



**4** US blocks Kuwait-drafted statement on Gaza violence



**17** Boursa Kuwait announces second phase of market development



**29** Kim attends rare concert by South Korea pop stars



**16** Dele brace sparks Spurs delight as wait for Chelsea win ends



# 15 oil workers killed in horrific bus collision

## Amir condolences families of victims, thanks first responders

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Meshaal Al-Enezi



KUWAIT: Emergency and rescue personnel are seen at the scene of a bus crash on Wafra highway yesterday.

KUWAIT: Fifteen oil workers, most of them from the Indian subcontinent, were killed yesterday in a head-on collision between two buses on the southern Wafra highway, officials said. Seven of those killed were Indian nationals, five were Egyptians and the other three were from Pakistan, said Mohammed Al-Basri of the state-owned Kuwait Oil Company (KOC). An Indian - in critical condition - and a Kuwaiti were also injured in the accident.

Fire department spokesman Colonel Khalil Al-Amir said the victims were employees of Burgan Drilling, a private subcontractor for KOC. The fire department added that rescue teams from Kabd, Wafra, backup and KOC fire stations rushed to the scene, and the two injured men were transferred to hospital by land and air ambulances.

HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent cables of condolences to the families of the victims. The Amir also thanked policemen, firemen, Kuwait Oil Company and the health ministry in the way they dealt with the tragic accident. 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.

## Assembly panel approves tax on expat remittances

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee yesterday defied advice from the Central Bank, the government, experts and the Assembly's legal panel and approved a draft law to impose taxes on remittances by foreigners living in Kuwait. Members of the committee voted four to one in favor of the draft law, which will become legislation only if the National Assembly passes it and the government accepts it.

Rapporteur of the committee MP Saleh Ashour said the six-article bill stipulates that expatriates must pay a percentage on all their money transfers

abroad, but the proposed legislation takes into consideration low-income workers. He said that the draft law states that transfers of up to KD 99 will be taxed 1 percent, those between KD 100-299 will be charged 2 percent tax, amounts between KD 300-499 will incur a 3-percent tax, while amounts of KD 500 and above will be taxed 5 percent. This means that a person who sends home KD 1,000 will be asked to pay KD 50 in tax above the commission charged by moneychangers and banks.

Ashour said the bill proposes that the taxes will be collected by the Central Bank and paid to the finance ministry. He said the bill stipulates that all money transfers must be made through official moneychangers and banks and not through illegal channels. The law stipulates a jail term of up to five years and a fine of at least double the money transferred for those who violate the law and make the transfers through the black market. Some expatriates send their remittances through illegal channels because of speed and cheaper rates they are offered.

Ashour said the main objective of the law is to encourage expatriates to keep their money in the

country and invest it here. Head of the committee MP Salah Khorshid said the proposed bill was selected from four draft laws submitted by various groups of lawmakers. He insisted that the committee was told by the Assembly's constitutional experts that the action does not involve any constitutional suspicion and is entirely in line with the Kuwaiti constitution and laws.

Khorshid, a former commerce minister and businessman, said the government expressed reservations on the draft law because it wanted the tax to be levied on Kuwaiti citizens as well. He said that the committee rejected the government proposal and decided to impose the tax on expatriates only. The lawmaker said that in the past five years, expatriates remitted some KD 19 billion, which is a huge amount and the aim of the bill is to boost the government's non-oil revenues.

If the law goes through, it will be the first time Kuwait imposes a tax on foreign remittances and this could trigger a black market for money transfers and foreigners to start leaving the country. The law exempts transfers by foreigners related to investment protection.



