departing speech to staff, she said the company had been "nearly bankrupt" when she took over, devastated by the oil-price collapse. "Memories are short," she added. However, according to interviews with 10 sources, including the four oil industry sources as well as officials from Sonangol and the government, Lourenco was frustrated with the slow pace of change at the company.

On Oct 13, a week after meeting the oil majors and 17 days after taking office, the president ordered government ministers, Sonangol and international oil companies to form a 30-day working group to review the state of the industry. The group's meetings, many of them led by new Secretary of State for Oil Carlos Saturnino, were tense, the

Dismissal points
to the waning
power of dos
Santos family

sources said. Saturnino, an oil industry veteran, had been fired by dos Santos from his role as head of production and exploration at Sonangol last year when she accused him of gross mismanagement.

Even though dos Santos had launched a turnaround plan, huge hold-ups in the approval of projects were strangling the oil sector, according to the sources. Her board had implemented a system for checking projects submitted by foreign oil companies which in practice exacerbated the problem, they said. She had also created a gulf between her board and the rest of the company by surrounding herself with foreign consultants, said the people, who declined to be named due to the confidential nature of the industry review and related discussions. The working group concluded there was "a near paralysis" at Sonangol, according to a government source.

China debts

As the group assessed the state of the industry, Lourenco met with Sonangol's biggest lenders - including

the Bank of China, Standard Bank and Standard Chartered - to understand Sonangol's financial situation and secure lower lending rates, according to a source familiar with the talks. "Lourenco realized Sonangol needs money fast," said the source, adding that the company had been seeking to restructure some payments. Standard Bank declined to comment, citing client confidentiality, while Standard Chartered and Bank of China did not respond to requests for comment.

Sonangol's direct debt to Chinese banks and lending consortia including Chinese banks stood at \$3.8 billion at the end of 2016, according to the company's annual report. Oil industry sources told Reuters this debt now stood at about \$3 billion, plus another \$3 billion to majors, contractors and traders. Of that, nearly \$1 billion is owed to trading firms Trafigura and Vitol under loans guaranteed by oil or product exports, according to a source close to Sonangol.

The government itself also last year took out a further \$6.9 billion loan from the China Development Bank that it lent to Sonangol, \$3.8 billion of which the firm used to refinance debt, according to an International Monetary Fund report. Supporters of dos Santos, who are familiar with her work at Sonangol, said the debts dated back to before her tenure. They said the company was now in better financial state. The slow pace of restructuring, they say, was due to the scale of the job and restraints imposed by the state on selling assets. Her dismissal, according to them, was purely political and part of a campaign by the president against her family.

'Golden goose'

With consensus in government building fast against dos Santos, she responded with a charm offensive. In London, she met CEOs of major oil companies at an industry conference. On Oct 18, she did a rare live interview at the Reuters office in the city's Canary Wharf financial district. In the Reuters interview, she described her relationship with the new president as one of "full alignment". But she gave a hint that her days at Sonangol may be numbered, when asked if she would stay to see through the transformation of the firm.

"Once the foundations have been laid and are right, it doesn't matter who steps in as long as the plan is good," said dos Santos, who has stakes in businesses from telecoms to diamonds. The charm offensive was too little, too late. On Nov 15, dos Santos and most of her board were sacked. She was replaced by the man that had become her nemesis: Saturnino. Foundations notwithstanding, the new management faces the tasks of getting projects moving again, repaying billions of dollars owed to oil majors, contractors and traders, and servicing billions more dollars of debt owed to Chinese banks. —Reuters

Sports

England into rugby World Cup final after late Tonga drama

England have reached the final in 22 years

WELLINGTON: England set up a World Cup showdown with Australia after scraping home 20-18 against a late-charging Tonga, who were denied a last-gasp try in Auckland yesterday. It is the first time England have reached the final in 22 years, their last appearance ending in a 16-8 defeat by Australia at Wembley in 1995.

In a nail-biting finish to the semi-final, Tonga were down 20-0 with eight minutes remaining but the Pacific islanders ran in three quick tries to close within two points. Then on the stroke of full-time, Tonga claimed Andrew Fifita was illegally stripped of the ball as he drove towards what would have been a sensational match-winning try.

But referee Matt Cecchin ruled Fifita lost the ball and refused Tongan pleas for a video review as England hung on to snap an agonising semi-final jinx. Before a packed 30,000 Auckland crowd—including a large contingent of Tonga supporters fired up by the appearance of the Tongan King Tupou VI wearing a team jersey—it was England who impressed from the outset.

They scored two tries in the first half and another in the second with Garth Widdop landing four out of four shots at goal and adding a try himself as England inflicted a first defeat on Tonga in the tournament. Australia, who beat England in pool play, thrashed Fiji 54-6 in the first semi-

final in Brisbane on Friday.

England face the Kangaroos in the final, also in Brisbane, next weekend. Since losing the 1995 final, every tournament since has ended in a semi-final defeat for England. But Wayne Bennett's men were determined to break the hoodoo as they stamped their authority early on against a fragile Tongan defence.

Jermaine McGillivray opened the scoring from a simple catch and pass move to continue his record of at least one try in his past 10 Test matches. When Tonga were denied a try for Sika Manu with Michael Jennings judged to have passed off the ground, England swept back downfield with Widdop scoring their second try. England extended the score to 14-0 from a Widdop penalty goal and with 15 minutes remaining a John Bateman try stretched the lead to 20-0. But as Tonga cut out the handling errors that had plagued their game, they hit a tiring England with tries from Tevita Pangai Junior, Siliva Havili and Tui Lolohea with Sio Siua Taukeiaho landing all three goals.

The Tongans had come back from 16-2 down to beat New Zealand in the group stage. But their hopes of a stunning comeback against England were dashed after a last-ditch tackle from Elliot Whitehead forced the ball to pop out Fifita's grasp. —AFP



Winners face the Kangaroos in the final



AUCKLAND: Luke Gale of England looses the ball in a tackle during the Rugby League World Cup men's semi-final match between Tonga and England at Mt Smart Stadium in Auckland yesterday. — AFP

Ooredoo proud of its equestrian Rakan Al-Hasawi

KUWAIT: Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, reiterated its pride in its equestrian brand ambassador Rakan Al-Hasawi, who ranked in a high position in the Hathab Series, part of the on-going Longine Global Champions Tour's final round of the season in Doha last week. Al-Hasawi, on his horse Denver, came triumphant in the



Medium Tour 1.20/1.30m class after a jump-off, against 32 equestrians competing for the title from around the world.

Ooredoo announced its sponsorship to Al-Hasawi and named him its brand ambassador for the current season in May. The sponsorship comes in alignment with the company's commitment to enriching youth and supporting them reach their potential.

Al-Hasawi won a number of awards locally and regionally, such as the CHI Al-Shaqab horse hurdles competition in Qatar, in addition to the Kuwait Police Show Jumping Tournament and the Kuwait Riding Center Tournament, in addition to the Hala Febrayer 2017 which was sponsored by Ooredoo Kuwait recently, among other competitions.

Chawrasia leads in Hong Kong by one stroke

HONG KONG: S.S.P. Chawrasia shot a 1-under 69 yesterday in the third round for a one stroke lead at the Hong Kong Open. The 39-year-old Indian is at 10-under 200 overall at the Hong Kong Golf Club.

Last year's runner-up, Rafa Cabrera Bello, hit six birdies, two bogeys and an eagle on the par-4 10th for a 6-under 64. The Spaniard shares second place with Australia's Wade Ormsby (65).

Race to Dubai winner Tommy Fleetwood (66) was two off the pace and tied for fourth with Sweden's Alexander Bjork (67) and Belgian Thomas Detry (66).

"I hit good putts that just didn't go in. You know, it was just a really steady round," Fleetwood said, adding that a "nice birdie on the last hole always makes you feel a lot better." Former champion Justin Rose (68) is at 5 under, a shot ahead of Masters champion Sergio Garcia (66) who hit five birdies and a bogey. Chawrasia led by two shots after the second round and said he was glad to hold onto his lead, with another low score needed to take the title.

"I'm happy with the score today, although I definitely left a couple of shots out there. I felt a little extra pressure today which (is) probably why (I) missed a couple of putts ... think I can do something special tomorrow," Chawrasia said. Cabrera Bello lost by a shot in 2016 to Sam Brazel of Australia.

"I think I'm going to be within reach, so I do believe that I can win it for sure," Cabrera Bello said. "I think it would be just a little extra special, the fact that last year I finished runner-up and this year perhaps I could win it." —AP



HONG KONG: S.S.P. Chawrasia of India tees off on the 14th hole during day three match at the Hong Kong Open golf tournament in Hong Kong, yesterday. —AP

Day snatches third round lead at Australian Open

SYDNEY: Jason Day ended a frustrating run of par golf by making three late birdies to snatch the outright lead after the third round of the 102nd Australian Open yesterday. The former world number one's patience finally paid off when he made back-to-back birdies at the 14th and 15th holes after parring his first 13 holes.

He did drop a shot when he bogeyed his penultimate hole for the second day in a row but made amends with a birdie at the last for a two-under-par 69 and a three-round total of 10-under-203. "It was tough to try and not to force things. I know the crowds are out there and they want to see a lot of birdies," Day said. "As a professional golfer that's been around for a while now, it's easier for me to stand back and go, okay, I need to be patient and not try to be too aggressive."

Day, chasing his first title in 18 months since winning the 2016 Players Championship in Florida, will head into Sunday's final round with a one-stroke lead over his fellow Australian Lucas Herbert, who carded an even-par 71 to finish at nine-under after leading overnight. Sweden's Jonas Blixt charged up the leaderboard into a share of third place at seven-under after a flawless 66, and was joined by the 2015 Australian Open champion Matt Jones, who signed for a 68.

"Jason's a world class player, a former number one," Jones said. "(So) he'd be the favourite to win but we've seen many upsets before and as long as I manage my game and give myself birdie opportunities, anything can happen." Australia's Cameron Smith, who teamed up with Blixt to win this year's Zurich Classic of New Orleans, was in fifth place at six-under after firing a third consecutive



SYDNEY: Australia's Jason Day Lucas Herbert hits a shot during the third round of the Australian Open Golf tournament in Sydney, yesterday. — AP

round of 69 while the defending champion Jordan Spieth shot a 70 to finish eight shots off the pace. "If there's any place to come from way behind, it's here," Spieth said. "If I can sneak a few breaks in... get a couple of long putts to go or chip in or something like that. I'm going to have to have some magic." Day's failure to pick up any early birdies saw him slip two shots behind Herbert but he drew level with his playing partner when Herbert took a double-bogey on the par-three 11th when he lost his ball in the bushes after an errant tee shot.

Herbert said he was so nervous about the prospect of playing with Day in the final group that he couldn't sleep on Friday night but was pleased with how he handled the pressure. "It's like trying to drink three cans of Red Bull and then go to bed: that's what it felt like," he said.

"But after I made a couple of good pars there to start, I think that sort of kicked the

nerves and I was good to go." Day made a tap-in birdie at the par-5 14th after almost chipping in for eagle, then snatched the lead with a birdie at the 15th. He narrowly missed a long putt on the 17th to salvage par to rejoin Herbert at nine-under but immediately regained his slim advantage with a superb approach on the 18th to set up birdie.

"This is my last tournament of the year. I just turned 30 just a little bit ago, and I said my 30s were going to be better than my 20s, so it would be nice to be able to start my 30s off with a good win," Day said. "I know it's going to be a very difficult day tomorrow with regard to what we're going to have out there: the pressure, the wind, the fans, the media." "It's been a while since I've won, so obviously everyone's going to be nervous out there," he added. "It's a good nervous; without nerves you don't get in the zone and without being in the zone, you don't shoot the scores that you can shoot." —AFP

Hakuho wins tournament as scandal rocks sport

TOKYO: Mongolian grand champion Hakuho won the latest sumo tournament yesterday as Japan's national sport continued to draw media attention after another top wrestler faced a police probe into an alleged assault.

Yokozuna-or grand champion-Hakuho easily shoved Endo onto the ring at Fukuoka Kokusai Center to secure a record-extending 40th career championship. He won the 15-day tournament at 13-1 by Saturday with one day remaining as his closest contenders were all defeated at 11-3 before his bout on the day. "I'm relieved to achieve (the 40th victory)," Hakuho told reporters without commenting on the scandal.

The historic victory came as local headlines featured his fellow Mongolian yokozuna Harumafuji, who is alleged to have repeatedly hit a junior wrestler also from Mongolia. According to several media reports, Harumafuji flew into a rage when the junior wrestler tried to take out his phone to take a call during a conversation.

The 33-year-old may have to step down



File photo shows Sumo grand champion or yokozuna, Hakuho of Mongolia performs 'dohyo-iri' (ring purification ritual) in a new ceremonial rope belt.

from his lofty position if charged. The alleged assault, which emerged just before the tournament began, took place last month as Mongolian wrestlers were relaxing over drinks after a tournament.

Police will reportedly question Harumafuji again next week following their initial interrogation of him last week and are separately planning

to hear from Hakuho, who witnessed the assault. Around 10 people, including Hakuho and other Mongolian and Japanese sumo wrestlers, were at the drinking session, according to reports. The ancient sport has an extremely strict protocol and yokozuna are expected to be beyond moral reproach in addition to showing superior strength and technique in the ring. —AFP

Sports

Boyle scores emotional goal as Devils beat Canucks 3-2

Marchessault's goal lifts Golden Knights over Sharks

NEWARK: Brian Boyle scored one of the most meaningful goals of his career to help the New Jersey Devils beat the Vancouver Canucks 3-2 on Friday night. The Devils were marking "Hockey Fights Cancer Night," a battle especially meaningful to Boyle, who was diagnosed with chronic myelogenous leukemia during training camp and missed the first 10 games of the season while undergoing treatment. The Prudential Center erupted with cheers when Boyle, set up by a beautiful drop pass from Will Butcher, scored at 10:17 of the second period to snap a 1-1 tie. Taylor Hall got the second assist as part of his big night. The Devils' leading scorer had a goal and two assists as the Devils picked up points in a third straight game (2-0-1). Damon Severson also scored for New Jersey and Cory Schneider made 23 saves to improve to 6-1-2 against the team that made him a first-round draft pick in 2004.



Devils mark "Hockey Fights Cancer Night"

Lightning's six-game road winning streak. Jay Beagle clinched the victory for the Capitals, scoring into an empty net with 2:08 to go. Ovechkin's second goal in two games and 15th overall followed a six-game drought. His resurgence comes after coach Barry Trotz placed Ovechkin and Nicklas Backstrom on the same line Wednesday night for the first time this season. Although the Lightning (16-4-2) are off to the best start in franchise history, they couldn't find a way to snap their run of poor outings against the Capitals, especially in Washington. Tampa Bay has lost five straight in the nation's capital and is 2-8 in its last 10 games against the Caps. Vladislav Namestnikov scored the lone goal for the Lightning, a power-play tally in the opening two minutes. Tampa Bay was seeking to match the franchise record for consecutive road wins - seven straight from Jan. 7-Feb. 1, 2007.

COYOTES 3, KINGS 2, OT

Christian Fischer scored on a rebound with 2:17 left in overtime to lift Arizona past Los Angeles. Oliver Ekman-Larsson and Brendan Perlini also scored for the Coyotes, who have won three of their past four. Arizona won at home for the first second time in 10 home games (2-7-1). Anze Kopitar and Trevor Lewis scored the Kings, who have lost three straight and seven of eight. Christian Dvorak took the initial shot, which Kings goaltender Darcy Kuemper seemed to stop with his right pad. But the puck trickled behind him and Fischer pounced on it, scoring into the vacated net from 3 feet away. Lewis pulled the Kings even at 2-2 with 17:08 remaining.

STARS 6, FLAMES 4

Tyler Seguin scored two of his three goals in the third period, and Dallas rallied to beat Calgary. Seguin broke a tie with an unassisted goal, the 200th goal of his career, with 5:57 to play and added an empty-net goal with a minute to go. After a turnover by Calgary's Michael Stone, Seguin took the puck down the slot and sent a wrist shot past goalie Mike Smith into the upper right corner of the net for the winner. Sean Monahan's second goal of the game gave Calgary a 4-3 lead 6 minutes into the third period. Dallas' Gemel Smith tied it at 4 at 12:12. Antoine Roussel and Alexander Radulov also scored for Dallas, and Ben Bishop made 34 saves. Michael Ferland and Johnny Gaudreau also scored for Calgary, and Smith stopped 36 shots.

BLUE JACKETS 5, SENATORS 2

Cam Atkinson scored twice to lift Columbus over Ottawa, extending the Blue Jackets' league-high winning streak to six games. Sergei Bobrovsky turned back 24 shots for his 14th win in 19 starts. Columbus improved to 15-7-1 and leads the Metropolitan Division with 31 points. Ottawa's Craig Anderson stopped 27 shots as the Senators (8-7-6) lost their fifth straight. Tom Pyatt got



NEWARK: Brian Boyle #11 of the New Jersey Devils and Henrik Sedin #33 of the Vancouver Canucks watch as Jake Virtanen #18 of the Vancouver Canucks controls the puck during the second period at the Prudential Center in Newark. — AFP

the scoring started off the Senators' second shot in the first period, taking a cross-crease pass from a driving Derick Brassard and going top shelf over Bobrovsky's left shoulder. It was Pyatt's fourth goal of the season, assisted also by Mark Stone. Atkinson tied the score less than 30 seconds later, stealing the puck from Alex Burrows just inside the Jackets' blue line and creating his own breakthrough. He slipped the puck under Anderson's left skate for his fifth goal of the season. It was Atkinson's first score in eight games.

SABRES 3, OILERS 1

Robin Lehner stopped 29 shots and Buffalo snapped a seven-game skid with a win over Edmonton. Jack Eichel, Jacob Josefson and Kyle Okposo, with an empty-netter, scored for Buffalo, which had gone 0-5-2 since beating Washington 3-1 on Nov. 7. Lehner's best save came six minutes into the third period when he lunged to his left to foil Matt Benning's one-timer from the right circle. Lehner's shutout bid was broken with 20 second left, when Yohann Avutu beat him with a shot just inside the left post. Edmonton came out flat in managing just four shots on goal in the opening period before taking 15 of its 30 shots in the third. The Oilers' inconsistencies also continued in failing to build off a 6-2 win at Detroit on Wednesday. Edmonton (8-13-2) dropped to 1-4 in its past five and has won consecutive games just once this season.

MAPLE LEAFS 5, HURRICANES 4

James Van Riemsdyk had a goal and an assist to help

Toronto beat Carolina. Van Riemsdyk was one of four goal scorers in the second period for the Maple Leafs (15-8-1), who won for the seventh time in nine games. The Hurricanes (9-8-4) lost their second straight home game. It wasn't for a lack of effort early or late. Coming off of a lackluster 6-1 home loss to the New York Rangers on Wednesday night, Carolina scored three goals in the third period and had a 47-25 advantage on shots. Noah Hanifin's goal with 4:11 to go cut Toronto's lead to one, but Frederik Andersen, who made 43 saves, held off a late Carolina flurry. The Hurricanes opened the game in control with 14 shots to four for Toronto in the opening period. Andersen was solid, and then the Maple Leafs' offense picked up in the second period.

RANGERS 2, RED WINGS 1, OT

Mats Zuccarello scored 37 seconds into overtime to give New York the victory over Detroit. Zuccarello scored his fourth goal of the season, off assists from Brady Skjei and J.T. Miller. The Rangers improved to 12-9-2 with their third straight victory and ninth in 11 games. Chris Kreider also scored for New York, and Henrik Lundqvist made 40 saves. Tomas Tatar scored for Detroit, and Jimmy Howard stopped 29 shots. Tatar opened the scoring with a power-play goal at 4:05 of the third. Kreider tied it at 10:17 when he knocked a rebound past Howard. Tatar's seventh goal of the season came with two seconds left on a tripping penalty to Michael Grabner. Tatar ripped the puck past Lundqvist, with assists to Niklas Kronwall and Henrik Zetterberg. — AP

France wins, go 2-1 up in Davis Cup final

LILLE: France moved one step closer to a 10th Davis Cup title when Richard Gasquet and Pierre-Hugues Herbert beat Ruben Bemelmans and Joris De Loore 6-1 3-6 7-6(2) 6-4 to give the hosts a 2-1 lead in the final against neighbours Belgium yesterday.

The French pair, in their first competitive match together, were down a break in the third set when Bemelmans suffered a meltdown, allowing Les Bleus to turn the situation around. David Goffin put the visitors ahead by beating Lucas Pouille in the opening singles before Jo-Wilfried Tsonga levelled for 1-1 when he defeated Steve Darcis in the second singles on Friday. Tsonga and Goffin face off in the first reverse singles on Sunday while Pouille and Darcis are set to play a decisive fifth match, if needed.

France captain Yannick Noah had surprisingly dropped doubles specialists Julien Benneteau and Nicolas Mahut, Herbert's preferred partner, to include Gasquet in the team on Thursday and while risky, his choice did not backfire.

Gasquet and Herbert, however, owe a big part of their victory to Bemelmans' inability to handle the pressure in front of a wild 28,500 crowd at the Pierre Mauroy stadium. After a disastrous opening set, the Belgian pair put the French on the back foot and served for the gain of the third set, only for Bemelmans to crack.

Herbert and Gasquet had never played together but it did not seem to be a problem at first as they raced to a 5-0 lead while the Belgians struggled to find their stride on the indoor hardcourt. They avoided a bagel, however, saving two set points before winning their first game.

The French bagged the set in the following game but Belgium gained momentum when they broke for 3-1 in the second. France broke back but dropped serve again in the following game as De Loore fired a jaw-dropping passing shot from way outside the court's limits. Bemelmans then levelled for one-set all with an angled service winner. The French saved two break points in the fifth game of the third set but dropped serve in the seventh against an ecstatic Belgian pair. Bemelmans played a poor service game to allow the French to level for 5-5 and as the left-handed Belgian's level nosedived, Les Bleus easily won the tiebreak. Two consecutive double faults by Herbert earned Belgium break points in the sixth game of the fourth set but France saved them in style before they broke in the seventh when Bemelmans made a dog's dinner of a routine overhead. The French held serve and wrapped it up when De Loore fired a forehand long on match point. — Reuters



ABU DHABI: Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas, center, of Finland, celebrates his pole position with his teammate second placed Lewis Hamilton, right, of Britain, and third placed Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel, of Germany. — AP

Bottas gets pole position ahead of Hamilton for Abu Dhabi GP

ABU DHABI: Valtteri Bottas beat Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton to take pole position for the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix yesterday. Hamilton, who secured his fourth world title two races ago, led on the first two split times but faded on the final sector.

Bottas secured his second straight pole following the Brazilian GP two weeks ago and the fourth of his career - all since joining Mercedes this season from Williams.

"I was so gutted in Brazil to be on pole and miss out on the win," said Bottas, who had a narrow escape earlier Saturday in the third and final practice. "I have a clear target for tomorrow." The Finnish driver set a lap record on the 5.6-kilometer (3.5-mile) Yas Marina circuit, clocking 1 minute, 36.231 seconds. He was .172 seconds ahead of Hamilton and about half a second clear of Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel. "I've only won once from pole, but I've had not had so many poles," said Bottas, who won the Austrian GP from the front in July. After just missing out on a 73rd career pole, and a personal best-equaling 12th of the season, Hamilton was keen to praise Bottas.

"He had an incredible qualifying session and congratulations to him," said Hamilton, who hugged Bottas. "I lost it

on turn five or six ... I gave it everything I could but it was really on a knife edge."

Vettel, who won in Brazil, finished ahead of Red Bull driver Daniel Ricciardo and Ferrari teammate Kimi Raikkonen in fifth. A sixth win of the season will lift Vettel's confidence after his title bid spectacularly collapsed between September and October.

"It's important to set yourself up for the winter and give the whole factory a boost," Vettel said, looking ahead to 2018. Next year, Hamilton and Vettel will both try to equal Argentine great Juan Manuel Fangio on five world titles. Only Michael Schumacher has more with seven and the German great also holds the record for race wins with 91.

Hamilton is second all-time with 62 wins. Four-time champion Alain Prost is third with 51 and Vettel fourth with 47. Qualifying was close. Bottas found the speed to challenge Hamilton, who has been consistently quicker this season. Hamilton set a lap record in the first part of qualifying - known as Q1 - before Bottas went even faster. Five drivers are eliminated from Q1 and from Q2 to leave 10 fighting it out for pole in Q3.

Pascal Wehrlein and Marcus Ericsson (both Sauber), Lance Stroll (Williams), Pierre Gasly (Toro Rosso) and Romain Grosjean (Haas) all went out in Q1 as the sun started to sink and nightfall descended on the desert-located track. Bottas looked sharp again as he led Q2 before Hamilton moved top of the leaderboard, with Vettel and Raikkonen following behind. Meanwhile, Brazilian veteran Felipe Massa just sneaked into Q3 at the expense of McLaren driver Fernando Alonso.

Competing in his last ever race, the 36-year-old Massa starts from 10th, behind Esteban Ocon and then Sergio Perez (both Force India). Renault driver Nico Hulkenberg goes from seventh behind Red Bull driver Max Verstappen. — AP



LILLE: France's Richard Gasquet and Pierre-Hugues Herbert celebrate their victory after the doubles tennis match at the Davis Cup World Group final between France and Belgium at Pierre Mauroy Stadium in Lille. — AFP

Sports

Ronaldo relieved as Real edge five-goal Malaga thriller

Cristiano's first La Liga goal for over a month

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo's first La Liga goal for over a month ensured Real Madrid closed the gap on La Liga leaders Barcelona to seven points by squeezing past struggling Malaga 3-2 yesterday.

Ronaldo's relief was clear to see when he fired home the rebound after seeing his penalty saved by Roberto in 15 minutes from time.

First-half goals from Karim Benzema and Casemiro had twice put the European champions in front.

However, their defensive fragilities without injured captain Sergio Ramos were also exposed as Diego Rolan and Chory Castro twice levelled for Malaga, who remain in the relegation zone.

Ronaldo's winner does though put some pressure on Barca when they travel to Valencia for a top-of-the-table clash today.

The Catalans will though be buoyed by Lionel Messi ending speculation over his future by finally signing a contract extension to 2021 earlier yesterday.

Ronaldo also played his part for Benzema's opener after just nine minutes. The World Player of the Year rose highest at the back post and when his header came back off the angle of post and bar, the unmarked Benzema had the simple task of nodding into an empty net. Real looked set to shake off their league struggles so far this season in a dominant start as Dani Carvajal also forced Roberto in the Malaga goal into the first of a series of impressive stops.

However, a slack pass from Toni Kroos on the edge of his own box handed Malaga a route back into the game on 18 minutes.

Keko pounced on the German World Cup winner's

gift and his cross was calmly chested down and slotted beyond Kiko Casilla by Rolan.

Parity only lasted three minutes for the visitors, though, as Kroos made amends with a corner from which Casemiro powered home.

Benzema and Ronaldo had plenty of chances to improve their meagre goal scoring returns this season with the Frenchman first to pull a great chance beyond the far post. Roberto then denied Ronaldo from close range before producing an even more stunning stop by leaping to his left to claw away a powerful header from the Portuguese.

Madrid's fans had complained before kick-off at their perceived harsh treatment from referees this season, but it was the hosts who were handed a let off from the officials on the stroke of half-time.

Paul Baysse's header looked to have levelled with the last touch of the half, but the French defender was penalised for a push on Dani Carvajal.

Malaga did level just before the hour mark thanks to some calamitous goalkeeping from Casilla as he let Castro's drive from 25 yards slip through his grasp into the bottom corner. Ronaldo saw another chance slip away as he failed to make any connection on Raphael Varane's knockdown moments later.

However, his moment came when substitute Luka Modric was tripped inside the area and referee Jesus Gil Manzano awarded Real their first penalty in La Liga this season. Ronaldo still couldn't find a way past Roberto with his first effort, but followed up to smash home the rebound to avoid Real's title chances suffering another severe blow. — AFP



MADRID: Real Madrid's Marcelo, left, goes for a header with Malaga's Sergio Gontan "Keko" during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Malaga at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, yesterday. — AP

Messi to end career at Barca after extending deal to 2021

BARCELONA: Lionel Messi hopes to end his career at Barcelona after ending months of speculation yesterday by signing a contract extension to 2021, sealing an agreement reached in July, the club announced.

Barca had said in the summer that Messi, 30, had committed his future to the club but the Argentine had not signed the new deal. With his previous contract set to expire in 2018, Messi could have left Barca for free next summer had he not extended his deal. "We have needed to do the signature for some time. It is done and I am happy to remain tied to the club," Messi told Barca TV. "I have always said I wanted to end my career here, it is my dream to finish at Barcelona and we are on the right track." Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu said the club needed to change the deal agreed in June to increase Messi's buyout clause to 700 million euros (\$835 million) and prevent the danger of a repeat of Neymar's departure when Paris Saint-Germain paid the Brazilian's 222 million-euro buyout clause in August. "We agreed to sign a new deal with a buyout clause adjusted to the current transfer market," said Bartomeu. "The buyout clause is 700 million. It allows us to keep Leo Messi where he should be."

Without Neymar, Messi's role as a creator and goalscorer has increased in a Barca side that has unusually built its stunning start to the season on a defensive record of 13 clean sheets in 18 games. "The departure of Ney has meant a change in the way we play," Messi, who has 16 goals in 19 games this campaign, told Spanish sports daily Marca on Saturday, a day after picking up his fourth Golden Shoe as the top goalscorer in Europe last season.

"We lost a huge amount of attacking potential, but that



BARCELONA: This handout photo taken yesterday in Barcelona, shows Barcelona FC President Josep Maria Bartomeu (L) and Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi signing a contract extension keeping Messi at Barcelona until 2021. — AFP

has benefited us in a defensive sense. Now we are more solid in midfield, we have more structure and that has made us stronger defensively." Barca first announced an agreement with Messi back on July 5, but pressure has been mounting on Bartomeu to get Messi to put pen to paper after a turbulent summer for the Catalans.

Neymar's departure sparked a crisis and Bartomeu was heavily criticised for failing to ward off PSG with a higher buyout clause and for a haphazard search for replacements in the final weeks of the transfer window.

Bartomeu did see off a vote of no confidence launched by disgruntled fans thanks to Barca's fantastic start to the season, in large part because of Messi's form. Bartomeu now has the image he craved of a smiling Messi tying the remainder of his peak years to the club.

"The new contract once more proves the relationship between Barca and Leo Messi, the best player in the histo-

ry of football," added Bartomeu. "He has always said he is happy at Barca and we are beginning a new era with a new project under Ernesto Valverde that at the moment is going phenomenally well."

Messi's 30 trophies are, along with teammate Andres Iniesta, the most of any player in Barca's history. The total eight La Liga and four Champions League titles. The diminutive Argentina captain, who joined Barca at the age of 13, has also smashed 523 goals in 602 games to become the Catalans' all-time top goalscorer.

News of Messi's renewal comes as a huge boost to the leaders of La Liga ahead of Sunday's top-of-the-table clash at Valencia (1945 GMT). Barca lead a revitalised Valencia by four points, with both Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid a further six points adrift, thanks to a club record start of 11 wins and one draw from 12 games. — AFP

Dortmund lets 4-goal lead slip away in 4-4 draw with Schalke

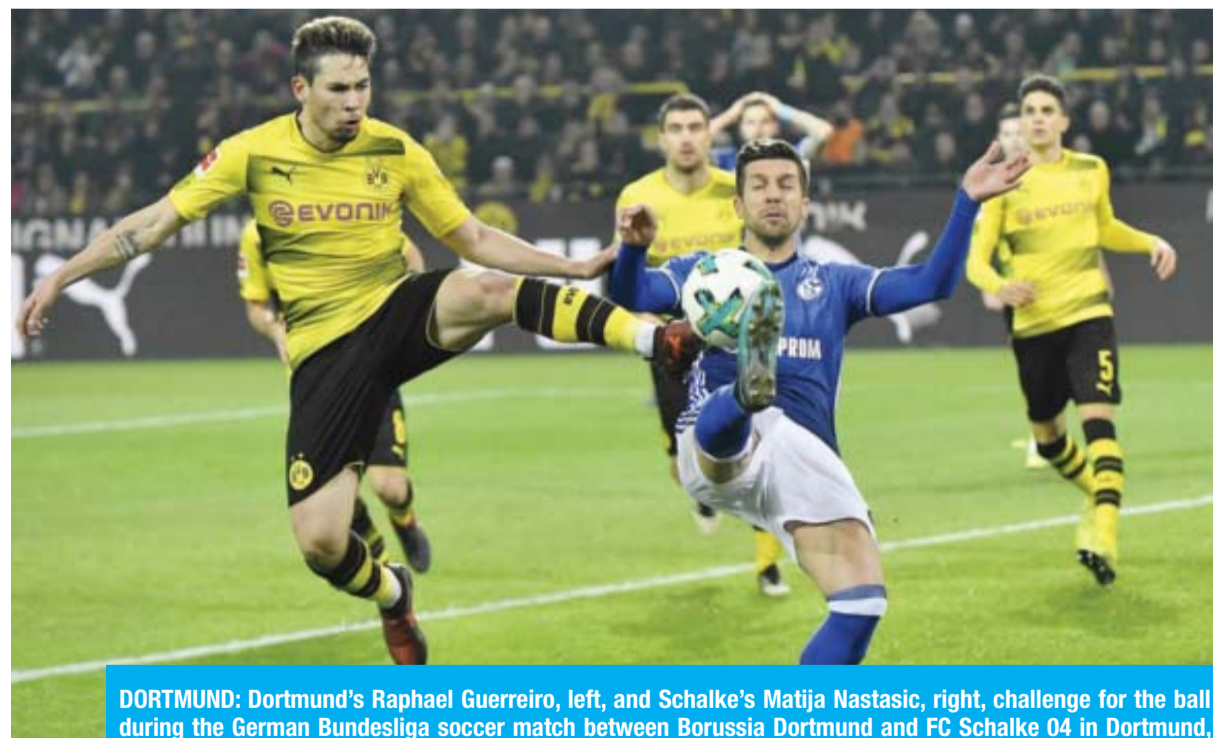
BERLIN: Brazilian defender Naldo scored in the fourth minute of injury time as Schalke rallied from four goals down to draw 4-4 Borussia Dortmund in the Bundesliga's 91st Ruhr derby yesterday.

Dortmund raced into a 4-0 lead after just 25 minutes and was hanging on for what would have been its first Bundesliga win since September when Naldo headed Yevhen Konoplyanka's corner beyond Roman Weidenfeller. The game ended with a melee involving both sets of players before Dortmund's Nuri Sahin and Schalke goalkeeper Ralf Faehrmann were booked by referee Deniz Aytekin. Faehrmann had appeared to be goading the home fans before Sahin intervened.

Both sides finished with 10 players - Dortmund after goal-scorer Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang was sent off with his second yellow card, Schalke after goal scorer Amine Harit went off injured when Domenico Tedesco had made all his substitutes.

Tedesco's counterpart, Peter Bosz, will face questions of how his Dortmund side allowed a four-goal lead to slip away at home, while the draw will not give him the job security he needs after just one win across 10 competitive games.

Aubameyang opened the scoring in the 12th minute, sliding in to convert past Faehrmann at the second attempt after the Schalke goalkeeper blocked his first. TV replays showed the rebound came off Aubameyang's hand, though he didn't have time to take it away. Six minutes later it was



DORTMUND: Dortmund's Raphael Guerreiro, left, and Schalke's Matija Nastasic, right, challenge for the ball during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and FC Schalke 04 in Dortmund, Germany, yesterday. — AP

2-0, after Benjamin Stambouli spectacularly turned Sahin's free kick into his own net. Aubameyang produced a brilliant cross for Mario Goetze to head Dortmund's third only two minutes later, then Raphael Guerreiro hammered a volley inside the far post for the side's fourth five minutes after that. Tedesco reacted with a double substitution, including Leon Goretzka for Weston McKennie, who had been booked early on. Schalke defender Thilo Kehrer, booked for a rash challenge on Sahin, was fortunate not to be sent off for another on Andrey Yarmolenko before the break. Kehrer didn't emerge for the second half as Tedesco

brought Matija Nastasic on for his final substitution.

Naldo thought he'd pulled one back as Schalke pushed forward, but the goal was ruled out for offside. Aubameyang should have scored Dortmund's fifth following a mistake from Faehrmann, but instead Guido Burgstaller scored at the other end, then Harit ensured an exciting finale with Schalke's second with 25 minutes remaining. Daniel Caligiuri cut inside to fire Schalke's third goal with four minutes remaining, and the side was given seven minutes' injury time to find the equalizer. Naldo only needed four. — AP

Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
Southampton v Everton	16:30
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Burnley v Arsenal	17:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Huddersfield Town v Man City	19:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
SPANISH LEAGUE	
Deportivo La Coruna v Athletic de Bilbao	14:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
Real Sociedad v Las Palmas	18:15
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
Villarreal v Sevilla	20:30
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Valencia v Barcelona	22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE	
Milan v Torino	17:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
Udinese Calcio v Napoli	17:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
Genoa v Roma	17:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
Lazio v Fiorentina	20:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
Juventus v Crotone	22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
GERMAN LEAGUE	
Hamburg v Hoffenheim	17:30
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
Koln v Hertha Berlin	20:00
beIN SPORTS HD 5	
FRENCH LEAGUE	
OGC Nice v Olympique Lyonnais	17:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
Olympique Marseille v Guingamp	19:00
beIN SPORTS HD 7	
Monaco v Paris Saint	23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	

Improved Swansea draw against Bournemouth

SWANSEA CITY: Swansea City produced a vastly-improved performance and ended a run of four straight Premier League losses with a 0-0 draw against Bournemouth at the Liberty Stadium yesterday.

Swansea midfielder Leroy Fer missed a chance to seal the win in the final 10 minutes, shooting straight at goalkeeper Asmir Begovic before missing with his second attempt while team mate Tammy Abraham had a penalty appeal denied late on. Wilfried Bony provided the game's other talking point just before halftime when the Swansea striker curled a shot into the top corner but his effort was disallowed after Jordan Ayew was adjudged to have fouled defender Nathan Ake in the build-up. Bournemouth began the game brightly but missed a chance to go ahead within two minutes as winger Marc Pugh scuffed Joshua King's low cross. Bournemouth sat back and allowed Swansea to grow in confidence but the hosts failed to make the most of their chances. — Reuters

12 England into rugby World Cup final after late Tonga drama



14 Steve Smith's 141 not out puts Australia in front in Ashes opener



15 Messi to end career at Barca after extending deal to 2021



TOKYO: Japan's Urawa Reds players celebrate after defeating Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal in the final of the AFC Champions League soccer tournament in Saitama, north of Tokyo yesterday. — AP

Japan's Reds crowned Asian kings

Brazilian Silva scores two minutes from time

SAITAMA: Brazilian sharp-shooter Rafael Silva smashed a late winner as Japan's Urawa Reds beat 10-man Al Hilal 1-0 yesterday to win a second Asian Champions League title. The forward, who also scored in last weekend's 1-1 first-leg draw in Riyadh, blasted a superb winner two minutes from time for Urawa, last crowned continental champions in 2007.

"Words can't describe how happy I feel right now," said Silva after recovering from a sore ankle he sustained in Saudi Arabia. "It's been a difficult week with the injury but this makes it worthwhile. We fed off the crowd's energy and were running on 100 percent adrenalin," added the 25-year-old, who was the target

of racial abuse in the build-up to the game.

Urawa officials filed a formal protest to the Asian Football Confederation after racist comments were posted on the player's Instagram account. Tempers flared on the pitch too as Silva and Uruguayan midfielder Nicolas Milei went nose to nose, with Al Hilal becoming increasingly anxious as they tried to cancel out Urawa's away goal.

Japanese teams have struggled in Asia's premier club competition since Gamba Osaka lifted the trophy in 2008 and the Reds were under the cosh for much of the return game in Saitama. But the visitors, chasing a first Asian title since 2000, lacked end product and their

cause was not helped by the dismissal of midfielder Salem Al Dawsari in the 78th minute.

Al Dawsari fizzed a first-half shot just over with arguably Al Hilal's best chance of the match before Syria striker Omar Kharbin curled a free kick just wide before the break. At the other end, Reds striker Shinzo Koroki had a header brilliantly saved before Silva almost broke the net with his late rocket to dash Saudi hopes. The home crowd of 57,000 erupted with joy at the final whistle while Al Hilal's players slumped to the turf, many sobbing, after coming up short in their bid for a third Asian title.

Reds manager Takafumi Hori said: "The players did

wonderfully well. We didn't have much time to prepare after the first leg but we showed great character to win." Urawa's victory qualifies them for next month's Club World Cup in the UAE. "Hopefully we can go there and do a job too," said Silva, who also scored the winner in last month's victory over star-studded Shanghai SIPG in the semi-finals. "We'll take a little time to recover from tonight and then we go again." Visiting coach Ramon Diaz tried to put a positive spin on the result. "Congratulations to Urawa on winning the title," said the Argentine. "I'm proud of how my players performed. It's been a dream to come this far in the tournament, it's been a great experience." — AFP

United close gap on City, Spurs held

LONDON: Manchester United closed the gap on Premier League leaders Manchester City to five points with a 1-0 win over Brighton, while Tottenham's title hopes suffered another blow in a 1-1 draw against West Bromwich Albion yesterday.

Jose Mourinho's United bounced back from their surprise Champions League defeat at Basel in midweek thanks to Lewis Dunk's second half own goal at Old Trafford. However, City can reopen an eight-point advantage over their Manchester rivals if they win at Huddersfield today. Tottenham's bid to win the title for the first time since 1961 is in tatters after their latest frustrating result at Wembley left them 10 points behind City. At Old Trafford, United, featuring seven changes from the Basel loss, found it hard to break Brighton's stubborn resistance before finally nabbing the crucial goal in the 56th minute.

Dale Stephens headed Marcus Rashford's corner to Ashley Young on the edge of the area and his shot deflected off Dunk and looped over Brighton keeper Mat Ryan. That was enough to secure United's second consecutive league win as they try to keep pace with City. It was United's club record 39th successive home game without defeat. Tottenham have had mixed results

at Wembley since moving into their temporary home while White Hart Lane is redeveloped and once again they lacked a cutting edge against supposedly inferior opponents.