KUWAIT: The National Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee meets yesterday. — KUNA

### News in brief

#### Erdogan calls Netanyahu 'terrorist'

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan accused Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday of being "a terrorist" after the Israeli prime minister rejected Ankara's "moral lessons" over deadly clashes in Gaza. "Hey Netanyahu! You are an occupier. And it is as an occupier that you are on those lands. At the same time, you are a terrorist," Erdogan said in a televised speech in Adana, southern Turkey. "What you do to the oppressed Palestinians will be part of history and we will never forget it," he said, adding: "The Israeli people are uncomfortable with what you're doing. We are not guilty of any act of occupation." The comments came after Israeli soldiers killed 16 Palestinians and wounded hundreds more on Friday when a major demonstration led to clashes along the border with the Gaza Strip. — AFP (See Page 6)

#### Cher tweets support for prince

DUBAI: American pop legend Cher has tweeted her support for a jailed Saudi Arabian royal, appealing to powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to "be kind... and let him go". Cher tweeted on March 30 that her son, Elijah, was "heartbroken" - using the broken heart emoji - over the fate of his "good friend Prince Turki bin Abdullah". Prince Turki was among more than 380 royals and businessmen rounded up in November in what authorities said was a crackdown on corruption. A son of the late King Abdullah, the prince was once the governor of the Saudi capital Riyadh. In an emoji-laden tweet, Cher urged Crown Prince Mohammed - currently on a high-profile US tour - to "be kind 2 Turki and let him go free", adding "INSHALLAH", Arabic for "God willing", and "I would speak 4 him". — AFP

## Bahrain makes largest oil and gas discovery

DUBAI: Bahrain yesterday announced it has discovered the largest oil and gas field in the history of the small kingdom, which unlike its Gulf neighbors is not energy-rich. Authorities estimate the newfound reserves at "many times" the volume of Bahrain's only other known oilfield, the state-run BNA news agency said. BNA did not give details on the size of the new light shale oil and gas find or on the expected date of the start of production.

"Initial analysis demonstrates the find is at substantial levels, capable of supporting the long-term extraction of tight oil and deep gas," Bahrain's Minister of Oil, Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa said in a statement. Manama is the smallest producer of hydrocarbons in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which also groups Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Bahrain currently has only one oilfield with several hundred million barrels of crude reserves. The field was the first to be discovered in the Gulf and the first to start production. It currently pumps around 50,000 barrels per day (bpd), in addition to over one billion cubic feet of natural gas daily. The kingdom, which raises around 80 percent of its revenues from oil, receives another 150,000 bpd from the Abu Safa oilfield which it shares with Saudi Arabia. — Agencies

## Couple sentenced to death for murder of Filipina maid found in freezer

KUWAIT: The criminal court yesterday sentenced in absentia a Lebanese man and his Syrian wife to death by hanging over the murder of a Filipina maid, a judicial source said. The court issued the sentence in the first hearing in the case of Joanna Demafelis, the 29-year-old maid whose body was found in a freezer in a flat earlier this year. The sentencing can still be appealed if the couple returns to Kuwait, the source told AFP on condition of anonymity. Philippines Ambassador Renato Pedro Villa declined to comment on the verdict, telling AFP his country would await the rendition of the convicts.

The Lebanese-Syrian couple was arrested in February in the Syrian capital Damascus following an Interpol manhunt. Syrian authorities handed the husband, Nader Essam Assaf, over to Lebanese authorities, while his Syrian wife remained in custody in Damascus. Philippines Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Sarah Arriola yesterday was scheduled to hold talks with officials in Kuwait on conditions of Filipino workers, including labor law violations.

The Demafelis murder triggered a diplomatic crisis between Kuwait and the Philippines, prompting Manila to impose a departure ban for its citizens planning to work in the state. An estimated 252,000 Filipinos and Filipinas work in Kuwait and depend on remittances to help their families back home. In the wake of the Demafelis murder, Manila has been working to facilitate the return of its nationals who wish to leave, including those who have lost their residency status.

Villa told AFP yesterday that his country has already repatriated 4,000 Filipino nationals living in Kuwait without the necessary paperwork. "We are now in talks with Kuwaiti authorities to secure an amnesty that will allow 6,000 Filipinos living without papers to return," he said. Rights groups have voiced alarm over the plight of workers in the Gulf and other Arab countries, where migrant labor is regulated under a system known as "kafala". The kafala, or sponsorship, system ties migrant workers' visas to their employers, prohibiting workers from leaving the country or changing jobs without prior consent. — AFP



BAHRAIN: Crude oil pumping units are seen at an oilfield in this file photo. — AP

# Drug addict threatens mother and sister; dad files complaint

## Kuwaitis, Lebanese and Jordanians fight in Salmiya

**KUWAIT:** A man told police that his son is an addict and represents a danger to the rest of the family. He said his son threatened his mother and sisters with a knife and demanded KD 1,000, so they gave him the money, and he left the house. The father lodged a complaint and asked police to arrest his son, who always started fights and destroyed things if he did not get what he wanted to buy drugs. The man was arrested while driving on King Fahd Road, and police found the money, drugs paraphernalia and two illicit pills with him. He was sent to concerned authorities.