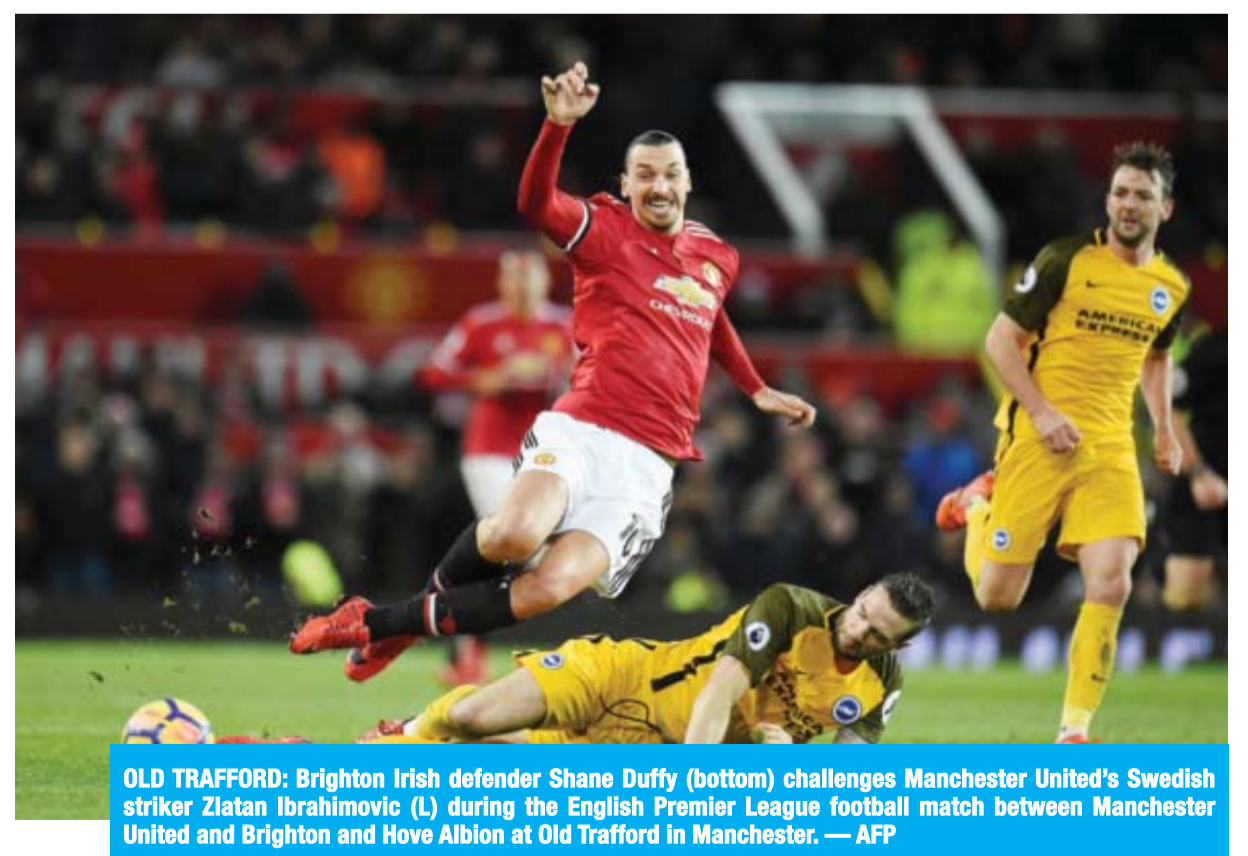
The pre-match headlines focused on Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino's decision to leave left-back Danny Rose out of the squad for the second time in seven days. Rose admitted he was "fuming" with his absence from the north London derby and although he played 90 minutes in Tottenham's midweek win at Borussia Dortmund, there was no place for the England international against Albion. Albion were led by caretaker boss Gary Megson following Tony Pulis's sacking earlier this week and they took a shock fourth minute lead. Notching his first goal since September, Salomon Rondon sprinted onto Jake Livermore's pass, held off Davinson Sanchez and hit a scuffed shot that trickled past Tottenham goalkeeper Hugo Lloris.

LABOURED

Tottenham laboured for long periods but equalised in the 74th minute when Kane converted Dele Alli's cross for his 15th club goal this season. West Brom are without a win in 11 league games, while Tottenham have failed to win their last two in the league.

Mamadou Sakho gave Crystal Palace just their second league win this season as the French defender's last-gasp goal sealed a 2-1 success against Stoke. Mark Hughes' men went ahead in the 53rd minute through Xherdan Shaqiri's superb solo effort at Selhurst Park.

But bottom of the table Palace drew level thanks to Ruben Loftus-Cheek's tap-in three minutes later and Sakho won it for the hosts from close-range in the 90th minute. Watford handed Newcastle a fourth successive defeat with a 3-0 win at St James' Park.



OLD TRAFFORD: Brighton Irish defender Shane Duffy (bottom) challenges Manchester United's Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic (L) during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Brighton and Hove Albion at Old Trafford in Manchester. — AFP

The Hornets showed why their manager Marco Silva has been linked with the vacant Everton job as they swept to a second successive victory. They took a 19th

minute lead through Will Hughes, the midfielder flicking in Marvin Zeegelaar's cross for his second goal in his last two games.—AFP

Business

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017

18 Change of guard brings a ray of hope for Zimbabwe's economy**20** Bursa Kuwait stocks end session on a bearish note**22** Al-Sayer Medical acquires 9001:2015, latest ISO Bureau Veritas Certification

ST LOUIS: An early morning line snakes around The Meadows in St. Louis as shoppers hope to get one of 500 gift cards being given out by management on Friday. — AP

Black Friday sales kick off US shopping season

Retailers work hard to woo shoppers to stores

NEW YORK: American consumers arrived en masse in stores - and online - for the annual Black Friday shopping extravaganza that opens the US holiday shopping season.

Held the day after Thanksgiving, a period when schools are out and many offices are closed, Black Friday has evolved over the years into a massive shopping occasion known for "door-buster" sales and other promotions to lure consumers into stores. Retailers work to attract shoppers to stores on Black Friday.

Retailers worked hard to attract shoppers to stores on Black Friday, offering in-person deals meant to counter the ease of shopping by phone on Amazon.

A better economy and colder weather helped, to be sure. But stores have also tried to improve the store experience and offer better service. They've also made a big push toward offering store pickup for online orders, hoping to get people to pick up more items. But they're fighting a circumstance in which online leader Amazon is the first and only stop for many shoppers.

So they're getting creative with the deals. Victor Moore said he arrived about two

hours ahead of Best Buy's 8 am opening in Nashville and scored one of the about 14 "door-buster" deals on a 55-inch Toshiba smart TV for \$280, a \$220 savings. Moore said he's done some online shopping, but the allure of in-store-only deals drew him out from behind the computer.

"This is the first successful door-buster that I've ever been a part of," Moore said. "I've been in lines before, but never actually got the items that I was waiting for."

Annette Peluffo usually avoids Black Friday and buys online. But a \$250 gift card reward for buying an iPhone 8 plus at a Target store in Miami was hard to resist. She plans to use the money to buy toys for her nephews and nieces in the coming weeks. "I just came here for the iPhone. I am not going to any other store," she said.

Still, Black Friday isn't what it used to be. It has morphed from a single day when people got up early to score door-busters into a whole month of deals. That has thinned out the crowds. And brick-and-mortar stores face plenty of challenges. With the jobsless

rate at a 17-year-low of 4.1 percent and consumer confidence stronger than a year ago, analysts project healthy sales increases for November and December. The National Retail Federation trade group expects sales



Amazon sales top 50% over previous year

for that period to at least match last year's rise of 3.6 percent and estimates online spending and other non-store sales will rise 11 to 15 percent.

But analysts at Bain say Amazon is expected to take half of the holiday season's sales growth.

Amazon said Friday that Thanksgiving

continued to be one of its busiest shopping days, with orders through its app up over 50 percent from a year ago. Overall, online sales on Black Friday rose 18.4 percent to \$640 million, from a year ago, as of Friday morning, says Adobe Analytics.

Thanksgiving generated a total of \$2.87 billion in online spending, up 18.3 percent from a year ago, the data firm said. About 69 percent of Americans, or 164 million people, intend to shop at some point during the five-day period from Thanksgiving to Cyber Monday, according to a survey released by the NRF. It expected Black Friday to remain the busiest day, with about 115 million people planning to shop then. "The consumer still likes to go to the stores," said Charles O'Shea, Moody's lead retail analyst. "I've seen a lot of traffic. Yes. There's going to be a lot of online shopping. But I think the brick and mortar stores have done a nice job so far in attracting shoppers."

That's true of Karre Wagner, a 20-year-old University of Minnesota student from St.

Paul, Minnesota, who was shopping at Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, with her boyfriend. She bought a Blue-Ray player at the mall's Best Buy store. She says she started holiday shopping on Black Friday, but she likes to go to the mall to shop.

"I like to see what I'm buying. I like to touch it, feel it, know exactly what I'm getting and part of it is the experience," she said. "I mean, sitting online is fine, but there's just something about starting the holiday season with Black Friday."

The shift to online buying is a major factor as industry analysts watch how the nation's malls fare this holiday shopping season. The Mall of America in Minnesota says that 2,500 people were in line at the 5 a.m. opening Friday, in line with a year ago. Shoppers started queuing up as early as 5:45 p.m. on Thanksgiving. Jill Renslow, Mall of America's executive vice president of business development, said stores like Nordstrom, Macy's and Best Buy were crowded. She said the items that caught shoppers' attention included voice-activated devices like Amazon Echo, nostalgic toys, clothing and shoes. — AFP

S&P slashes South Africa rating further into 'junk'

WASHINGTON: S&P Global Ratings lowered South Africa's credit rating further into "junk" territory on Friday, citing the country's deteriorating public finances and weak economic growth outlook.

S&P dropped South Africa long-term foreign currency sovereign rating to "BB" after having placed it higher in the speculative category at "BB+" in April. "Weak GDP growth has led to further deterioration of South Africa's public finances beyond our previous expectations," S&P said.

"We think the government will attempt to introduce offsetting measures in an effort to improve budgetary outcomes, but these may

not be strong enough to stabilize public finances, and may weaken economic growth further in the near term." "In our view, economic decisions in recent years have largely focused on the distribution - rather than the growth - of national income," S&P added. "As a consequence, South Africa's economy has stagnated and external competitiveness has eroded."

S&P said its outlook on South Africa is "stable," meaning credit metrics are not expected to change significantly over the next year. S&P's move comes amid worsening economic data and as tensions rise within the African National Congress, which will choose a new party leader in December to replace President Jacob Zuma. South Africa finance minister Malusi Gigaba in October slashed the country's GDP growth forecast for 2017 from 1.3 percent to just 0.7 percent, and revealed that by 2020, 15 percent of government revenue would be eaten up by debt repayment.

Zuma is accused of enriching a new corrupt elite rather than helping the poverty-stricken black majority. The latest downgrading by S&P could spur additional foreign investment to flee South Africa. — AP

Trump appoints new head of financial watchdog

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Friday appointed White House budget director Mick Mulvaney to head a financial watchdog that the administration has sought to overhaul as part of its deregulation push. Mulvaney, who described the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) as a "sick, sad joke" in a 2014 interview, will serve as acting director until a permanent head is nominated and confirmed, according to a White House statement.

Richard Cordray, the first director of the CFPB who had long been in the banking industry's crosshairs, announced last week he would step down by the end of the month, several months early. The Trump administration's decision to appoint Mulvaney sparked some confusion over the interim CFPB leadership, as Cordray had already named Leandra English—who was already part of the agency—as his de facto successor by naming her deputy director. That move came hours before Trump tapped Mulvaney as the regulator's temporary leader.

Since the start of his presidency Trump has decried financial rules and regulations, put in place through the 2010 Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform legislation, to combat the excesses that led to the 2008 financial crisis. Trump's



RICHMOND: In this March 26, 2015, file photo, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Director Richard Cordray speaks during a panel discussion in Richmond, Va. — AP

Treasury Department has produced three reports calling for a whittling down of rules imposed on mid-size banks, a scaling back of stress tests and a restructuring of the CFPB.

Republicans have long deemed the bureau, which was founded in 2011 under the administration of former president Barack Obama, too far outside political control.

Last month, the US Senate voted to terminate a rule created by the agency that would have allowed class-action suits against banks or credit card companies. — AFP

Business

Change of guard brings a ray of hope for Zimbabwe's economy

Mnangagwa has only one priority: Rebuilding the economy

HARARE: Every time Chareka Mutungwazi, 76, tries to collect his pension money, he spends the night, like scores of others, sleeping outside a bank in Harare, the Zimbabwean capital.

He is lucky if he is allowed to take out just \$20 of his monthly \$63 (53 euros) pension as banks limit withdrawals due to the cash shortage—a symptom of the country's economic collapse.

For most Zimbabweans, incoming president Emmerson Mnangagwa has only one priority: rebuilding an economy shattered by policies that threw out investors, destroyed the key agricultural sector and left almost everyone unemployed. "I have to sleep in the queue if I want to get money. I came here last night and this is not good," Mutungwazi told AFP, wincing as he shifted to find a more comfortable position on the pavement.

Beside him in the queue at the government-owned People's Own Savings Bank, an elderly woman laid half asleep while a young mother tried to control her restless child. The shortage of banknotes is a legacy of the hyperinflation 10 years ago that forced the government to abandon the Zimbabwean dollar.

Inflation hit 500 billion percent as the government printed one-hundred-trillion dollar bank notes that could barely buy a loaf of bread. All savings were wiped out.

'Jobs, jobs, jobs!'

Since then, the economy has survived on scarce US dollar notes—often used until they fall apart—and for the past year a parallel "bond note" currency that is pegged to the US dollar but widely distrusted. The World Bank estimates that 2.8 million people, or 17.5 percent of the population, are short of food, and says

paying public wages sucks up a staggering 87 percent of government revenue.

Zimbabwe's unemployment level is generally put at over 90 percent, while the size of the economy has halved since 2000 when many white-owned farms were seized.

Mnangagwa addressed the unemployment crisis in his first speech as the president-in-waiting on Wednesday, saying: "We want to grow our country. We want jobs, jobs, jobs!"

Among the cheering crowd was Remigio Mutero, 30, an unemployed IT graduate. "All I want is job creation, and he has promised it," he told AFP. Anger at bond notes was a driving force behind protests last year, while rocketing prices have returned in recent months—adding to the pressure that finally forced the military to take over. The country does have economic strengths, especially in tobacco, cotton and mining, and Mugabe's fall could offer the chance to open the taps for funding from overseas donors like the International Monetary Fund (IMF).



New president open to limited economic reform

Opening up?

Mnangagwa—a veteran Mugabe loyalist—appears open to limited economic reform, including of the "indigenization" laws that force foreign-owned companies to sell majority stakes to locals.

The IHS Markit analysis consultancy also predicted the reinstatement of former finance minister Patrick Chinamasa, saying the move "would indicate a more pro-business shift (and) re-engagement with the international community". But local economists like Tony Hawkins, a professor at the University of Zimbabwe, warned that the country's problems run deep and inter-



HARARE: In this photograph taken on November 23, 2017, shows a basket of state subsidized bread for sale at a shop in the childhood village of former Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe in Kurtama some 200kms west of Harare. —AFP

national donors may not be encouraged by the new ZANU-PF regime.

"Lenders like the IMF want reforms. They will say trim the civil services, cut the wage bill. None of these can be achieved overnight," he said.

"If Mnangagwa cuts civil servants salaries, he is going to lose his support. "We have no money in the banks, we have a huge budget deficit, there is hardly any foreign direct investment. There is no magic wand."

Many ordinary Zimbabweans, still stunned that Mugabe is no longer in power, are seizing on the chance to be more optimistic.

"We have suffered for too long," said Charles Mutimhai, 35, who runs a stationery shop. "Real change means creating a stable environment for new investment to bring more money and to expand companies and create jobs. We need confidence for that to be able to happen." —AFP

Bayt.com weekly report

2018 is on the Horizon with good news for job-seekers

It seems like just yesterday people were saying their farewells to 2016, unprepared for the full weight of what the New Year would bring. Now, we find ourselves faced with the same old dilemma as the year nears completion. But, how are job seekers feeling at the end of this year? Are they feeling overwhelmed and underprepared or are they bracing themselves in preparation for a bright new year? Do they believe there are enough business and career growth opportunities on the way? Will 2018 bring more jobs to the Middle East? As 2017 draws closer to the end, 2018 shines bright like sunrise on the distant horizon. This year has borne its share of joy and challenges, of achievements and obstacles, but the Middle Eastern workforce remains stalwart and deals with the good and the bad with confidence and optimism. As curtain call nears and we all prepare to end the year on a good note, job seekers must look at the next as a glass half full and take life by the reins. Luckily, it appears that good news is on the way for job seekers region-wide, bringing about a collective sigh of relief that can be felt across the region. While words certainly hold their

weight in dialogue, we can quantify the positivity that approaches the tail-end of this year with numbers as well.

It seems that job seekers already have the right idea, with more than four in ten job seekers saying they will snatch their dream job within the next year, according to the Bayt.com Job Seeker Confidence Index Survey. The report showed factual insights on what job seekers are anticipating for the next year in terms of their personal financial situation, the general economy, and business and career growth opportunities.

This is more than wishful thinking. The latest Bayt.com Middle East Job Index as well as the Bayt.com Entrepreneurship in the Middle East survey showed that the majority of companies, large and small, are planning to hire over the next year for a multitude of different positions.

But it is also a widely held belief that a positive attitude brings about positive outcomes! To put this belief into perspective, consider this: If employable adults in the Middle East and North Africa region are optimistic about job prospects, opportunities and job security, it will be reflected in their attitudes toward their work and the greater economy as a whole. So, a sunny outlook borne by the majority will help job seekers become more proactive in their continuous journey toward greener pastures. This is why businesses always look at "consumer confidence" and predict their revenues accordingly.

It has also been proven that pessimism can harm the economy. If job seekers do not bear a positive attitude toward their job security, personal finance or greater economy, they will rein in their spending in order to prepare for a future they perceive to be potentially tough. It

is almost ironic that in doing so, economic growth will be negatively affected and worsened. With less people buying consumer goods and driving the economy, a spending recession could take place and lead to an economic downturn. Therefore, a positive attitude toward the economy is crucial for its success and growth. The Bayt.com survey showed that close to two-fifths of job seekers believe that their financial situation will improve within the next six months. Job seekers are very perceptive about their environment, and harboring better hopes for the future is unlikely to be misplaced optimism. Rather, they clearly have reason to believe that 2018 will bring better tidings, business opportunities and personal financial growth. Similarly, when it came to the conditions of business in their country of residence, close to half of respondents believe that business conditions will improve in the next six months. It becomes apparent that there has been a shift in job seeker perspective. This shift shows that although the past year has been challenging for many, current variables indicate to job seekers that things are more likely to improve than to get worse.

Putting numbers aside, it is transparent that job seekers are optimistic about 2018. Optimism alone, however, will not drive you forward in your career or get you the job you want. In addition to positivity, you will need to prepare in advance and get ahead of things. Begin by updating your CV. Your CV freshness and completeness affects how attractive you look to prospective employers. Get started on writing your cover letters and begin searching more vigorously through the 10,000+ jobs available to you on Bayt.com, the Middle East's #1 job site, on any given day.

Tunisia to lift bread prices for first time since revolution

TUNIS: Tunisia plans to slightly increase bread prices for the first time since its 2011 revolution and sell Eurobonds worth 500 million euros (\$593.20 million) as it seeks to slash a budget deficit, an economic adviser told Reuters. The North African country is under pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to cut its deficit and overhaul its economy, in turmoil since the 2011 toppling of Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali.

Tunisia is struggling with high unemployment as foreign investment has dried up since 2011 and militant attacks have hit the vital tourism sector. The government plans to keep subsidies flat in 2018 but this will mean small price increases for some subsidized goods, as it will not match an expected rise in prices for imported petrol or wheat, said Ridha Saidi, an adviser to the prime minister.

"The price of bread will ... rise by at least 10 millimes (about half a US cent), or perhaps a little more than that," he said in an interview on Thursday, referring to the price of one loaf, which normally costs 0.19 dinars. There are 1000 millimes to the dinar.

The last time Tunisia tried increasing bread prices was in 2010 in the final stages of Ben Ali's rule. Authorities reversed the increase within months in a

vain attempt to curb dissent which eventually swept away the strongman. "There is an intention to gradually adjust the price of tea and coffee as well," Saidi said, adding that drinking water would also become more expensive.

Imports more expensive

The Tunisian dinar has lost against hard currency this year, making imports more expensive. Parliament started debating the budget draft this week calling also for increases in taxes and social security contributions, a move opposed by business associations. Saidi also said authorities wanted to issue Eurobonds worth about 500 million euros in the first quarter to help finance the budget. He said the expected pricing would be probably in a similar range like in February when Tunisia sold a seven-year bond worth 850 million euros at a yield of 5.75 percent.

The government also wants to sell bonds worth 2.2 billion dinars in the local market, he said. In April, the IMF agreed to release a delayed \$320 million tranche of Tunisia's \$2.8 billion in loans, on condition that it raise tax revenue, reduce the public wage bill and cut popular energy subsidies.

Tunisia expected the IMF to pay out the next tranche worth \$315 million after a delegation reviewed the reforms during a visit from Nov. 29 to Dec. 13, economic reforms minister Taoufik Rajhi told Reuters.

There is a positive signal from the International Monetary Fund," he said. Tunisia also planned to sell Islamic bonds, or sukuk, worth \$500 million next year once it overcame some legal and technical issues, he said. The government has been planning for some years to issue sukuk. —Reuters

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	302.200
Canadian Dollar	238.470
Sterling Pound	404.465
Euro	361.915
Swiss Frank	297.655
Bahrain Dinar	802.065
UAE Dirhams	82.670
Qatari Riyals	83.495
Saudi Riyals	81.445
Jordanian Dinar	427.515
Egyptian Pound	17.143
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.966
Indian Rupees	4.672
Pakistani Rupees	2.864
Bangladesh Taka	3.665
Philippines Peso	5.961
Cyprus pound	17.985

Japanese Yen	3.710
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.928
Malaysian Ringgit	74.435
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.230
Thai Bhat	10.235
Turkish Lira	77.100

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.398423	0.405923
Czech Korune	0.006180	0.018180
Danish Krone	0.044452	0.049452
Euro	0.355862	0.363362
Georgian Lari	0.134754	0.134754
Norwegian Krone	0.033217	0.038417
Romanian Leu	0.064731	0.081581
Russian ruble	0.005182	0.005182
Slovakia	0.009013	0.019013
Swedish Krona	0.032503	0.037503
Swiss Franc	0.302798	0.313798

Australasia	BUY	SELL
Australian Dollar	0.222613	0.234613
New Zealand Dollar	0.202427	0.211927

America	BUY	SELL
Canadian Dollar	0.232864	0.241864
US Dollars	0.298450	0.302870
US Dollars Mint	0.298950	0.302870

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003296	0.003880
Chinese Yuan	0.044444	0.047944
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036798	0.039548
Indian Rupee	0.004105	0.004746
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002635	0.002815
Korean Won	0.000269	0.000284
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069532	0.075532
Nepalese Rupee	0.003019	0.003189
Pakistan Rupee	0.002645	0.002935
Philippine Peso	0.005822	0.006122
Singapore Dollar	0.219557	0.229557
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001699	0.002279
Taiwan	0.009995	0.010175
Thai Baht	0.008920	0.009470

Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.795527	0.804027
Egyptian Pound	0.014497	0.020215
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000185	0.000245
Jordanian Dinar	0.422118	0.431118
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000155	0.000255
Moroccan Dirhams	0.023512	0.047512
Omani Riyal	0.779526	0.785206
Qatar Riyal	0.078813	0.083753
Saudi Riyal	0.079593	0.080893
Syrian Pound	0.001282	0.001502
Tunisian Dinar	0.117953	0.125953
Turkish Lira	0.072197	0.082497
UAE Dirhams	0.080948	0.082648

Business

Ford Trucks appoints Alghanim Auto as its only Agent and Dealer in Kuwait



Chairman of Alghanim Industries, Kutayba Y. Alghanim (third from right) Meeting with the Ford Trucks team.



Lawrence Silverman, the Ambassador of the United States.



Omar K. Alghanim, CEO of Alghanim Industries.

KUWAIT: Ford Trucks, one of the largest international heavy truck manufacturers in the world, recently announced that it has selected Alghanim Auto as the official dealer for Ford Trucks Heavy Commercial Vehicles in Kuwait. Alghanim Auto is part of the Alghanim Industries automotive group, which includes Ford Motor Company and Lincoln Motor Company.

This new partnership was announced and celebrated during a press event at the Dar Hamad Restaurant. The event was attended by CEO of Alghanim Industries, Omar K. Alghanim, Director of International Markets at Ford Trucks, Ercan Emrah Duman, the Ambassador of the United States, H.E. Lawrence Silverman, the First Counselor of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Ali Bozçaliskan, executives from Ford Trucks and Alghanim Auto and other prominent guests.

The event included a special ceremony where the CEO of Alghanim Industries, Omar K. Alghanim, spoke to the audience about the new partnership, indicating that it further strengthens Alghanim Industries as it strives to play a vital role in the continued advancement of Kuwait. Following the ceremony, attendees enjoyed a presentation on Ford Trucks and later toured a collection of Ford Trucks showcased outside of the Dar Hamad Restaurant.

Speaking about the new partnership, Chairman of Alghanim Industries, Kutayba Y. Alghanim said: "It gives me great pleasure to see this new partnership between our company, Alghanim Industries, and Ford Trucks. It is truly a testament to Alghanim Industries' ability to represent some of the world's largest companies, and is also a showing of Ford Trucks' desire to expand its operations and presence in the region. Just as we have for over a century, we will continue to establish a foundation of trust with our venerable customers. Our focus on customer service is a shared value between our two organizations. We believe that no relationship can last or prosper without shared values – and that is why both our companies believe in quality, integrity and an unwavering focus on meeting our customers' needs. This is our promise to our customers and what they can expect from Ford Trucks in Kuwait."

He went on to say: "Alghanim Industries always strives to be an integral part of Kuwait's development, whether it's through our businesses and our international partnerships, or through our role within our community, as we support entrepreneurship, education and other causes. As one of the largest private companies in the region, we have an obligation to be proactive and have a lasting impact on our country – we work vigorously to meet that obligation. We consider this new partnership to be yet another bond in the relationship between our beloved country of Kuwait and the United States of America and the Republic of Turkey, as was evident in the pres-

ence of the honorable representatives of those great countries during the event."

Speaking at the event, CEO of Alghanim Industries, Omar K. Alghanim said: "We are really excited to represent Ford Trucks Heavy Commercial Vehicles in Kuwait – it's an outstanding company. Through this partnership, we'll be able to provide our customers more efficient vehicles, better service, and better value overall. At Alghanim Industries, we believe that having the finest heavy commercial trucks with the best value will not only help our customers, but will in return move our economy closer to the Kuwait Vision 2035."

Director of International Markets at Ford Trucks, Ercan Emrah Duman, said: "We are very pleased to partner with Alghanim Auto to launch our range of heavy commercial vehicles for the first time in Kuwait. Kuwait is a fast growing market: the heavy commercial vehicle segment has witnessed strong growth over the past 5 years and is set to grow even more given all the infrastructure development plans currently underway in Kuwait. With our new partner, Alghanim Auto, we are committed to providing the highest levels of customer service and competitive aftersales solutions through dedicated facilities for sales, service and parts."

The new Ford Trucks facilities for sales, service and parts will be open soon in Ahmedi. Furthermore, Alghanim Auto will offer various transportation solutions ranging from international extended warranty programs backed by the manufacturer, customized maintenance packages for up to 5 years, a mobile workshop service to provide repairs and maintenance to increase vehicle uptime, 24/7 roadside assistance, technician and driver training for customers, as well as fleet management systems with built-in connectivity as a standard on all truck models.

Driven by the brand's strategic pillars of quality, durability and efficiency, Ford Trucks combine more than half a century of design and production experience with expertise in market specific product development. This partnership allows Ford Trucks to present a wide range of vehicles in Kuwait distinguished with their power, efficiency, fuel economy and technology, including tractors, construction trucks and road trucks with a high capacity payload.

During the event, the guests had the chance to be the first to discover the Ford Trucks line-up displayed for the first time in Kuwait: The Tractor, Construction, and Road series. The three series were presented in an interactive way showcasing their features and their competitive edge:

Ford Trucks Road Series:

The new Ford Trucks Road Series comes with many innovative features that help increase profits and reduces operating costs. This is due

to the new Ecotorq engine that provides fuel efficiency and effortlessly bears the burden of any business. Both economic and environmentally friendly, the new Ecotorq engine provides the most appropriate power for various kinds of use. Equipped with many high tech features for a safer and more powerful drive, the Ford Truck Road Series ensures that both your load and your business easily reach their goals. Ergonomic and technological innovations stand out in all models. A selection of 4x2, 6x2, 6x4 and 8x4 road trucks with different cab options and wheelbases accommodate your business needs and the superstructure application you want to use.

Ford Trucks Construction Series:

Displaying sheer power and stability under all conditions with the support of Ecotorq engines, Ford Trucks Construction Series always supports you with low fuel consumption, a strong engine brake system and extreme durability under all load conditions, while an all renewed ergonomic cabin enhances the driver's comfort and productivity. The Ford Trucks Construction Series is powered by the new Ecotorq engine offering comfort for drivers with exceptional traction uphill and on rough terrains. The Construction Series delivers 430HP, as well as strong performance in demanding site conditions with 2150Nm torque value. While climbing the steep slopes encountered especially in earthmoving and cutting sites with high torque, the new 400KW engine brake keeps the power continually under control. The optional 600KW Intarder option offered for even rougher conditions brings the total braking capability to 1000KW, ensuring that the heaviest loads can be safely carried on even the steepest slopes and hills. Functionality meets aesthetics with the Ford Trucks Construction Series, ensuring a comfortable journey for those carrying a heavy load. The Ford Trucks Construction Series also offers flexible solutions for various projects, thanks to an automated transmission option with different usage modes for road and terrain.

Ford Trucks Tractor Series:

Ford Trucks Tractor Series offers high performance with low fuel consumption, thanks to the powerful Ecotorq engine. Long service intervals and conformity to different trailer options make it your loyal business partner all along the way. With the newly developed active safety features and the ergonomic cabin that enhances the driver's operating quality, Ford Trucks Tractor Series is the most reliable companion for those who are in for the long haul. Designed by Ford engineers and preferred all around the world, the profitability of Ford Trucks Tractor Series will instantly impact your operating costs.



Omar K. Alghanim and H.E. Lawrence Silverman taking one of the Ford Trucks for a ride for the first time in Kuwait.



(Left to Right) Mr. Ali Bozçaliskan, First Counsellor at the Turkish Embassy; Mr. Omar K. Alghanim, CEO of Alghanim Industries; H.E. Lawrence Silverman, US Ambassador; Mr. Emrah Duman, Director of International Markets at Ford Trucks.



First preview of the Ford Trucks in Kuwait.



The Ford Trucks line-up.

Business

Bayan Weekly Market Report

Boursa Kuwait stocks end session on a bearish note

Selling pressure returns to haunt market

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week in the red zone. The Price Index closed at 6,239.37 points, down by 1.11 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index decreased by 1.73 percent after closing at 395.99 points, whereas the KXS-15 Index closed at 906.27 points down by 2.13 percent. Furthermore, the week's average daily turnover decreased by 19.01 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 11.43 million, whereas trading volume average was 56.23 million shares, recording a decrease of 29.27 percent.

The trading activity during the last week witnessed a return to the negative performance's control over the three market indices, after a positive performance presence during the previous week, whereas the random selling operations returned, and executed on many listed stocks in the market, headed by the leading ones, and pushed the three indices to end the week's trading in the losses zone, amid continued decrease in the trading levels, especially the value, which reached its lowest level in about a month on last Thursday, and reached KD 8.8 million only by the end of the same session.

On the other hand, Boursa Kuwait lost during the last week over KD 400 million, as its market capitalization reached KD26.52 billion after being KD 26.97 billion in the previous week, which means that the market recorded a loss of 1.64 percent of its total market cap, and its gains were reduced to reach 4.40 percent since the beginning of the current year compared to end of 2016, where it was KD 25.41 billion. (Note: The market cap for the listed companies in the Regular Market is calculated based on the average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements).

As far as the daily trading activity: the first session of the week witnessed a drop in the three Boursa indices by different percentages, in light of the increased selling operations executed on the small-cap stocks in particular amid an overall decline that included most of the market sectors and headed by the Financial Services, which came in parallel with a relatively good increase in the value, as it recorded a growth of 25.17 percent. On the second session of the week, the market indices witnessed declines, however with less drop than the previous session, that came as a result to the continued control of the selling operations over the trading activity, amid a limited decrease in the trading levels, where

the volume declined by 6.6 percent, while the value decreased by only 0.11 percent.

Moreover, the market continued its negative performance in the mid-week session, which witnessed an increased losses of the three indices, especially the Weighted and KXS-15 indices, which dropped by 1.46 percent and 1.17 percent respectively, affected by the increased random selling operations with concentration on the leading stocks, and in parallel with an increase in the cash liquidity by about 30 percent. On Wednesday's session, the market wit-

nessed a mixed closing to its three indices, whereas the Price Index and KXS-15 Index continued to record decline, however limited, while the Weighted Index was able to realize limited increase by the end of the session. Also, the three market indices were able to record gains at end of the week session, in light of the return of the purchasing operations executed on some leading and small-cap stocks, with a growth in the most of the market sectors led by the Financial Services sector.



Bank sector stocks highest traded

For the annual performance, the Price Index ended last week recording 8.55 percent annual gain compared to its closing in

2016, while the Weighted Index increased by 4.18 percent, and the KXS-15 recorded 2.40 percent growth.

Sectors' Indices

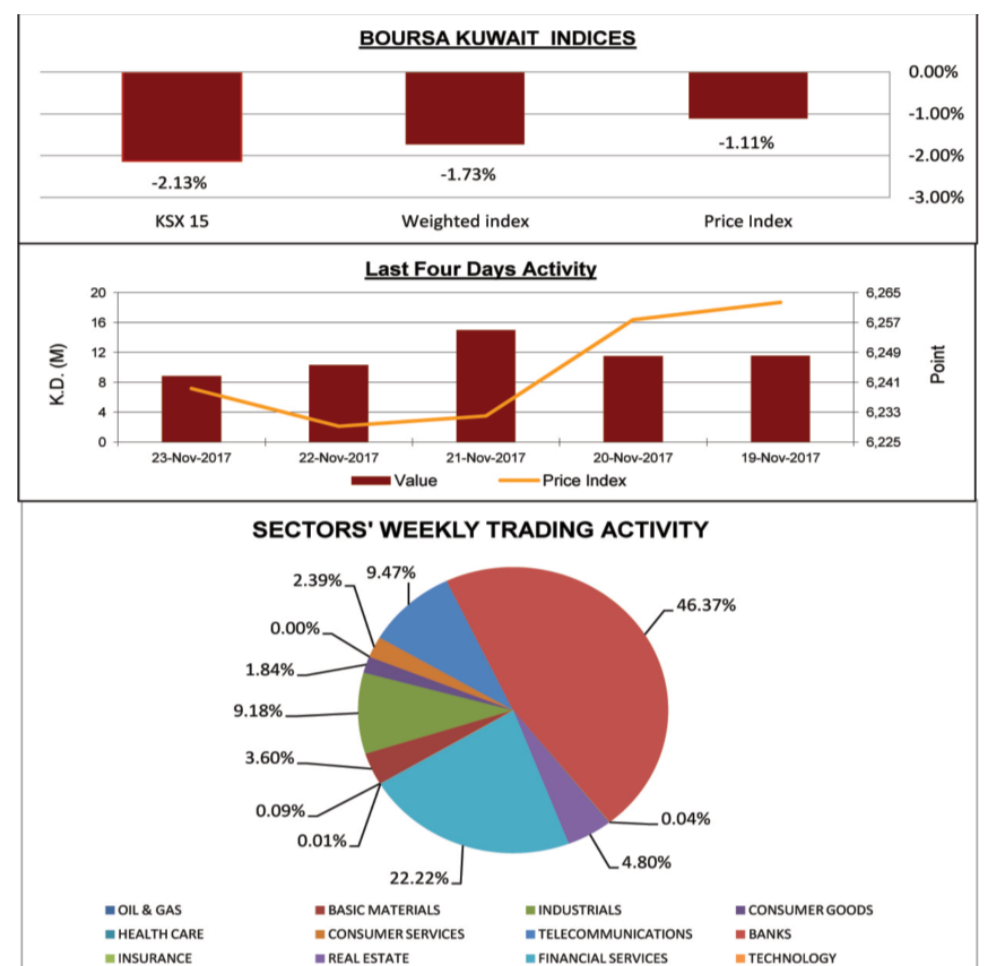
Eight of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the red zone, three recorded increases, whereas the Health Care sector's index closed with no change from the week before. The Consumer Services sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 4.72 percent to end the week's activity at 897.93 points. The Real Estate sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 2.97 percent, closing at 877.04 points, followed by the Oil & Gas sector, as its index closed at 927.64 points at a loss of 2.87 percent. The Telecommunications sector was the least declining as its index closed at 532.86 points with a 0.10 percent decrease.

On the other hand, last week's highest gainer was the Insurance sector, achieving 3.02 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,014.27 points.

Whereas, in the second place, the Technology sector's index closed at 556.83 points recording 0.52 percent increase. The Industrial sector came in third as its index achieved 0.19 percent growth, ending the week at 1,757.76 points.

Sectors' Activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 129.32 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 46 percent of the total market trading volume. The Banks sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 21.77 percent of last week's total trading volume,



with a total of around 61.20 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 26.50 million or 46.37 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Financial Services

sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 12.70 million representing 22.22 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by: Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.

SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %
OIL & GAS	1,309,729	0.47%	50,472	0.09%
BASIC MATERIALS	4,019,441	1.43%	2,055,878	3.60%
INDUSTRIALS	17,130,748	6.09%	5,245,426	9.18%
CONSUMER GOODS	2,408,807	0.86%	1,049,338	1.84%
HEALTH CARE	0	0.00%	0	0.0000%
CONSUMER SERVICES	13,618,490	4.84%	1,365,043	2.39%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	13,495,501	4.80%	5,414,810	9.47%
BANKS	61,203,832	21.77%	26,500,230	46.37%
INSURANCE	309,873	0.11%	24,312	0.04%
REAL ESTATE	38,280,858	13.62%	2,742,833	4.80%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	129,320,980	46.00%	12,698,276	22.22%
TECHNOLOGY	35,500	0.01%	5,077	0.01%

SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE				
Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
OIL & GAS	927.64	955.05	-2.87%	18.83%
BASIC MATERIALS	1,244.13	1,254.66	-0.84%	23.82%
INDUSTRIALS	1,757.76	1,754.41	0.19%	30.78%
CONSUMER GOODS	920.64	936.01	-1.64%	-18.17%
HEALTH CARE	1,510.51	1,510.51	0.00%	21.38%
CONSUMER SERVICES	897.93	942.44	-4.72%	-2.88%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	532.86	533.40	-0.10%	-16.24%
BANKS	864.71	881.52	-1.91%	3.28%
INSURANCE	1,014.27	984.58	3.02%	2.01%
REAL ESTATE	877.04	903.88	-2.97%	0.79%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	629.01	632.32	-0.52%	5.35%
TECHNOLOGY	556.83	553.93	0.52%	-8.29%

Global Stocks Weekly Report

Stocks set more records as technology and energy rise

NEW YORK: US stocks set more records in quiet post-holiday trading Friday as technology companies again did much of the heavy lifting. Energy companies rose with the price of oil.

Macy's and some of its retail counterparts rose after the department store's CEO said Black Friday sales were going well. Online titan Amazon made an even bigger gain. Oil prices and energy companies rose after Bloomberg reported that a group of key oil producers plans to extend production cuts until the end of 2018. "If you take the cumulative effect of online and foot traffic going into the stores, it's showing you a robust consumer spending pattern," said Quincy Krosby, chief market strategist at Prudential Financial.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 5.34 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,602.42, its first close above 2,600. The Dow Jones industrial average added 31.81 points, or 0.1 percent, to 23,557.99. The Nasdaq composite gained 21.80 points, or 0.3 percent, to 6,889.16. The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies climbed 2.40 points, or 0.2 percent, to 1,519.16.

The Dow finished slightly below its record high from Tuesday but the other major indexes closed at all-time highs. Trading ended early after the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday.

Macy's CEO Jeffrey Gennette told CNBC holiday shopping is off to a good start with relatively few discounts and strong sales of some especially profitable products like winter clothing. Macy's gained 44 cents, or 2.1 percent, to \$21.07 and other department stores climbed as well.



Experts are mostly predicting strong sales over the holiday shopping period because of increased consumer confidence and a very low unemployment rate. The National Retail Federation trade group expects sales to grow at least as fast as they did last year.

Big retailers like Wal-Mart and Urban Outfitters and Gap have also reported strong quarterly results recently. On Friday, Gap added 47 cents, or 1.6 percent, to \$29.64 and electronics retailer Best Buy gained 51 cents to \$57. Amazon's stock rose \$29.84, or 2.6 percent, to \$1,186.

Amazon, along with tech giants Apple, Facebook, Microsoft and Google's parent company Alphabet, have played a huge role in the market's gains this year. Those five companies combined are responsible for more than one-fourth of the value the S&P 500 has gained this year. Amazon and Facebook closed all-time highs Friday and the other three set record highs earlier this month.

US benchmark crude rose 93 cents, or 1.6 percent, to \$58.95 a barrel in New York. Krosby said the Keystone oil pipeline spill earlier this month has also pushed US oil prices higher by disrupting supplies. Brent crude, used to price international oils, added 31 cents to \$63.86 a barrel in London.

Hess gained 95 cents, or 2.2 percent, to

\$44.40 and Marathon Oil added 25 cents, or 1.7 percent, to \$15.13. Billionaire investor Carl Icahn disclosed that he's acquired a 13.5 percent stake in SandRidge Energy. A week ago SandRidge agreed to buy oil and gas company Bonanza Creek Energy, and Icahn said he's opposed to the \$736 million deal. Another major SandRidge investor, Fir Tree Partners, is also against the deal. SandRidge jumped \$1.40, or 8 percent, to \$18.90 while Bonanza tumbled \$3.76, or 11.7 percent, to \$28.38.

In other energy trading, wholesale gasoline added 2 cents to \$1.79 a gallon. Heating oil rose 2 cents to \$1.95 a gallon. Natural gas sank 16 cents, or 5.2 percent, to \$2.81. The dollar rose to 111.58 yen from 111.23 yen. The euro climbed to \$1.1927 from \$1.1853.

Bond prices fell. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 2.34 percent from 2.32 percent late Wednesday. Gold fell \$4.90 to \$1,287.30 an ounce. Silver lost 12 cents to \$16.99 an ounce. Copper rose 3 cents to \$3.17 a pound.

France's CAC 40 rose 0.2 percent and the DAX in Germany gained 0.4 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 slipped 0.1 percent. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index rose 0.1 percent while the Hang Seng in Hong Kong rebounded 0.5 percent and South Korea's Kospi added 0.3 percent. — AP

Gas exporters call for 'fair price' at Bolivia summit

SANTA CRUZ DE LA SIERRA, Bolivia: Gas exporting countries, grappling with collapsed global markets, on Friday called for a "fair price" for the commodity after a summit in Bolivia.

The Gas Exporting Countries Forum seeks a "fair price for natural gas," taking into account its environmental benefits and energy efficiency, a declaration said. The price of natural gas is linked to that of petroleum and its derivatives, and is down roughly 50

percent from peaks of three years ago—partly from rising shale gas production in the United States, which does not belong to the Forum.

Bolivian President Evo Morales, one of the last Latin American leftist leaders, said producers should combat "those who want to appropriate our resources through abusive price manipulation."