### Deep stab wounds

Paramedics rushed four injured persons to hospital, including two Jordanian brothers suffering from deep stab wounds. The injuries occurred during a fight between Kuwaitis and Lebanese and Jordanians in Salmiya. Security sources said the first fight broke out in a Salmiya mall between three citizens and a group of Lebanese and Jordanian youth, during which knives were used. Police and paramedics rushed to the scene and transferred the injured to Mubarak Hospital ICU. The three citizens involved in the fight were arrested.

### Fight on 'Love Street'

Police responded to a call about a fight on "Love Street", but when police arrived, all those involved escaped, leaving the sticks they used behind. Separately, a fight broke out in a Sharq mall, but those involved escaped from the scene.

### Drug suspect nabbed

Two policemen arrested a citizen with nine envelopes of shabu and an axe. The two policemen were on a routine patrol when they saw the suspect's car parked in a remote area, so they went to check it. They

immediately realized the suspect was in an abnormal condition, so he was arrested. Policemen found nine envelopes of shabu which he said were for sale to his customers. He was taken to concerned authorities.

### Daughter's tattoo

A citizen told police her 19-year-old daughter left home following an argument. The mother was surprised when she saw a tattoo covering her daughter's entire arm. When she admonished her, the daughter retorted that what she does "is up to her alone" and that she wanted a tattoo like her

friend. Detectives are working on the case.

### Kuwaiti attempts suicide

The citizen accused of running over and killing a Pakistani attempted suicide by slashing his wrist. A security source said the suspect was being held at a Sulabiya police station awaiting an appearance at the public prosecution. The suspect went to the bathroom, then policemen heard screams, so they went to the bathroom and found the bloodied suspect. Paramedics were called in and took him to Farwaniya Hospital. — Al-Rai/Al-Anbaa

## Minister denies plans to sell TEC

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf denied any plans to sell the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) and stressed that the company is currently studying its future strategy including forming some subsidiary companies specializing in tourism. He added that the strategy has been approved by TEC's CEO and the Cabinet. Hajraf added TEC has signed 24 consultancy contracts with various specialized companies in PR, marketing, finance, development, taxation, payroll restructuring, developing the Entertainment City, the seafont, Khairan resort, airport facilities and marine clubs. Hajraf also noted that seven foreign advisors had been hired by TEC with a total of KD 34,000 in monthly salaries.

### Fuel prices lowest in GCC

Fuel prices in Kuwait remain the lowest in GCC states according to the latest prices declared at the beginning of April, said informed sources. The sources stressed that despite maintaining or reducing prices in April, fuel prices in UAE remain the highest in GCC states, followed by Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and finally Kuwait.

### Auditory bodies

Auditory bodies approved a request made by the Ministry of Information to update the TV and radio operation section and maintenance workshops at a total cost of KD 590,000. Informed sources said the approval includes supplying, installing and maintaining a new HD satellite station at a total cost of KD 398,000, in addition to supplying and installing special digital receivers at a total cost of KD 196,000.

### MP to grill Oil Minister

MP Yusef Al-Fadhalah declared his intention to grill Oil and Electricity and Water

Minister Bakheet Al-Rasheedi and Deputy PM and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh over offering a tender to supply turbines for Al-Zour power plant through direct contracts.

### Unlicensed kindergartens

MSAL has provided the Municipality with a list of unlicensed kindergartens demanding their immediate closure, said informed sources.

### 79 new-generation ambulances

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah yesterday launched 79 new-generation ambulances joining the MoH fleet. Sheikh Basel said the new vehicles are the latest and most developed that provide direct contact between paramedics onboard and doctors in the hospital to save much of the time that might be wasted on the way to hospitals and help save more lives. He added that the new ambulances are equipped with GPS devices as well as exterior support to protect patients onboard in case of traffic accidents.