In coming decades, the role of petroleum in the global energy mix will fall from 32 percent to 29 percent while gas will rise to 26 percent from 22 percent, Seyed Mohammad Hossein Adeli of Iran, the Forum's secretary general, told the group's opening session. The 12-country group, which aims to strengthen collaboration among members, includes Venezuela, Russia and Qatar, the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas. Forum members hold about 70 percent of global natural gas reserves. — AFP



This handout picture released by Bolivia's Presidency shows (left to right) Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak, Iranian Vice-President Eshaq Jahangiri, Bolivian President Evo Morales, Mohammad Hossein Adeli, general secretary of Gas Exporting Countries Forum, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Equatorial Guinea's President Teodoro Obiang posing for a picture during the IV Gas Exporting Countries Summit in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia on Friday. — AFP

Behbehani launches Modern, Bold Design 2018 GMC Terrain

*Confident appearance, accommodating interior and turbo engines elevate
The new premium compact SUV*



Mohammed Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani unveiled the next chapter of GMC design via a boldly styled and intelligently engineered successor to the brand's popular compact SUV. It is the All-New GMC Terrain launched by MSRY Behbehani Company during a press conference attended by representative Managers from General Motors in Dubai, company managers and leading media delegates in Kuwait.

Seven years after its successful launch in the US, global and Arabian Gulf markets, the all new GMC Terrain 2018 is being manufactured in North America. The new version of GMC Terrain Compact SUV is given a fully modern exterior and interior design with two all-new available turbocharged engines that reflect its power and dynamic features and efficiency-enhancing nine-speed automatic transmissions that is a first application for the GMC lineup.

Mohsen Kassem, Regional Sales Manager at GMC said: "Strong growth over the past decade is due in large part to Terrain." The all-new Terrain builds on that success, leveraging GMC's proven premium SUV experience to shake up the largest vehicle segment, with a strong blend of design, functionality and engineering excellence."

Bold, modern design

The new Terrain's bold exterior signals the next chapter of GMC's design language, evolving the brand's signature cues with stronger, sharper and more sculpted elements such as the grille and lighting features. Its shape was refined in the wind tunnel to help ensure the distinctive profile cuts through the air

with optimal efficiency and quietness.

Elevating GMC's new design, the all-new Terrain Denali will feature its signature satin chrome grille along with Denali-specific accents including body-color fascia, lower trim and door handles, plus bright roof-mounted side rails, and chrome outside mirrors and body-side molding. Additionally, LED headlamps and 19-inch ultra-bright machined aluminum wheels are standard on Denali.

All other models feature signature LED running lamps and tail lamps. Bi-functional HID headlamps are standard on SLE and SLT. Additionally, 17-inch wheels are standard on SLE, with 18-inch wheels available on SLE, and standard on SLT.

Turbocharged propulsion choices

A range of two all-new turbocharged gas engines, including the new 1.5L with 170 horsepower and 2.0L turbocharged gas engines with 252 horsepower, matched with two unique new nine-speed automatic transmissions, with the 2.0L turbo engine offering stronger acceleration and a higher degree of performance than its 1.5L counterpart.

GMC's new Electronic Precision Shift enables more storage room in the center console by replacing the conventional transmission shifter with electronically controlled gear selection consisting of intuitive push buttons and pull triggers that are easy to use.

Mr. Adel Behbehani commented: "Both engines are connected to the new 9-speed automatic transmission, which features button control instead of the traditional

stick shift, and this feature is usually available in luxurious cars. The larger engine has a diameter of 1.5 tons delivering similar power to the V6 engines that means acquiring same power with less fuel consumption."

The Terrain comes standard with GMC's driver-controllable Traction Select system, which has choices for different driving conditions. Elements such as the throttle responses are optimized for the selected driving mode. AWD models include a FWD mode that disconnects the AWD system to minimize drag and optimize fuel economy, while the AWD mode offers all the benefits of an active AWD system.

Refined, versatile and purposeful interior

Like the exterior, the new Terrain's interior makes a statement and serves as a fundamental component of the vehicle's heightened emphasis on refinement and functionality. Elements such as authentic aluminum trim, soft-touch materials on the instrument panel and doors and standard active noise cancellation are premium features seamlessly integrated into the interior design for a luxurious customer experience.

The Terrain Denali heightens the GMC experience throughout the new interior with a unique trim tint color and Denali-specific logos and piping on the front seats. Denali customers will benefit from additional standard features including a heated steering wheel, navigation, Bose premium 7-speaker sound system and a hands-free programmable power liftgate.

An expanded center console with pass-through storage

underneath adds to the Terrain's functionality. A new fold-flat front passenger seat and flat-folding rear seat help Terrain offer greater versatility for stowing longer items and make it easier to load cargo. There are also new under-floor compartments in the cargo area for more secure storage.

GMC keeps passengers connected with 8-inch-diagonal infotainment systems, featuring compatibility with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto functionality.

Expanded range of safety features

An expanded range of available active safety technologies is designed to enhance driver awareness and even help make it easier to park and maneuver in low-speed situations. The features include radar and camera-based adaptive technologies that can provide alerts to potential crash threats, allowing the driver to react and make changes to potentially avoid them, including:

- New Surround Vision
- New Forward Collision Alert with Following Distance Indicator
- New Low-Speed Forward Automatic Braking
- New Lane Keep Assist with Lane Departure Warning
- Lane Change Alert with Side Blind Zone Alert
- Rear Cross Traffic Alert
- New Safety Alert Seat

The new Terrain also features GMC's new Rear Seat Reminder. Rear Seat Reminder alerts drivers to check the back seat as they exit their vehicles under certain circumstances.



Technology

Al-Sayer Medical acquires 9001:2015, latest ISO Bureau Veritas Certification

Al-Sayer Medical represents 35 world class brands in Kuwait



Dr Hossam Afify and Faisal Bader Al-Sayer



KUWAIT: Reflecting the commitment to latest International Standards in Quality Management Systems, Al-Sayer Medical Company, a subsidiary of Al-Sayer Holding has been successfully awarded ISO certification 9001:2015 by Bureau Veritas Certification Holding SAS - UK Branch. The certification is in compliance with the requirements of the management system standards within the scope of import and sale of pharmaceutical and medical equipment and personal hygiene products.

Khaled Hamd, Country Chief Executive, Bureau Veritas Kuwait and Shrivas Mulay, Certification Manager presented the accreditation certificate to Faisal Bader Al-Sayer Chairman ALSAYER Holding at the awarding ceremony which was also attended by Bader Musaed Al-Sayer



**Renewing
commitment
to quality**

Group Business Director, Bengt Schultz Chief Operating Officer and Dr Hossam Afify General Manager Al-Sayer Medical Co.

ISO 9001 is a standard that sets out the requirements for a quality management system. It helps businesses and organizations to be more efficient and improve customer satisfaction. The new version of the standard, ISO 9001:2015, replaces the previous version (ISO 9001:2008).

According to Dr Hossam Afify General Manager Al-Sayer Medical Company "Our aim is to excel and expand the delivery of our services and our commitment to offer what's new and unique in the medical and healthcare technology market to become the preferred destination for all

healthcare facilities and medical professionals in Kuwait."

The achievement of International Standard ISO Certification is mirrored in the operations of the medical company, and this reflects the commitment to achieving high standards in all aspects of the Company's business (quality products, services offered and customer satisfaction).

"The certification reflects ALSAYER Medical Company's standards and behind this achievement there is a dedicated professional team in sales, marketing, back office support and after sales services who dealing with the customer services and satisfaction as top priority in line with the philosophy of ALSAYER Group holding in business," added Dr Afify.

VIVA wins 'Best Operator Network' and '5G Innovator of the Year' awards



KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, has been recognized as "Best Operator Network" and "5G Innovator of the Year" by Telecom World Middle East. The event took place on 18th September 2017 at Ritz Carlton DIFC hotel in Dubai, UAE.

On this occasion, Eng. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran, VIVA's CEO commented: "We take pride in being selected as "Best Operator Network" and "5G Innovator of the Year" by Telecom World Middle East. This accolade is a witness to our constant commitment to growth and relentless focus on providing our clients high quality products and services."

VIVA has always distinguished itself to be a market leader in technology and provide the customers with the most advanced solutions and technologies. Implementing the most advanced solutions and features helped VIVA in providing very high data packages, which is reflected by having one of the highest Traffic per user (TPU) in the world, in addition to excellent services and highest speeds.

It is noteworthy to mention that VIVA was the first telecom company in Kuwait that has successfully tested the fifth-generation "5G" in its lab.

VIVA is the fastest-growing telecom operator in Kuwait. Launched in December 2008, VIVA makes things 'More' for its customers by transforming communication, information and entertainment experiences. The company has rapidly established an unrivalled position in the market through its customer centric approach. VIVA's quest is to be the mobile brand of choice in Kuwait by being transparent, engaging, energetic and fulfilling. VIVA continues to take a considerable share of the market by offering an innovative range of best value products, services and content propositions; a state of the art, nationwide network and world-class service. VIVA offers internet speeds of more than 100 Mbps, due to the implementation of the most advanced fourth generation (4G LTE) network in Kuwait resulting in superior coverage, performance and reliability.

Ooredoo awarded by Bader Al-Mulla for optimized printing project

KUWAIT: Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, was awarded by Bader Al-Mulla Group for the successful implementation of optimized printing project that helped Ooredoo achieving the goals and targets assigned, during the recent OPS "Optimized Printing Services" event that was held in Jumeirah Hotel. Ooredoo shifted towards a new way of smart printing as part of its strategy, which includes efficiency, security, flexibility and simplicity. In order to achieve the targeted goal Ooredoo hired the best brand in this field "Konica Minolta" that had supplied and managed all the printers that were set up in the Ooredoo Headquarters and branches.

During the OPS event, many industry experts spoke about the latest technological developments in the area of business visibility with structured process enhancement practices. Moreover, focusing on how to optimize the printing infrastructure with an output strategy and the benefits of smart scan workflows. An Ooredoo representative from the IT infrastructure and end user support department received the award during the event due to

Tissot expands its Boundaries with opening of a new Boutique in Rome

ROME: Tissot expands its retail network with the new boutique located close to the luxury addresses of the capital city, at 167 Via del Corso, in the Boncompagni Ottoboni Historical Palace of 1731.

The new spaces create a new generation concept that accompanies the customer through an evocative path of the Tissot tradition of innovation since 1853. 140 square meters, divided into two floors, offer ample exhibition surfaces that expand the choice between the brand's sports, classic, feminine and technological lines to meet a growing demand from customers. On the ground floor, the exhibition of new collections marries with the state-of-the-art design that, while continuing on its path, leaves room for a more vintage environment, a trip to the past to rediscover the origins of the brand represented by the Tissot collections Heritage.

The large arched windows overlooking Via del Corso and Via della Vite allow passers-by to admire the different collections. The new Tissot Ballade, with the revolutionary Powermatic 80 movement characterized by the silicon spiral, Tissot Everytime, the utmost expression of the brand's democracy with its new Swismatic movement and Tissot Chrono XL, is a new, urban, contemporary sports clock at the same time.

Customer service

Tissot takes care of its customers not only by accompanying them in choosing their own products but also by providing them with special after sales service. On the first floor of the store, it is possible to use an exclusive Customer Service service that, through a watchmaker station, is able to guarantee the highest quality in maintenance work, the result of the witty handicrafts of Swiss tradition.

The space is also equipped with a large and comfortable



proper execution of the newly adapted printing project that helped in saving more than 40% in printing costs, advanced secure printing and enhanced flexibility of using

the printers that carryout the newest technology. Ooredoo has always been keen to be the pioneer in providing and using the latest technologies internally and externally. This particular major upgrade in the company will aid to in boosting productivity, performance and save future costs that will all be beneficial for both the employees and the organization itself.



Vip lounge for events and special installations.

Care for detail

Just as the watchmasters in Le Locle's home care for the detail of every single watch, the same attention is evident in the study of the new Tissot Boutique, such as the traditional

showcase safe that resumes the design of the T-Touch Expert Solar.

The new Boutique in Rome is enriching the already large retail panorama Tissot, which today consists of 358 boutiques divided into 70 corporate and 288 franchises and distributed in 39 countries around the world.

What's On

Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait hosts reception



KUWAIT: Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub hosted a reception to celebrate the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of Palestine. Top state officials, diplomats and other dignitaries attended the event. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

KPC, CSM Bakery Solutions organize interactive workshop

Kuwait Protein Company (KPC) and CSM Bakery Solutions recently organized an interactive workshop on making the finest bakeries and confections with various flavors to satisfy all tastes. The workshop was attended by Kuwait's best chefs and presented by the international German chef, Clemence Parkhorn. KPC's



executive director, Amira Sa'eed said that the workshop was the first of its kind in Kuwait. KPC was awarded the ISO 22000:2005 award to coronate a 35 year career. On his part, CSM's regional sales

manager for the Middle East, Emel Lattouf highly commended KPC's efforts on organizing the workshop as a channel for direct contact with local market clients.

Sheikhah Fadya Al-Saad holds meetings for scientific competition



Dr. Ali Al-Kandar honors director of Salma Bint Malek School Manal Al-Mansour.



From left, Dr. Aysha Al-Holi, Sara Al-Qadeesh and Dr. Ali Al-Kandari.

Within the ongoing preparations for Ibtikar Al-Kuwait competition for scientific research under the title of 'Sheikhah Fadya Al-Saad Al-Sabah 16th Scientific Competition', chairlady of Al-Saad charity for knowledge and scientific research, Sheikhah Fadya Al-Saad recently held several meetings to explain the competition rules. The meetings were held with MOE and a number of science, computer and Arabic supervisors so that they could later on explain the competition to participating students.

NBK partners with Al Shaheed Park to support Kuwaiti culture

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) provided its support to Al Shaheed Park "Modern Heritage Festival" held during November, as part of the bank's continuous efforts to stand by the social and cultural institutions in Kuwait. NBK's Public Relations Assistant General Manager, Manal Al Mattar, said that NBK's support to Al Shaheed Park's activities is a gesture of recognition of the important and pivotal role that this leading cultural institution plays in promoting our culture and shedding light on its arts and rich heritage.



Manal Al Mattar

"Our CSR strategy focuses on supporting cultural activities that aims at building bridges between generations," she added, "We trust that cultural and historical events attract a large segment of the society and it's our duty as a leading institution to be a part of such cultural activities and help the youth to be more engaged in enhancing Kuwait's history and tradition for years to come."

Over the past six and a half decades, NBK has committed itself to supporting social and cultural activities in Kuwait as part of its social responsibility. As a leading and prestigious institution, NBK has a track record of serving and supporting the Kuwaiti society. Its contribution to Al Shaheed Park that supports highlights the richness of history and civilization. It's worth mentioning that Al Shaheed Park is managed by LOY-AC. The park management's vision is to help in enhancing the cultural and civilized dimensions of the country, as well as support the development of the heritage.

SPY organizes annual domestic helpers' day

By Ramona Crasto

Salmiya parish youth (SPY) organized annual domestic helpers' day on November 24, 2017. The youth members arranged a day of fun and games for 110 maids and drivers at a chalet in Kabd. The food was sponsored by M&M confectionery, Amit and Nancy caterers, White Rose and many generous well-wishers from Salmiya parish contributed towards the cause.

Donovan Ferrao, member of the youth group said, "Domestic helpers' day is SPY's way of giving back the community at large and giving the domestic helpers who work tirelessly to make our lives better, a day of fun, frolic and happiness. I am grateful to the well-wishers, sponsors and my fellow volunteers who made this day a success." There were around 19 volunteers who showed great efforts to make this day enjoyable from serving tea, snacks and food to arranging games and meeting their needs for the day.

Elvira D'souza, who has been working in Kuwait for 15 years said, "SPY has been organizing this annual event for many years now and we all look forward to attend it just like any other celebration. It was amazing to see so many youngsters cater to our needs for a change and I would like to thank SPY for organizing this day of joy and fun for us in a very well organized way. God bless the youth and organizers who made this day feel like a break from our daily routine."



Organized by

Kuwait Times



CANADA 150

In cooperation with
Embassy of Canada
to the State of Kuwait
Canada

The winners of the student's art competition "Celebrate#Canada150" organized by Kuwait Times supported by Canada Embassy in Kuwait were feted at an awards night held at the Four Seasons Hotel on Monday under the patronage of Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education H.E Dr Mohammed Al-Fares along with the sponsors' representatives. The art competition drew thousands of participants from both government and private schools in Kuwait.



STUDENT ART COMPETITION

Winners from 12-14 years old category



Cathal Hurley, Dr. Mohammed Al-Fares, H.E Martine Moreau, Svitlana Arndt, Didier Jardin and Adnan Saad pose with the winning students.

1



Liya Ance George - DPS FAIPS AHMADI



2



Brinda Krishnan - United Indian School

3



Naif Khaled Al Miteri - Kuwait Ideal School



Jumana Khaled Mohamed - Hawaly int. School



Fatima ABBAS - Salmiya Int. School



Rana Raheem - Indian Community School



Sehan Dillwsh Gamhewa



Rowida Ehab - New Pakistan Intenational School



FANER MOHAMED AL ARAK - SALMA BENT MALEK



Justin I. Mascarrenhas - IES

Sponsored by





STUDENT ART COMPETITION

Winners from 15 years old and above category



Dr. David Mchardy, H.E. Dr. Mohammed Al-Fares, H.E Martine Moreau, Abdul Kareem Al Enezi and Adnan Saad pose with the winning students.



1- Janan Al Luwheb - Esraa School



2- Jumanah Kamal - Ekhlis



3- Meghna P. Ravindran - Indian Educational School



Aya Adel Habib Qamber - Khaleda Bent Al



Hesa Hamad Al Humaidhi - Bayan School



6- Carol Mary Thomas - United Indian School



7- Lulwah Jamal Al Asfoor - Hadia School



8- Jumana Ali Al Siwaeri - Omamh Bent Bisher



9- Fatima Bashar Al Ali - Maria Al Qbtia



Shaha Al Roudhan - American Academy School



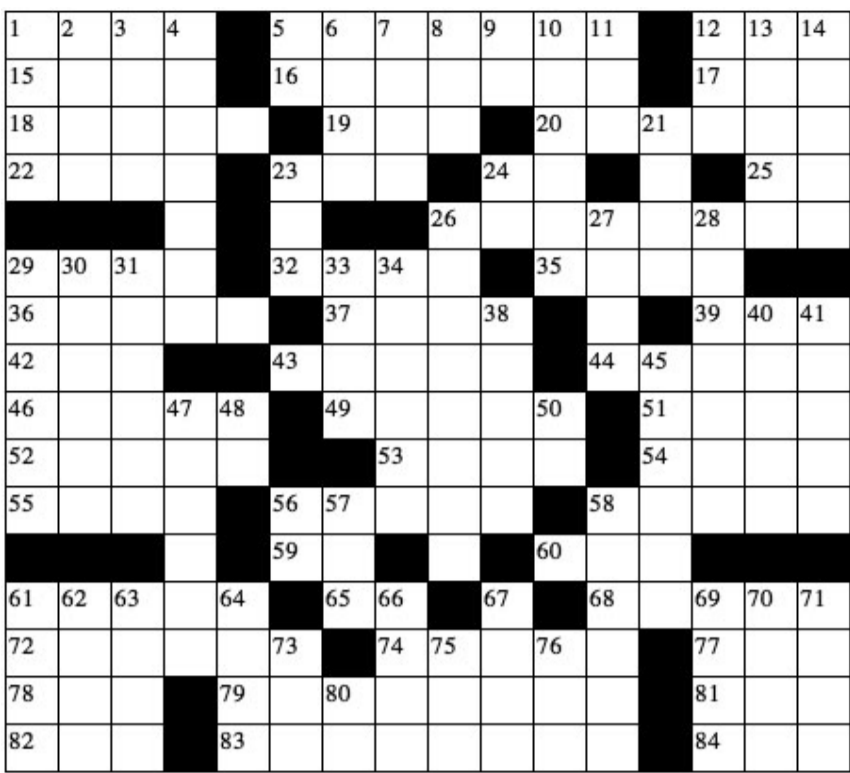
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SNC-LAVALIN

Stars

CROSSWORD 1770



ACROSS

- 1. A genus of Accipitridae.
5. Release from a clasp.
12. A crystalline rock that can be cut and polished for jewelry.
15. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
16. (Sumerian and Babylonian) A solar deity.
17. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
18. Small crude shelter used as a dwelling.
19. (British informal) An airless smoky smelly atmosphere.
20. A historic division of Ireland located in the northeastern part of the island.
22. A local and well-defined elevation of the land.
25. Destruction of heart tissue resulting from obstruction of the blood supply to the heart muscle.
29. Hard strong durable yellowish-brown wood of oak trees.
32. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
35. An island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
36. Common black European thrush.
37. Make a plat of.
39. Tag the base runner to get him out.
42. Electronic warfare undertaken to prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
43. (British) A former administrative district of England.
44. Genus of tropical plants with creeping rootstocks and small umbellate flowers.
46. Largest crested screamer.
49. Having or showing knowledge and skill and aptitude.
51. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.
52. A wall hanging of heavy handwoven fabric with pictorial designs.
53. An elaborate song for solo voice.
54. Tall woody perennial grasses with hollow slender stems especially of the genera Arundo and Phragmites.
55. Small beads made from polished shells and formerly used as money by native Americans.
59. A physician who is not a specialist but treats all illnesses.
60. Take in solid food.
61. A rule made by a local authority to regulate its own affairs.
65. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
68. Tropical American trees with palmately compound leaves and showy bell-shaped flowers.
72. Without moral standards or principles.
74. Having the wind against the forward side of the sails.
77. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
78. Injured by bites or stings.
79. Small family of usually tropical butterflies.
81. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
82. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
83. A Norwegian archipelago in the Arctic Ocean.
84. The sign language used in the United States.

DOWN

- 1. United States film actress who appeared in films by D. W. Griffith (1896-1993).
2. A member of an extinct North American

- Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
3. A deep prolonged sound (as of thunder or large bells).
4. Shaped like a pouch.
5. An organization of independent states to promote international peace and security.
6. (British slang) An unpleasant smell.
7. King of Denmark and Norway who forced Edmund II to divide England with him.
8. (Irish) Ancient Irish god (probably a god of the sun).
9. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
10. English historian noted for his constitutional history of medieval England (1825-1901).
11. A close friend who accompanies his buddies in their activities.
12. (slang) A gangster's pistol.
13. Fragrant resin obtain from trees of the family Burseraceae and used as incense.
14. A dark region of considerable extent on the surface of the moon.
21. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
23. Hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland (trade name Pitressin) and also by nerve endings in the hypothalamus.
24. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
26. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
27. The basic unit of money in Thailand.
28. Norman leader in the First Crusade who played an important role in the capture of Jerusalem (1078-1112).
30. A card game similar to ecarte.
31. The capital of Eritrea.
33. An ancient Hebrew unit of dry measure equal to about a bushel.
34. Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
38. A city in west central Mexico.
40. (of complexion) Blemished by imperfections of the skin.
41. English monk and scholar (672-735).
45. Expose to fresh air, as of old clothing.
47. A large spotted feline of tropical America similar to the leopard.
48. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
50. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
56. 1/1000 gram.
57. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
58. Filled to capacity.
62. (Norse mythology) The primeval giant slain by Odin and his brothers and from whose body they created the world.
63. A globular water bottle used in Asia.
64. A large number or amount.
66. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
67. A quantity of no importance.
69. A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
70. South African term for 'boss'.
71. Fleasy and usually brightly colored cover of some seeds that develops from the ovule stalk and partially or entirely envelopes the seed.
73. A room equipped with toilet facilities.
75. Top part of an apron.
76. 4-wheeled motor vehicle.
80. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.

Yesterday's Solution

Grid for Yesterday's Solution crossword puzzle with filled-in letters.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You communicate with consummate skill and it is stimulating just being with you. Your high degree of mental concentration makes you an excellent student, able to excel in speaking, writing and all types of communication skills.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Lovely words and a flair for description—the artistic in all its many forms is where you excel above any other. You have an inner sense of warmth and goodness with the ability to express your talent.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You enjoy socializing with people from different backgrounds. If you are working this Saturday, you may be very popular when you are trying new things—you are so eager.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are always out front and manage to spend a lot of time in the spotlight and today is no exception. Others find it easy to watch and learn from you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Strong beliefs are keystones to your power—the power of ideas and the power they wield over people. Religious, cultural or philosophical controversies and crusades have a way of stirring your blood.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You could find yourself working longer at some project—you may be sought after as just the person for a particular chore. You are open-minded and democratic, enthusiastic and have a definite sense of mission.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your energies are up and there are lots of new projects that are up for grabs in your place of business. Outer circumstances make it easy for you to make clear decisions, as usual.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You have a lot of energy and drive—perfect for starting something or for taking care of old business. Communications may tend to be short and to the point this morning.



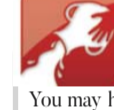
Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

People that depend on you for support, particularly over the weekends, have agendas for you to work through. Golly! Sounds like you may not get anything accomplished on your own agenda list!



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This may be a slow day. You are happiest when lots of activity is around you. While the energies will pick back up soon, it is not the end of the world.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

At work, you may want to take charge of the most important issues first. You may have plans to leave work a little early today so you will busy yourself quickly and with purpose.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You value independence, as well as anything unusual or different. You are expressive and creative and find ways to solve problems and accomplish projects very quickly.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Candy

Find and circle all of the Candy treats that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.

Wordsearch grid for Candy puzzle with letters S, J, E, L, M, S, E, S, S, I, K, Y, E, H, S, R, E, H, S, Y, L, Y, etc.

- ALMOND JOY, BABY RUTH, BAZOOKA GUM, BOTTLECAPS, BUBBLE YUM, BUTTERFINGERS, CANDY NECKLACE, CHICLET'S, CHUCKLES, CLARK BAR, COFFEE CRISP, CRACKER JACK, DUBBLE BUBBLE, GOOBERS, GUMMI BEARS, HERSHEY KISSES, HUBBA BUBBA GUM, JAW BREAKERS, JULIETS, KIT KAT, LEMON DROPS, LICORICE PIPE, LIFESAVERS, LOLLIPOPS, MILK DUDS, MILKY WAY, MOUNDS, NECCO WAFERS, OH HENRY, PEPPERMINT PATTY, PEZ, POP ROCKS, PUMPKIN SEEDS, RED HOTS, LAKES, SEN-SEN, SLO-POKES, SMARTIES, SOUR BALLS, SPEARMINT LEAVES, SWEETARTS, TOOTSIE ROLLS, TWIX, TWIZZLERS, WAX LIPS

Canada

Wordsearch grid for Canada puzzle with letters T, E, C, R, I, U, V, A, N, U, N, H, S, B, C, O, A, H, M, O, S, R, P, etc.

- ALBERTA, BEARS, BEAVERS, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CARIBOU, CHARLOTTETOWN, CURLING, EDMONTON, FORESTS, FREDERICTON, GEESE, HALIFAX, HOCKEY, IQALUIT, LABRADOR, LAKES, LOONIE, MANITOBA, MAPLE LEAF, MAPLE SYRUP, MOOSE, MOUNTAINS, NEW BRUNSWICK, HOCKEY, LABRADOR, LAKES, LOONIE, MANITOBA, MAPLE LEAF, MAPLE SYRUP, MOOSE, MOUNTAINS, NEW BRUNSWICK, NEWFOUNDLAND, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, NOVA SCOTIA, NUNAVUT, OIL, ONTARIO, OTTAWA, PRAIRIES, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, QUEBEC, RCMP, REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN, SNOW, ST. JOHN'S, TOQUE, TORONTO, VICTORIA, WHITEHORSE, WINNIPEG, YELLOWKNIFE, YUKON

The hidden message is: THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC IS QUEBEC CITY

Daily SuDoku

4x4 grid for Daily SuDoku puzzle with numbers 1-9.

Yesterday's Solution

4x4 grid for Yesterday's Solution SuDoku puzzle with numbers 1-9.

Kuwait Times Classifieds

Sunday, November 26, 2017

Kuwait Times
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Sunny with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear later on.

BY NIGHT: Cool with light to moderate north westerly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 25/11/2017 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	24 °C	16 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	23 °C	08 °C			
ABDALY	22 °C	07 °C			
BUBYAN	23 °C	08 °C			
JAHRA	23 °C	10 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	23 °C	16 °C			
SALMIYAH	22 °C	17 °C			
AHMADI	23 °C	17 °C			
NUWAISIB	26 °C	12 °C			
WAFRA	25 °C	09 °C			
SALMY	20 °C	08 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	11/26	Partly cloudy	24 °C	09 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 26 km/h
Monday	11/27	Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for scattered rain	24 °C	11 °C	NE-SE	12 - 38 km/h
Tuesday	11/28	Sunny	25 °C	14 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	11/29	Sunny	25 °C	12 °C	NW-N	12 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:57
Sunrise	06:20
Zuhr	11:35
Asr	14:31
Sunset	16:50
Isha	18:11

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	24 °C
MIN. Temp.	09 °C
MAX. RH	54 %
MIN. RH	21 %
MAX. Wind	NW 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

SITUATION WANTED
 Accounting service: Firm headed by 16 year experience chartered accountant. Accounting, Vat, A/R, A/P, Inventory, Financial Reports, Projections etc. Contact: 97769970. (C 5364) 26-11-2017

CHANGE OF NAME
 I, Neeraj Kumar S/o Subhash Chander, holder of Indian Passport J5752152 & Civil ID No. 285092011066 has changed my name to Neeraj Makan hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5363) 23-11-2017

AIRLINES

American Airlines	22087425
Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Air Slovakia	22434940
Olympic Airways	22420002/9
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
Reservation	22433388
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Alitalia	22414427

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STRUCTURAL STEEL FABRICATIONS and HOT DIP GALVANIZING

- Kuwait Regional Branch Head (1)
 - Bachelors Degree Engineering or Business
 - 10 years minimum management experience in similar field, 2 years minimum must be in Kuwait
 - Ability to Meet Set Goals and Targets
 - Proven Record of Achieving Revenue Targets
 - Preferably oil & gas industry experience
- Regional Sales Coordinator I Engineer (2)
 - Bachelors Degree Engineering or Business
 - 5 years minimum experience in similar field, 2 years minimum must be in Kuwait
 - Excellent written and spoken knowledge of English language
 - Structural steel fabrication experience is a must
 - Driver license
- Office Administrator (1)
 - Bachelors degree in business administration
 - Carry out all managerial tasks
 - Excellent written and spoken knowledge of English language
 - At least 5 years administrative experience
- Yard & Material Supervisor (1)
 - 2 - 5 years Experience in the position or similar field
- Diesel Mechanic (1)
 - Good experience in the position All candidates must have transferable visa and willing to join Immediately.

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Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

Flight Schedule

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 26/11/2017					Departure Flights on Sunday 26/11/2017				
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time		Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	AXB 393	Kozhikode	13:15			
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KAC 792	Madinah	13:20			
KAC	504	Beirut	00:30	KAC 774	Riyadh	13:40			
JZR	539	Cairo	00:50	PAL 668	Manila	14:00			
KAC	102	London	00:50	KAC 618	Doha	14:15			
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	KAC 692	Muscat	14:15			
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	FDB 059	Dubai	14:20			
WAN	416	Beirut	01:05	QTR 1078	Doha	14:20			
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	KAC 516	Tehran	14:20			
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	KAC 672	Dubai	14:25			
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	GFA 221	Bahrain	14:40			
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	SVA 500	Jeddah	14:45			
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC 304	Mumbai	14:50			
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	KNE 529	Jeddah	14:55			
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KAC 662	Abu Dhabi	14:55			
JZR	125	Bahrain	02:35	KAC 788	Jeddah	15:10			
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	ETD 303	Abu Dhabi	15:15			
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	KAC 787	Riyadh	15:30			
KAC	414	Bangkok	03:05	KAC 502	Beirut	15:30			
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	KAC 562	Amman	15:30			
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	OMA 645	Muscat	15:35			
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	FEQ 937	Sohag	15:45			
JZR	555	Alexandria	03:55	UAE 857	Dubai	15:45			
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	QTR 1072	Doha	15:55			
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	ABY 127	Sharjah	16:00			
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	KAC 118	New York	16:00			
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	JZR 779	Jeddah	16:25			
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	FDB 051	Dubai	16:40			
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	RJA 640	Amman	16:55			
JZR	609	Hyderabad	05:10	KAC 542	Cairo	17:05			
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	SVA 510	Riyadh	17:15			
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	GFA 215	Bahrain	17:30			
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	JZR 125	Bahrain	17:35			
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	JZR 777	Jeddah	17:40			
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	WAN 984	Tbilisi	17:50			
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	UAE 875	Dubai	18:00			
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	FDB 063	Dubai	18:10			
KAC	678	Dubai	06:00	JZR 177	Dubai	18:15			
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	MSR 620	Cairo	18:30			
QTR	8511	Doha	06:25	QTR 1080	Doha	18:50			
KAC	362	Colombo	06:25	KAC 744	Dammam	19:10			
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:30	KAC 776	Riyadh	19:20			
WAN	342	Sohag	06:35	ABY 123	Sharjah	19:25			
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	RBG 555	Alexandria	19:25			
BAW	157	London	07:10	KAC 156	Istanbul	19:30			
FEQ	933	Sohag	07:30	GFA 217	Bahrain	19:30			
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	JZR 483	Istanbul	19:40			
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	KAC 674	Dubai	19:45			
WAN	332	Alexandria	08:00	FDB 057	Dubai	19:50			
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC 616	Bahrain	19:55			
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC 104	London	20:00			
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC 620	Doha	20:15			
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	OMA 647	Muscat	20:20			
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	KAC 166	Rome	20:20			
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	DLH 624	Frankfurt	20:45			
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	QTR 1088	Doha	20:45			
IRC	528	Ahwaz	10:00	ALK 229	Colombo	21:20			
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15	MEA 402	Beirut	21:20			
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ETD 307	Abu Dhabi	21:20			
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00	KAC 786	Jeddah	21:25			
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC 172	Frankfurt	21:30			
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	UAE 859	Dubai	21:35			
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	GFA 676	Dubai	21:40			
WAN	134	Doha	11:45	KAC 219	Bahrain	21:45			
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	WAN 116	Bahrain	21:50			
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10	KAC 564	Amman	22:00			
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	QTR 1082	Doha	22:05			
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	ETD 309	Abu Dhabi	22:15			
FDB	075	Dubai	12:45	AIC 981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25			
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	JZR 241	Amman	22:40			
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	JZR 185	Dubai	23:10			
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	JAI 574	Mumbai	23:15			
				BBC 043	Dhaka	23:30			
				PIA 205	Lahore	23:40			
				FDB 071	Dubai	23:45			



Dwayne Johnson reminisces on 'tough' times

The 45-year-old actor celebrated the annual American holiday on Thursday with his family, but the star took a moment to reflect on a time when he was not as fortunate as he is now and he did not have food on the table, but he desperately waited for someone to invite him and his loved ones to their house to eat. The 'Jumanji' star - who was known as The Rock when he was a professional wrestler - shared a photograph of the festivities on his Instagram account, which captured him surrounded by his relatives as they stood around a table. He captioned the post: "After we bowed our heads in prayer, we went around the table and everyone shared what they were thankful for. Beautiful seeing and listening to everyone speak from their heart. Tears, laughter and boundless gratitude. "As my mom pointed out earlier in the day, there was a time back in '87 when we couldn't even afford Thanksgiving dinner and was praying someone would invite us over their house to eat. We were in a tough spot back then, but we got thru it. And here we are today. One big, extended, blended, slightly crazy, loving, grateful ohana. #sib (sic)." However, the muscular hunk - who has daughters Simone, 16, with his former flame Dany Garcia, and 23-month-old Jasmine with Lauren Hashian - brought a more uplifting tone to his post as he joked he was "a little surprised" no one at the meal shared how privileged they were to be in the presence of "THE Sexiest Man Alive".

Willow Smith says fame is 'absolutely terrible'

The 17-year-old singer - who is the daughter of Will Smith and his wife Jada Pinkett Smith - has admitted living a life in the spotlight is not as great as it seems, and the star has hinted the worst part is that she cannot "change [her] face" or her parents and go unnoticed but has to embrace her celebrity status instead. Speaking openly to Girl Gaze Online, the 'Whip My Hair' hitmaker said: "I'm going to be completely and utterly honest, it's absolutely terrible. "Growing up and trying to figure out your life ... while people feel like they have some sort of entitlement to know what's going on, is absolutely, excruciatingly terrible - and the only way to get over it, is to go into it. "You can't change your face. You can't change your parents. You can't change any of those things. "When you're born into it, there are two choices that you have: I'm either going to try to go into it completely and help from the inside, or no one is going to know where I am and I'm really going to take myself completely out of the eye of society. "There's really no in between." And the 'I Am Legend' actress also thinks social media also has a negative effect on youngsters, and can cause them to go on a downward spiral and fall into depression. She explained: "I feel like most kids like me end up going down a spiral of depression, and the world is sitting there looking at them through their phones, laughing and making jokes and making memes at the crippling effect that this lifestyle has on the psyche."



Love set to regain late husband's guitar



The 53-year-old singer and songwriter - who was married to the late Nirvana band member for two years before he tragically passed away in 1994 - has been asked by her child, Frances Bean Cobain, for help in a legal battle against her estranged husband, Isaiah Silva, to regain the Martin D-18E guitar that belonged to Kurt. According to court documents, which have been obtained by The Blast, the 25-year-old model - who filed for a divorce from Isaiah in 2016 two years after they tied the knot - has asked her mother to act as a witness in the case. Frances filed the official documents to split from the 32-year-old, and in the file she reportedly listed her father's estate as her own property separate from any joint ownership she and Isaiah have together. However, Isaiah has since claimed that Frances gave him the musical instrument, which is believed to be one in 300 that were made, as a wedding gift. But Frances has denied the allegation and has demanded for the sentimental piece of equipment to be given back to her. The battle over the possessions has been an ongoing issue for months, and with the trial for the divorce fast approaching Frances is keen to do all she can to ensure she regains what she believes is rightfully hers. After the 'Sid and Nancy' actress presents her testimony, Frances will hand over a collection of photographs and messages exchanged as evidence in the trial.

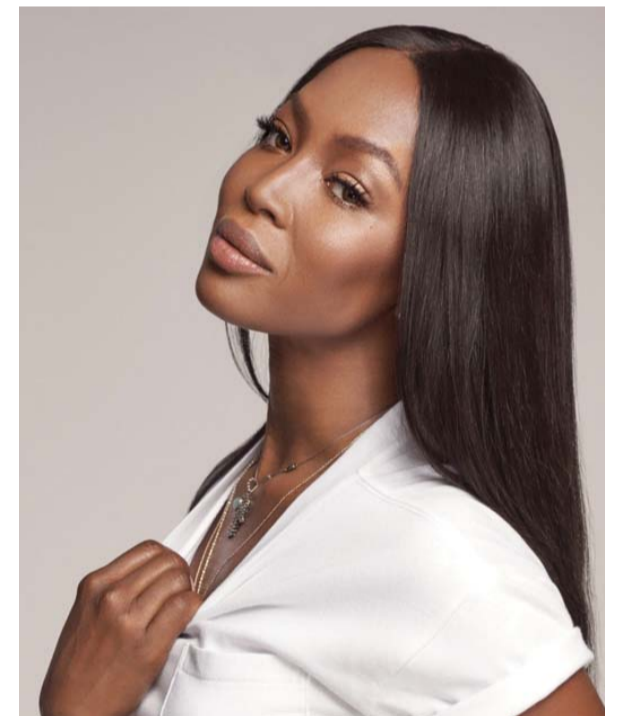
Gyllenhaal thinks prostitution should be decriminalized



The 40-year-old actress plays a sex worker in her new TV show 'The Deuce' and she thinks it would be safer and healthier for everyone involved in the illicit industry if it was no longer a criminal act. She said: "Who needs a union more than a prostitute? I'm quoting David Simon (show creator) actually and I agree with him. "My instinct is to say decriminalise it and make sure everybody's safe, healthy and taken care of." Maggie - who has daughters Ramona, 11, and five-year-old Gloria with husband Peter Sarsgaard - has a producer credit on the program, which also stars James Franco, because she wanted to be involved in the "storytelling process". She said: "There was a little part of me that was concerned they weren't interested in telling the same story as I was interested in telling. "That's why I asked to become a producer because I wanted to have some guarantee that I would be included in the storytelling process. "The joke on set was, 'Maggie what kept you up last night?' There was always one thing that I would write a long email about at night. I would say, 'Here are the tiny things. If you don't do these, fine, but you must do this.' " And one topic the actress insisted on being shown on the show was her character masturbating or having sex away from her work. She told Britain's ELLE magazine: "I thought that would be, in some ways, an opening into her needs, her desire, her agency. "I didn't hear anything about it for a long time. David Simon sort of joked with me, like, 'What? Really?' but he delivered a script with a storyline about Candy's own love life, and even includes her masturbating and having an orgasm that's both vulnerable and profound."

Naomi Campbell finds Puff Daddy 'inspiring'

The 47-year-old supermodel and the 'I'll Be Missing You' hitmaker star as the royal beheaders in this year's 'Alice in Wonderland'-inspired Pirelli calendar and they had a great time working together on the shoot, even though it was full of "craziness". Naomi said: "He coached me. He was behind me saying, 'Get into character, sis.' "Sean is so inspiring. I love him, he's like a brother to me." "We actually share the same acting coach so he knows the method of how to get into character. "We had a lot of fun on set, we were all singing at one point a table caught fire - it was craziness but we just kept going." The iconic calendar - which was styled by new Vogue editor Edward Enninful and shot by Tim Walker - this year featured an all-black cast and Naomi thinks it is a symbol of the way the fashion industry is finally embracing diversity. She said: "The message of this calendar is so big and the timing could not be more perfect. "It is an amazing time. It is a new time. "I hope it stays this way and isn't a trend. "Out of my 31 years as a model, this has been the most phenomenal moment for diversity [in fashion]." And the British beauty loves the fact every Pirelli calendar she's worked on has been so different, but gave off a timely message. She told Grazia magazine: "I've done it for four decades - one in my teens, twenties, thirties and forties. "They've all been so different, they've all had a different message. "I think Pirelli is very good at knowing what's going on in the world and aligning themselves with that message."



Tamara Ecclestone shops in Poundland



The 33-year-old heiress - who has three-year-old daughter Sophia with husband Jay Rutland - may be the daughter of a billionaire but she can't resist splashing out on bargains from the discount retailer because the products are so cheap. Asked if she's ever been to Poundland, she said: "Yes I have. There was one near where I used to get my nails done. I just used to go in and buy random stuff, which I love doing. "Everything's a pound, and it's stuff I don't need. I'm spending money when I don't need to, because I think I'm getting a bargain." And Tamara is also a big fan of bulk-buying retail outlet Costco and despite her fortune, loves getting a good "deal" on her purchases. She said: "I have a Costco card - I love Costco, it's like the dream - there's nothing you can't get. "Listen, if you can get a deal, why wouldn't you? "It doesn't matter how much money you have. Why would you not want a bargain? "The first time I went there, I got very carried away. Actually, I get carried away every time I go." Though little Sophia enjoys the finer things in life, she also loves tucking into a Happy Meal from fast food outlet McDonalds. Tamara said: "Her favorite way to travel is by private jet with a Happy Meal. It really is a beautiful life." And the 'Tamara's World' star doesn't only stick with high-end designers when it comes to shopping for the youngster. She told heat magazine: "It's not all designer - it's a mixture of stuff, from Zara to Gap. Sometimes I shop online for her - pyjamas from Mothercare, that type of thing. "It's not all expensive brands, but she does have designer clothes."



Carey cancels three more days of Christmas tour

The 48-year-old singer recently announced she was pulling the plug on a few of her upcoming performances last week due to an upper respiratory infection, and the blonde-haired beauty has since taken to social media to announce she is scrapping even more gigs from her 'All I Want For Christmas Is You World' tour because she has been told by medical experts she needs "a few extra days of rest". Alongside an advertisement for her festive string of concerts, which was posted on her Instagram account, she wrote: "I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving with loved ones; it's certainly nice to remember what we are grateful for! Like most, I'm thankful for my overall health... for which I need a bit more time to get right. Doctors have ordered a few extra days of rest before I can finally fly to New York and take the stage for my Christmas Tour (sic)." Although the 'Heartbreaker' hitmaker is "disap-

pointed" with the news, she is "grateful" she is slowly recovering from her illness. She concluded: "While this news disappoints me to share, I am grateful to be on the mend and for the support from all of you - it means the world to me! See you from the stage soon darlings! , Mariah (sic)." Mariah - who has twins Moroccan and Monroe, both six, with her former partner Nick Cannon - was originally due to take to the stage on November 17, and later perform on November 27, 28, as well as December 1. But the dates have since been pushed back to December 2, which will see Mariah wow crowds at the Beacon Theatre in New York, before she heads to Paris, Manchester and London, to then take to Las Vegas on December 14 for a string of shows to conclude her tour. And refunds will be offered to people who bought tickets for the cancelled dates. — bangshowbiz

Lifestyle | Features



Iraqis sit at the century old Shabandar cafe, one of the capital Baghdad's few remaining traditional cultural cafes. — AFP photos

Baghdad cafe marks 100 years as intellectual hub

Sited at tables with glasses of tea in the heart of Baghdad's bookshop district, the customers of Shabandar cafe have watched 100 years of Iraq's tumultuous history pass by. Since opening its doors a century ago, the establishment has become a hub of Baghdad's intellectual life, drawing poets and politicians to its wooden benches and photolined walls.

"I've been coming here for the past 60 years," Abdel Fattah al-Noeimi, 77, tells AFP, dapper in his spotless brown suit and matching tie. "At nine in the morning until two or three in the afternoon, when everyone is leaving." From British rule to modern-day Iraq, Shabandar has lived through the birth of a nation, the toppling of its monarchy, decades of domination by Saddam Hussein, the drama of the U.S.-led invasion and the bloody chaos that followed. The twists and tragedies have all left their mark on the cafe. During the sectarian bloodletting, a car bomb in 2007 tore through the historic Al-

Mutanabbi Street on which the cafe stands—killing around 100 people. Among the dead were four sons and a grandson of Shabandar's owner, Mohammed Al-Khashali.

'A history book'

But Khashali does not want to dwell on that tragic event—and today the rhythm of clinking tea glasses, bubbling hookah pipes and conversation hums just as it always has done. "Taking a seat here is like taking a seat in a history book," the proprietor tells AFP from his regular position by the glass and wood front doors. When it first became a cafe in 1917, the brick and plaster building was already a local institution as it housed the printing press of merchant

Abdel Majid Al-Shabandar—whose name comes from Turkish, meaning "the greatest of merchants".

Khashali—who sports a traditional white robe and beard of the same color—took over in 1963

and made a decision that would prove defining: he banned all games, including cards and dominoes, from the cafe. While the move surprised some customers, it meant the new owner stayed true to a "promise" he had made to himself. "That this would be a place where people of culture would meet," Khashali said. "That is truly what happened."

'School of thought'

Dozens of black and white photographs covering the walls of the cafe offer a glimpse into the history of Baghdad and Iraq, chronicling some of its leading lights and others who have since slipped into obscurity. In a golden book, a number of foreign ambassadors have left their signatures. The diversity of the faces of the men and women lining the walls is echoed nowadays by the varied crowd that still packs into Shabandar each morning.

The cafe is "not reserved for any religion, or culture or part of society everyone is here", says regular patron Noeimi. It even encompasses a certain "school of thought" of its own, he insists, where despite the profound divisions that have torn apart Iraqi society, "everyone respects each others' ideas". As the hubbub of chatter

Where people of culture would meet



Peddlers sell fruits in their stalls in at Al-Mutanabi Street outside Iraq's century old Shabandar cafe.

and shouted orders rumbles around him, Rammah Abdelamir, 17, looks up from his book on modern political thought to take in this "monument of old Baghdad". Waiters weave between customers, filling

their glasses with steaming hot tea, as they barely look up from deep in their conversations. "This place is a bit of a mecca for intellectuals and a place of learning for each new generation," Abdelamir says. — AFP



Lost and found items, including cell phones, are seen at Burning Man festival headquarters in San Francisco. — AP photos

Shoes, bags, even dentures lost at Burning Man await owners

Lindsay Weiss once lost her cellphone and got it back, so she and a friend knew what they had to do when they discovered a camera during the Burning Man festival in the Nevada desert - even though it meant giving up their coveted shady seat for a musical performance. The friends snapped a quick selfie and took the device to lost-and-found, so the owner could claim it and the pair could "forever be a part of their journey," Weiss said.

"Losing something out there on the playa makes its mark on your trip," she said of the sprawling counterculture gathering. "Kinda makes you feel like a loser." Cameras and IDs are among the more common belongings that end up at lost-and-found after the event this summer billed as North America's largest outdoor arts festival. Other items left behind in the dusty, 5-square-mile (13-square-kilometer) encampment include shoes, keys, stuffed animals - even dentures.

Still missing are a marching-band hat with gold mirror tiles, a furry cheetah vest, a headdress with horns and a chainmail loincloth skirt. "As of mid-November, we've recovered 2,479 items and returned 1,279," said Terry Schoop, who helps oversee the recovery operation at Burning Man's San Francisco headquarters. "We have about a 60 percent return rate." Not bad for a temporary community of 60,000 artists, free spirits,

old hippies and young thrill seekers who descend on a dried-up lake bed in the Black Rock Desert for an adventure combining wilderness camping with avant-garde performance 120 miles north of Reno. The usual suspects top this year's list of most frequently lost in the land of drum circles and psychedelic art cars: 582 cellphones, 570 backpacks or bags, and 529 drivers' licenses, passports or other forms of identification.

Unclaimed items are listed on Burning Man's website with photos and numbers. They include more than 200 shirts, 100 jackets, 80 hydration backpacks, 50 pairs of eyeglasses, six suitcases and several dozen water bottles. "Your item may look different after rolling in the dust," the website advises. It links to an online forum that has brief descriptions of found items: a "big bag of ladies clothes," a piano tuning kit, a "small stuffed cow with cowboy hat" and one black Dr. Martens combat boot.

A celebration of art

Other articles lost-but-not-yet-found include a wedding ring, a flute, "fire nunchucks," a stuffed bunny - "daughter's since birth," and a "dark-leafy-print bandanna lost on the playa somewhere around the giant flamingo." The high rate of return doesn't surprise Mike Kivett, manager of a company that has provided portable toilets and trailers at Burning Man since 2003. He remembers when his co-worker dismissed his suggestion to check the lost-and-found for his missing phone, saying the odds of recovering it were slim.

"I told him there's a good vibe out here," Kivett said. "If somebody finds it, they're going to return it because they know what it's like to lose something out here - a sense of obligation, duty to fellow man." Ninety minutes later, the co-worker had his phone back. Burning Man has been collecting and returning items since the event moved to Nevada in 1992 from San Francisco, where it began in 1986 with about 20 people burning a wooden effigy in a celebration of art. The event's technology team has developed a sophisticated database people can search onsite at a Wi-Fi center. Afterward, volunteers scour the web and emails.

Most institutions donate lost items to charity if they aren't claimed in about a month. Burning Man does that too - just not as quickly, said Schoop, who helps oversee recovery. Volunteers concentrate first on IDs and cellphones. "We spend about three or four months trying to hook people up with lost items," he said. His most unusual recovery? "A partial pair of dentures," Schoop said.

"The man showed up, took them out of the bag they were in, popped them in his mouth and said, 'See, I can prove it's mine: It fits!'" Some lost items carry hefty price tags, while others have more sentimental worth. Schoop remembers a cellphone returned to a woman who lost it shortly after her father died and her home burned down. "She said the phone we gave back to her was the only record of any photographs she had of her father and, I think, some voicemails from him," he said. "We thought we were just returning a phone, but it meant a lifetime to her." — AP



Terry Schoop, community services manager for Burning Man festival, looks through some lost and found items at the organization's headquarters in San Francisco.

PIONEERING JAZZ SINGER JON HENDRICKS DIES AT 96

Jon Hendricks, the pioneering jazz singer and lyricist who with the trio Lambert, Hendricks & Ross popularized the "vocalese" singing style in which words were added to instrumental songs, has died. He was 96. His daughter, Aria Hendricks, confirmed his death to the New York Times. She said he died Wednesday at a New York City hospital.

Hendricks found fame in the 1950s and '60s teaming with Dave Lambert and Annie Ross. Their interracial trio became one of the most celebrated jazz vocal groups ever, and among the latter-day stars they influenced were Joni Mitchell and Manhattan Transfer. The trio's first album, "Sing a Song of Basie," won acclaim for its use of vocalese, in which the voices mimic the instrumental parts. Hendricks wrote the lyrics to existing Basie songs, and the three recorded their own voices in layers instead of using backup singers.

Others experimented with vocalese before Hendricks, but he is widely regarded as the father of the spirited singing style for popularizing it. In the 1980s, he collaborated with Manhattan Transfer on an album called "Vocalese" that won three Grammys, one for Hendricks himself. He first teamed up with Lambert, a be-bop singer he admired, in the mid-1950s; the duo had a hit with "Four Brothers" and "Cloudburst." The two became a trio with the addition of Ross in 1957. The English-born Ross was already known for her own vocalese lyrics to Wardell Gray's music in the classic "Twisted."

In a 1997 Associated Press interview, Hendricks recalled that Lambert said, "Let's do something artistic so that the Earth will at least know we were here. Why don't you lyricize 10 Count Basie things and we'll see if we can record an album." After trying out by recording a large group of singers, Hendricks recalled, they decided to instead create the harmonies by multitracking as a trio with Ross. After the group broke up in 1962, he pursued a solo career in London, worked as a jazz critic in San Francisco and released several solo albums. Ross also had success in a solo career; Lambert died in 1966.

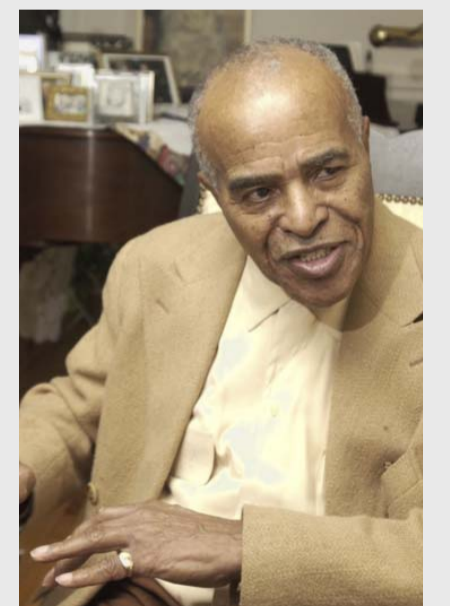
'Yet to topped'

Hendricks won a Grammy in 1986 for best male jazz vocal performance of 1985 for his work with Bobby McFerrin on "Another Night in Tunisia," a cut on Manhattan Transfer's "Vocalese." Hendricks wrote all the lyrics for the album, to music by Ray Charles, Quincy Jones and others. It was nominated for a near-record 12 Grammys and won three. In 1997, he was three featured singers to perform Wynton Marsalis' "Blood on the Fields" on a CD and on tour in the United States and Europe.

That same year the three-hour work, which tells the history of blacks in

America, won the Pulitzer Prize for music. But the fame of the trio that began recording nearly a half-century ago has not faded. Hendricks and Ross teamed up again in the late 1990s in a series of concerts. And "The All-Music Guide to Jazz" says Lambert, Hendricks and Ross "has yet to be topped as a jazz vocal group." Mitchell, who rarely sings songs other than her own, recorded "Twisted" on her 1974 album, "Court and Spark," and "Centerpiece" on her 1975 "The Hissing of Summer Lawns." In a 1979 Down Beat magazine interview, she recalled hearing "Lambert, Hendricks and Ross: The Hottest New Sound in Jazz," as a teenager.

"In a way I've always considered that album to be my Beatles, because I learned every song off it..." she said. "I don't think



In this Jan 13, 2004 photo, Jazz singer Jon Hendricks talks about his career in jazz at his home in Toledo, Ohio. — AP

there's another album that I know every song on, including my own!" Hendricks got his start in amateur shows and at age 14 sang in Toledo nightclubs for two years with another future jazz great from his hometown, pianist Art Tatum, who gave him music lessons after school. "I learned what I know from him," Hendricks told The Associated Press in a 2004 interview.

Yet, he was on his way to becoming a lawyer in 1950, singing in small clubs at night, when his wife asked if Hendricks could sing with be-bop pioneer and saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker at a concert in town. Parker was impressed, telling Hendricks, "You ain't no lawyer. You're a jazz singer."

You got to come to New York," Hendricks did, two years later. Hendricks was born Sept. 16, 1921, in Newark, Ohio, and grew up in Toledo, one of 15 children of a preacher who hoped Hendricks would follow him into the ministry. "I always felt like a traitor," Hendricks said. — AP

Lifestyle | Movies

Film Review

Oldman gives us a human Churchill in 'Darkest Hour'

Words matter. That's one of the key messages of "Darkest Hour," in which Gary Oldman embodies - fiercely and memorably - the legendary Winston Churchill, who rallied his country with soaring oratory when Britain's very survival was at stake. But the same man who uttered indelible phrases like "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat" - and many others - was also a human being, the film argues, with fears and doubts and insecurities and flaws. "Just be yourself," Churchill's wife, Clementine (a briskly effective Kristin Scott Thomas) advises him as he heads off, full of jitters, to meet the king and become the wartime prime minister. Later, he raises a glass with Clementine, with a fervent wish: "Here's to not bugging it up."



"Bugging it up" was certainly a risk - both for Churchill, and for Oldman or any actor attempting to embody the great man. It's hard enough to portray a revered real-life figure - and harder yet with such a larger-than-life persona, physically and otherwise. It won't be a surprise to fans of the skilled Oldman that he avoids mimicry or caricature, and it's an even better treat that he's able to so adeptly balance conviction with doubt, courage with fear, and gravity with humor. (Kudos are due as well to the superb makeup by Kazuhiro Tsuji, jowls and all.)

Political woes

"Darkest Hour," directed by Joe Wright and written by Anthony McCarten, focuses on one



month in 1940 that saw Churchill rise to office and face down his political foes and a wary British monarch as he navigated the threat of looming war against Adolf Hitler's forces. Though Wright is known for his sweeping filmmaking in another war film, "Atonement," here he focuses not on the beaches of Dunkirk but on dimly lit interiors like the underground war rooms at Westminster Palace, the halls of

Parliament, and Churchill's own bedroom.

The film is, in a sense, a companion piece - by way of timing, at least - to Christopher Nolan's "Dunkirk," released in the summer. While Nolan focused on the action, Wright focuses on the talk - specifically how Churchill, in the words of one frustrated opponent, "mobilized the English language and sent it into battle." He wasn't the first choice to be prime minister - not of his party, and certainly not of a skeptical King George VI (an excellent Ben Mendelsohn). But Parliament, as we learn at the beginning of the film, had lost confidence in the ailing Neville Chamberlain, and Churchill was a compromise solution.

He enters office as France and Belgium are on the brink of falling to the Nazis, and most of the British Army is stranded at Dunkirk. The new prime minister is forced to make an agonizing decision: try to negotiate a dubious peace, as Chamberlain desired, or fight - and risk the deaths of a generation of young British men. He's hated by Chamberlain and his sidekick, Lord Halifax, and doubted by the king, who (initially) finds



him scary and unpredictable.

Moments of levity

It's fun to watch the lunch meeting between the restrained king and Churchill, a man of great appetites - and a famous thirst. When the king asks how he can drink during the day, the prime minister replies: "Practice." There are many such moments of humor, including when Churchill first meets his new young secretary, Elizabeth Layton (Lily James), and inadvertently flashes his privates under his nightshirt. Or when he warns her as he exits the shower: "I'm coming out in a state of nature!" He's also shown on the toilet, shouting out that he cannot speak to the Lord Privy Seal because he is "sealed on The Privy."

Despite such comic moments, which Oldman attacks with gusto, the film's mood is urgent and dire. The United States cannot help because of neutrality agreements: in a dispiriting phone call with Franklin D. Roosevelt, the US president notes: "It must be late there." Churchill replies: "In more ways than you can possibly know." Ultimately - as we all know -

Churchill decides to fight on, and to declare "We will never surrender." What gets him there? Partly, a ride on the London Underground. The prime minister decides to ditch his aides and take the Tube to Westminster, and on the way, to chat with some commonfolk. To a person, they agree with him that the country must never surrender to the forces of evil.

There are two problems with this scene. First, it's rather corny. The second is that it never happened. The filmmakers do warn that some material has been fictionalized. But some may be disappointed to learn that one of the most pivotal scenes in the film was manufactured. Oldman's performance, though, which has launched him to the forefront of awards season chatter, triumphs over any such qualms. The last few years have seen a number of notable Churchill interpretations. Oldman has set the bar higher still. "Darkest Hour," a Focus Features release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America "for some thematic material." Running time: 125 minutes. Three stars out of four. — AP

YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS: 'CASABLANCA' AT 75

This weekend marks the 75th anniversary of the premiere of "Casablanca," a timeless story of love, loss and redemption many consider to be the greatest movie ever made. Rushed onscreen at New York's Hollywood Theater on November 26, 1942 to capitalize on the Allied invasion of North Africa, it was a slow burner at the box office but went on to win hearts worldwide and a best picture Oscar.

The story is iconic: a devastating romance starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman as Rick Blaine and Ilsa Lund, star-crossed lovers whose union must be sacrificed for the sake of fighting the Nazis. Nora Fiore, who runs the "Nitrate Diva" classic film blog, says "Casablanca" is about the triumph



This file photo taken on September 15, 2006 shows a tattoo artist working from a portrait of Hollywood legends Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman in Los Angeles. — AFP

of idealism over cynicism, pointing to the passion of the supporting cast, many of whom were refugees who had fled Nazi persecution. "Sugarcoated though it is, 'Casablanca' offers up an allegory of America shedding its isolationism and selfishness and sticking its neck out to help others, especially refugees," she told AFP. The Oscar-winning screenplay by Howard Koch, Julius Epstein and his twin brother Philip is as remarkable for the sheer number of catchphrases it spawned - from "Round up the usual suspects" to "Here's looking at you, kid."

With the death last year of Madeleine LeBeau, who played Rick's spurned girlfriend Yvonne, there are no surviving cast members, but the movie's legacy has never been in doubt. Chosen by British parliamentarians as their favorite film of all time in a 2006 poll, and named the third greatest US movie a year later by the American Film Institute, it still packs out special screenings.

Subversive

In 2012 Michael Curtiz's best director Oscar fetched \$2.1 million at auction in Santa Monica, California, while the painted upright piano that adorned Rick's Cafe fetched \$3.4 million in New York two years later. "It is a film that gripped audiences during the dark-

est days of World War II, and its message is still relevant," Amanda Garrett, an Ohio-based writer specializing in films from Hollywood's golden age, told AFP. "'Casablanca' puts each of its varied cast of characters in a desperate situation - living under a totalitarian regime - and then forces them to decide how they will react in the face of unimaginable evil."

The movie came out in a more censorious era, with polite society still scandalized by the use of the word "damn" in "Gone with the Wind" (1939), but "Casablanca" still managed to be impressively subversive. Film historian Noah Isenberg, author of the bestselling "We'll Always Have Casablanca," points to the "very sly, clever way" in which it eluded the wrath of notorious chief film censor Joseph Breen. "Quite a few of the lines delivered by the lecherous Captain Renault (Claude Rains) had to be tamped down or cut altogether," he told AFP. "But somehow, despite a few sternly worded memos sent by the Breen office, producer Hal Wallis and director Michael Curtiz managed to make the sex-for-visa program that Renault operated rather obvious." Many myths have built up over the years concerning the production, the most common being that the famous chemistry between Bergman and Bogart was based on a real-life mutual attraction.

'Continued relevance'

Various family members, including the actresses Isabella Rossellini and the late Lauren Bacall, have insisted, however, that neither Bogart nor Bergman thought very much of the movie, nor of each other. Bergman, who died at the age of 67 in 1982, remains for many the most beautiful woman ever to grace the silver screen, lauded for her looks, exotic accent and naturalistic demeanor.

She never actually wanted to make "Casablanca" but took the role after initially being turned down for the film she was really interested in - "For Whom The Bell Tolls." She was only offered the part in "Casablanca" after Hedy Lamarr, the preferred choice, turned down the role. Scholars note that the screenplay was written and rewritten dozens of times as filming went along, meaning Bergman didn't know whether she would end up with Rick or Paul Henreid's character, Victor Laszlo.

She pushed the screenwriters to tell her, but they had no idea either, so Bergman was forced to sit on the fence emotionally during her big close-up in Rick's Cafe - hence her much-admired opaque facial expression. "'Casablanca' showcases the strength of the studio system, with a great director, stars, character actors, script, cinematography, costume and set design all working in tandem to produce an absolute joy of a movie," film blogger Fiore said. "It's a testament to the brilliance and quality of old Hollywood and the continued relevance of the films that the studio system produced at its best." — AFP

Denzel on 'Roman J Israel', 'Malcolm X' and 'Shaft'

Denzel Washington, 62 years-old and a seven-time Oscar nominee, is still trying to get better. In Dan Gilroy's "Roman J. Israel, Esq.," Washington has challenged himself with one of his most complicated and singular roles. The title character (played by Washington) is a veteran activist attorney. After decades spent as a brilliant behind-the-scenes legal mind, the death of his more renowned partner brings Israel out into the open.

For an actor whose most powerful performances ("Malcolm X," "Glory," "Training Day") have been monuments of power and strength, Israel is an oddity - a loping, rumpled, anti-social loner who Gilroy and Washington say has Asperger's Syndrome. But he's also a part with many of Washington's more recent roles (the tragic Troy Maxson in "Fences," the alcoholic pilot of "Flight") that have stretched the actor in new directions. "I'm looking at the guy in the mirror," says Washington. "That's who I'm challenging."

Washington met for interview in midtown Manhattan earlier this week during a day's break from shooting the thriller sequel "The Equalizer 2" in Boston. His affection for Israel was obvious. It's the only movie, Washington says, where he's found himself quietly pleading to his character to make better choices. But the moves made by Washington - arguably the biggest movie star on the planet - remain fascinating, too.

AP: You've compared Roman to "Cornel West on the spectrum."

Washington: Cornel is brilliant and different. I don't know if he's on the spectrum but who cares. He's just bright and articulate and down for the cause, and there's a lot of that in Roman.

AP: Where did Roman's walk come from?

Washington: I did a lot of research on the spectrum. In some people, it talked about a lack of coordination - in some people, not everyone. I was attracted to that. It was something I could physicalize. I forget how I actually got to it, but I decided to wear shoes a couple of sizes too big. It changed everything. It changed the way I walked, just trying to keep them on.

AP: Did you have a feeling of starting a new chapter after "Fences"? You spent years performing that on Broadway and directing the film adaptation.

Washington: Increasingly, I'm only going to do what I want to do, professionally. So I don't know what I'm going to do next. Film-wise, I don't. I do on the stage. (Washington will headline a revival of Eugene O'Neill's "The Iceman Cometh" on Broadway.) And that's OK. Take my time. The time I have left and the opportunities that I have left, I understand that that's finite. How can I be the best that I can be? And what interests me? Where's the new territory?

AP: Troy from "Fences" and Israel both



Director Dan Gilroy, left, actress Carmen Ejogo and actor Denzel Washington attend a special screening of "Roman J. Israel, Esq." at the Henry R. Luce Auditorium on Monday, Nov. 20, 2017, in New York. — AP

share a disconnect with younger generations. Has that been on your mind at all?

Washington: It's a fact. Whether it's on your mind or not. It may be on my mind, but I don't remember! (Laughs) There's 365 days in a year, so 10 years is about 3600 days.

Twenty years is about 7200 days. I'm 62 so 20 years, 7200 days, that's not a lot of time - if you get 7200. You don't know how many you're going to get. You just try to do the best you can with what you have and enjoy it.

AP: This year marks the 25th anniversary of "Malcolm X" and like him, you're the son of a preacher. Do you feel as though you've followed in your father's footsteps at all?

Washington: For a time, it sent me in another direction. That can be a pattern for preacher's son.

I had to go to church, so it wasn't fun. I didn't know anything different. Being a minister's son, having grown up in the church and

learned the cadence, it was probably easier to play that part. I had some idea of different rhythms.

AP: I suspect you'd be good at the pulpit.

Washington: Well, it's not performance-based if you mean what you say. And you better mean what you say. My father did. He believed it with every fiber of his being. He was a man of God and we share that. For him, the pulpit was wherever he was. My father was a minister and my mother owned a beauty shop. So that seems like perfect breeding ground for an actor. That covers a lot!

AP: Is there you a film you saw at a young age that changed your life?

Washington: "Super Fly"! And "Shaft." When I was 14, 15, "Shaft" especially. Here was a guy - I didn't know who he was - but he walked around and he had his own theme music. He had a leather jacket on. He seemed to be in control and he was sticking it to the man. I remember seeing those movies and you were picking who you wanted to be: Super Fly or Shaft. I wanted to be Shaft. — AP



Denzel Washington at the special screening of "Roman J. Israel, Esq." at the Henry R. Luce Auditorium. — AP photos

Lifestyle | Features



Dancers from BodyTraffic - Los Angeles Contemporary Dance Company perform during a dress rehearsal of the ballet "Green Bride" in the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko music theater in Moscow. — AP photos



Young dancers perform the ballet "Trails" by choreographers Pavel Glukhov from Moscow and Konstantin Chistyakov from St Petersburg.

Russian dancer challenges centuries of ballet tradition

It's an uphill battle trying to promote contemporary dance in a country which prides itself on keeping its trademark ballets intact for a century. But acclaimed dancer Diana Vishneva is no stranger to taking risks. Throughout her career on both sides of the Atlantic, Vishneva, a principal dancer at the Mariinsky Theater in St Petersburg, did not just bask in the accolades for her immaculate performances of Russian ballet classics like Swan Lake or The Sleeping Beauty but also ventured into contemporary dance projects with seemingly little commercial appeal.

Her own efforts, originally with another Russian, Alexei Ratmansky, led her to collaborate with the best and brightest of contemporary dance including the venerated American choreographer John Neumeier, who created several productions just for Vishneva. This month, the ballerina, who was a principal dancer at American Ballet Theater from 2005 until June when she retired from the company, brought to Russia her brainchild, the fifth festival of contemporary dance, titled "Context. Diana Vishneva." The festival, which originally started as three days of performances starring Vishneva, has evolved into a week of shows, workshops and meet-the-artists sessions in Moscow and St Petersburg. The companies that performed in Russia's two major cities are rarely

seen in one place: from the cutting-edge Los Angeles-based BodyTraffic to the acclaimed Dutch National Ballet.

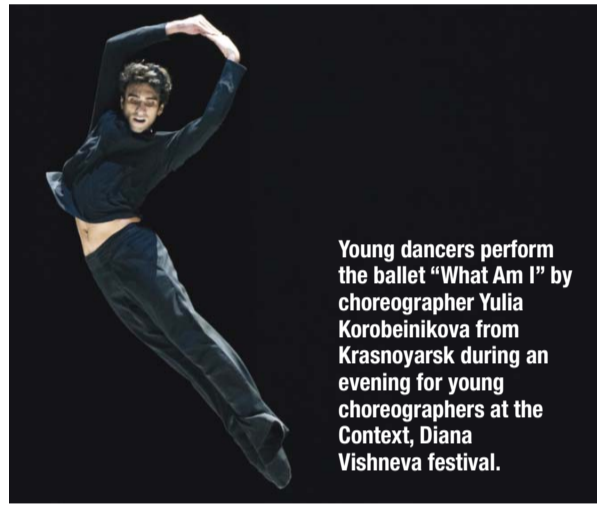
Weight of tradition

The festival opened with a show by several up-and-coming Russian choreographers. In one of them, a female dancer dressed in jeans was jogging on stage for several minutes while her partner was writhing on the floor as if struggling to get to his feet. In Russia, where the Bolshoi and other powerhouses of music and dance pride themselves on keeping the ballet classics unchanged for a century, that might seem like a hard sell. But not for Vishneva, who takes pride in the fact that some of the young choreographers whose work was featured at the festival went on to build international careers.

"With every year, there's more interest in contemporary dance (in Russia), and I can feel it's true both for professionals and the audience," Vishneva told The Associated Press. Paradoxically, smaller theaters in the Russian provinces are often more receptive to modern dance. "In a way it's easier because that weight of tradition, history and classical heritage that major theaters like the Bolshoi and the Mariinsky have... the regions are much more flexible now," Vishneva said. "They don't have such rigid boundaries."



2017 has not been easy for contemporary art



Young dancers perform the ballet "What Am I" by choreographer Yulia Korobeinikova from Krasnoyarsk during an evening for young choreographers at the Context. Diana Vishneva festival.



"Nureyev" is due to premiere next month while Serebrennikov remains under house arrest. Serebrennikov's Gogol Center, famous for its productions that mock officialdom and conservatism, offered its stage to some of the events of Vishneva's festival. Vishneva said she is "concerned and sad" about the case against Serebrennikov but waits to hear about further developments. Vishneva's festival enjoyed the support of the Russian Culture ministry, a patronage that helped ward off activists who have ransacked art exhibitions or disrupted plays in Moscow in the past. "You can find faults in classical art too," she said. "It's all because of people who are always on the look-out, for ways to publicize themselves." — AP

The year 2017 has not been easy for contemporary art in Russia. Ultra-conservative activists threatened violence in response to the release of a movie about the last Russian czar's love affair; the premiere of the ballet "Nureyev" directed by the prominent director Kirill Serebrennikov was postponed at the last moment, reportedly because of its depiction of the protagonist's homosexuality, and several months later Serebrennikov found himself in the dock on fraud charges he vehemently denies. The criminal case against arguably Russia's most prominent theater and film director shocked Russia's creative circles and sparked fears of the return of a Soviet-style censorship.



A crowned sifaka lemur hugs his knees toward his chest on the book cover of Tim Flach's *Endangered*. Flach used a black velvet backdrop in many of his prints "because I want you to focus on the animal." — AFP photos



A Shoebill looks straight into Tim Flach's camera.



An Pied Tamarin photographed by Tim Flach.

Photographer captures the human face of endangered species

Can you love an animal to death? A new book by British photographer Tim Flach documents some of Earth's most treasured species pushed to the brink of extinction by manmade crises, from pangolins hunted for their scales to Brazil's pied tamarin threatened by urbanisation.

"Most of the changes in the past have been driven by natural forces, but on this occasion, it seems to be driven by us," Flach told AFP on a visit to Washington. "My real question is: 'Why am I here doing it? Why am I here taking a picture of the last male white rhino?' It's the question of how we got to that point, rather than simply one of wonderment."

Coral, insects and even some ecosystems are included alongside some of the most recognizable threatened mammals such as polar

bears and lesser-known creatures like harlequin toads. The panda is one of the least vulnerable species found in the more than 150 images of "Endangered," whose release coincides with a new exhibition of Flach's photos in London's Osborne Samuel Gallery. Flach, known for his highly stylized photographs of dogs and horses, captures the animals' almost human expressions.

On the book's cover, a crowned sifaka lemur hugs his knees toward his chest, his bright yellow eyes betraying a worried yet inquisitive look, like a reprimanded schoolboy. Flach, 59, often uses a black velvet backdrop and his lighting captures colors in such detail that one can almost feel the softness of the lemur's black, orange and white fur. In the summer, Flach trekked to Russia's Caspian Sea, hiding in a "fly-infested hole" in search of the



London-based photographer Tim Flach poses with his book "Endangered" in Washington.

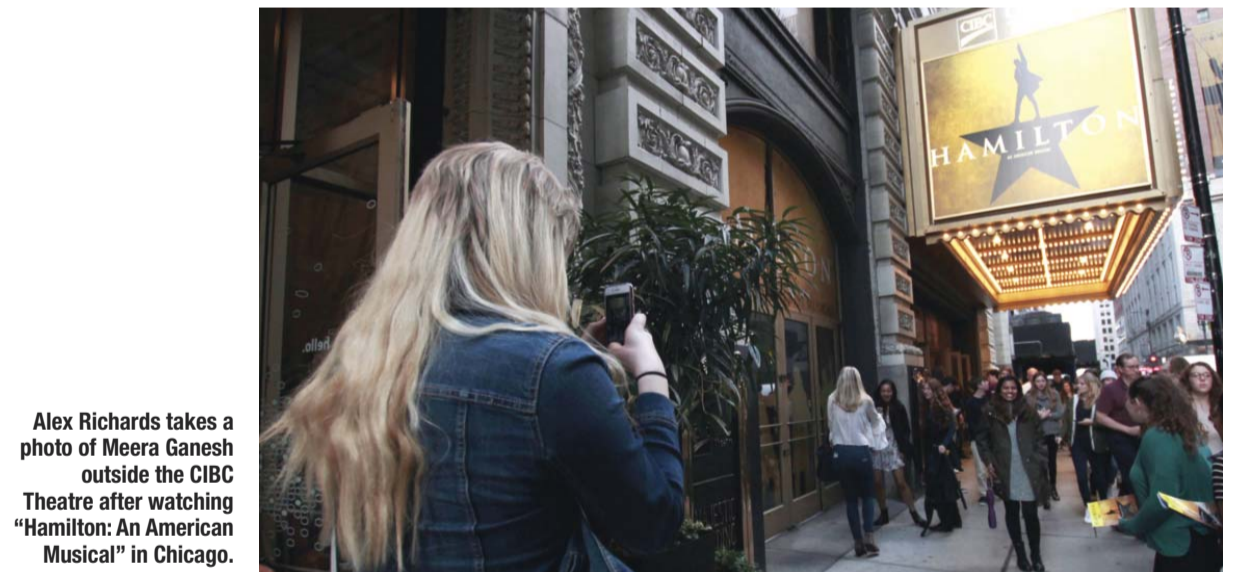
saiga antelope, an Ice Age survivor that once roamed alongside woolly mammoths but could soon be wiped out by poachers preying on its twisted horns.

Flach could only get a good sighting of the females, so he returned in the dead of winter with the longest lens he could borrow from Canon and got just one shot. Other encounters during a two-year odyssey included staring the last male white rhinoceros in the eye and swimming with great white sharks off the Galapagos Islands. He hopes that others share his passion for wildlife. "If we care about something, we are more likely to take action," said Flach. — AFP



An Philippine eagle photographed by Tim Flach

Colleges, high schools use 'Hamilton' to enhance teaching



Alex Richards takes a photo of Meera Ganesh outside the CIBC Theatre after watching "Hamilton: An American Musical" in Chicago.

More than 2,000 students got into the hottest show in Chicago for free - "Hamilton: An American Musical" - as part of their acceptance to Northwestern University. It's one of the ways colleges and high schools are using the hugely popular musical to teach students about history, art, drama, culture, and even politics. There's even a high school program coordinated through the show that has allowed nearly 49,000 students in four cities to see the show for free or reduced admission.

"It's one thing to learn about these kind of events in a classroom but to go and see this in a production it's different, and it's just amazing," said Northwestern freshman Alex Richards after seeing the smash hit musical. First-year Northwestern students went to two matinees at CIBC Theatre in October on 48 buses as part of the One Book One Northwestern program, which includes a series of discussions, speakers and other events around the theme of a book. This year it was Danielle Allen's "Our Declaration: A Reading of the Declaration of Independence in Defense of Equality."

Nancy Cunniff, director for One Book One Northwestern, says the program gives students a common discussion point when they get to campus as well as a different perspective on a subject. "Our approach has been to find different access points," Cunniff said. "So maybe history is not your thing but you like musicals and then you go and see this musical and then maybe history isn't so bad."

Interesting way to teach

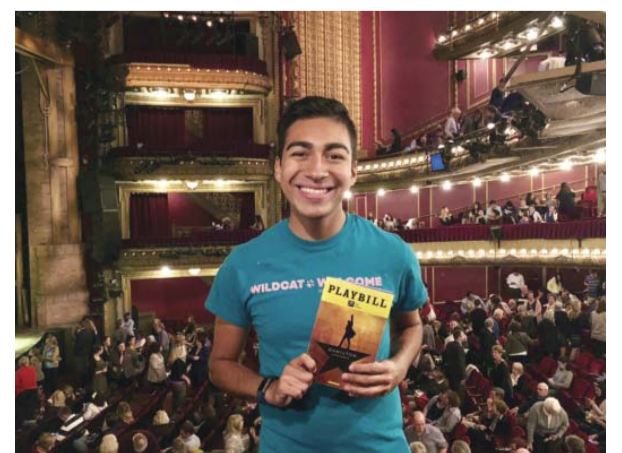
The university also started a class last year called "Hamilton's America," a lecture course cross-listed in history and Latino studies. Last year they taught 135 students and this year they plan to raise the cap to 180, expecting interest to increase after the One Book program, said Geraldo Cadava, an associate professor who helps lead the class.

Milwaukee's Marquette University is offering an honors, pass-fail course this semester for freshman called "Lin-Manuel Miranda's Hamilton," after the musical's creator. And it's overfilled by almost double at 14 people. Assistant English Professor Gerry Canavan uses the soundtrack, videos and lyrics as well as the Ron Chernow biography of Alexander Hamilton, which Miranda used as inspiration for the play. "To me it's a really interesting way to teach the skills of criticism and interpretation and careful reading

because you are looking at something that you haven't necessarily been trained how to read in the same way you've been trained to read great literature," Canavan said.

Ithaca College, Duke University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison are among the other schools that have credit or noncredit courses or touch on the show in other music or history classes. Educators are also targeting high school students. There's a program coordinated through the show and donors that uses donations to allow mostly 10th and 11th graders to see "Hamilton" for free or reduced admission. Some students also write dramatic scenes, poems or songs drawing on the founding era time period to present on stage before a performance.

Since 2015, nearly 49,000 students have gone in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Chicago. It has started to expand to San Diego, Tempe, Ariz., Seattle, Denver, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, Houston and Washington DC and the idea is to send at least 100,000 students to the show by next summer. "Our goal is to ensure that students have a shot to see 'Hamilton' and use its words, music and staging to further their understanding and enjoyment of American History, music and drama," "Hamilton" producer Jeffrey Seller said about the program in a press release. — AP



Mauricio Gonzalez posing for a photo at THE CIBC Theatre in Chicago while attending the performance "Hamilton: An American Musical" in downtown Chicago. — AP photos

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017



Visitors walk in front of an illuminated replica of The Kremlin and St Basil Cathedral built for the forthcoming holiday season outside a shopping mall in Moscow. — AFP

Oscars bid for story of 'Pakistan's toughest woman'

As 200 armed men surrounded their house on a hot August night in 2005, Nazo Dharejo and her sisters grabbed their Kalashnikov and puny stock of ammunition and climbed to the roof. The gunfight which followed earned her the moniker "Pakistan's toughest woman", and became the subject of a film which has been entered in next year's Academy Awards, vying for glory alongside heavy-hitters such as Angelina Jolie's "First They Killed My Father" and Joachim Trier's "Thelma".

A world away from Hollywood's red carpet, at the ancestral home Dharejo fought for in Pakistan's rural Sindh province, she described the night which could lead to Oscar glory. "I will kill them or die here but never retreat," Dharejo, now in her late 40s, recalled saying as assailants attacked her home. Her husband begged her to stand down but she refused, facing down her own relatives—who were armed and had long sought to take her family's property after her father died leaving no male heir, she said.

Her grandfather had several wives, and the male heirs in other branches of his family were laying claim to her inheritance. But her family had defied rural Pakistani cultural norms of the time to educate their daughters and teach them they were as good as boys, and the sisters were willing to give their lives to prove it.

From their position on the roof their tiny army—the three sisters, Dharejo's husband, and some loyal friends and neighbors—held off the onslaught, with household staff making daring runs for more ammunition until daylight broke. A five-year legal battle over the land eventually saw her foes pay half a million rupees (\$4,800) in compensation and offer a public apology—an act of utmost disgrace in rural Pakistan.

The Waderi

Born in a conservative feudal family, Dharejo was entitled to learn the Koran at home—and that was all. She persuaded



This photograph taken on September 27, 2017, shows Pakistani woman Mukhtiar Naz (R), known as Waderi Nazo Dharejo, walking her guard at her agriculture field in Qazi Ahmed in Sindh province. — AFP photos

her father to allow her and her sisters to study English, which paved the way for her to gain her Bachelor of Arts in economics at Sindh University, where she could study at home and appear in public only for the exams. But the modern justice system has made few inroads into rural Sindh, where little has changed for centuries in a society dominated by feudalism, and the bloody years-long fight over her family's land

threatened many times to derail her progress. "It kept intensifying. Five, six murders took place and in 1992 my brother was also murdered," she explained. When her father died that same year, the women who visited to pay condolences taunted her mother and sisters that their family line had ended. But Dharejo's determination—particularly her defiant stand over her family's property years later—slowly turned the tide. Soon

neighbors began to speak of her as "Waderi", a new feminine version of the male honorific "Wadera" meaning something akin to a feudal "Lady". "She has become such a huge tree spreading soothing shade to the people around her," commented Zulfiqar Dharejo as his wife, draped in a traditional printed Sindhi shawl, rocked gently on a nearby swing bed in their sparse drawing room, hung with more guns.

Heat, hospitals and gunfire

In 2013 Dharejo's story came to the attention of a British-born Pakistani filmmaker, Sarmad Masud. Fascinated, he got in touch. The result is My Pure Land, the 98-minute Urdu-language film version of Dharejo's story starring Suhace Abro, which became the UK's official entry in the Oscar's foreign language category. It faces tough competition: a record 92 countries have entered this year.

Other contenders include Jolie's film on the Cambodian genocide. Nominations will be announced in January, with the ceremony held in March. Masud told AFP: "I was immediately inspired by (Dharejo's) courage and heroism." But he conceded making the movie, filmed in some 30 days around Lahore, had been tough.

Temperatures touched 40 degrees during filming; both he and his wife, the production designer on the film, were briefly hospitalized; and the set was attacked. Much to his frustration, they also never met their heroine in person, though they spoke often. Despite its labeling by some critics as a "feminist Western", My Pure Land has only a few action scenes in it, Masud said. Ultimately it is a drama about a father's loving relationship with his daughters, he explained. "It was important to shine a light on characters and a part of the world which is very rarely accurately represented on screen," he added. Dharejo said she was "very happy" with the final film, adding that the triumphant story belongs to Sindh and Pakistan. She said: "That is an honor for me." — AFP



Mukhtiar Naz meets her daughters at her agriculture field.



Mukhtiar Naz checks a gun at her ancestral home in Qazi Ahmed.



Mukhtiar Naz meets with her workers at her agriculture field.