## Millions suffering from autism

**KUWAIT:** Founder and Director of Kuwait Autism Center and elected President of the World Autism Organization Dr Sameera Al-Saad said on the occasion of World Autism Day that millions are suffering from autism around the world, especially after it became easier to diagnose it from the age of two. She said the global incidence is one in 88 newborns, which is very high and needs scientific, medical, educational and social responses in every country. She added that Kuwait Autism Center, which presents an integrated model of services, can be copied inside and outside Kuwait.

Saad said we need to fill the gap between theoretical knowledge of many people after the spread of awareness and the increase in the number of those who study the field of autism, and the practical requirements of sufferers themselves. She said to develop programs in many nurseries and schools that were established following the government's support of the disability authority and guaranteeing that it will present what the autistic need in the

form of accurate specialized programs, there is a dire need for trained teachers to deal with behaviors that need patience and above all unlimited love.

Saad said this is what the World Autism Organization is trying to do through the organization and sponsorship of a world conference every four years - South Africa in 2006, Mexico in 2010 and Kuwait in 2014, that was sponsored by the Amir of humanity HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The next conference will be organized in Nov 2018 in Houston in the US. The conference aims at increasing knowledge, supporting skills, theories and required training to fill the gap between the theoretical and practical in the field of autism.

Kuwait Autism Center works around the year, but in April focuses on making the society have more knowledge on autism and how to deal with it and its needs. So a series of publications were prepared and a large number is being distributed free of charge to schools participating in the Autism Day events with lectures and visits.



Dr Sameera Al-Saad



Dr. Fahad Al-Wuhaibi (left) and Dr. Sultan Al-Duwaish



**KUWAIT:** The Kuwaiti survey and excavation team of the Department of Antiquities and Museums is currently on an excavation mission in various locations around Kuwait to find various ancient communities' graves and to study the burial rituals each followed. Dr Sultan Al-Duwaish said that excavations are in progress South East of Kuwait near the Khairan area. 12 rock formations had been discovered by the team.

### Bayt.com Job Index

## Skills most sought by Kuwait's firms

**KUWAIT:** The latest installation of the bi-annual Bayt.com Middle East Job Index Survey reveals a positive outlook for the job market in Kuwait. The survey found that a large majority (92%) of Kuwait companies intend to hire new people in the next year, with more than four in five (82%) saying they will be hiring in the next three months. What's more, nearly three quarters (74%) of working respondents in Kuwait claim that their company has hired new employees in the last 12 months. The Bayt.com Job Index, released bi-annually and conducted by Bayt.com, the Middle East's #1 job site, and global online market research company, YouGov, is an in-depth study that tracks job availability and hiring trends in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) market and provides an understanding of the required skills and qualifications in the region.

### Jobs in three months

For Kuwait companies looking to hire in the next three months, seven in ten (70%) say they will be hiring for 'up to 20 jobs', while 20% say they will be hiring for more than 20 jobs, and the remainder are unsure how many jobs they will be hiring for in the short term. In Kuwait, the greatest demand in the coming three months will be for 'junior executives' (51%), 'executives' (30%), 'coordinators' (28%), 'managers' (23%), and 'senior executives' (21%). Regarding the specific roles Kuwait companies are looking to fill in the next three months, the most common positions are 'project manager' (18%), 'accountant' (16%), 'mechanical engineer' (15%), and 'customer service representative' (15%).

Across the region, 'small/medium local companies' in the private sector took the leading spot in terms of hiring potential, where 76% of them said they will be hiring. Meanwhile, industries that are most likely to hire are: 'Consumer Goods/FMCG' (81% are planning to hire),

'Real Estate/Construction/Property Development' (80%), and 'Hospitality/ Recreation/Entertainment' (78%).

### Jobs in next 12 months

Regionally, 'small/ medium local companies' as well as 'multinational companies' seem to have the highest hiring potential in the long term, where 89% of them said they will be hiring in the next year. In regard to specific industries that have the strongest hiring plans for the next 12 months, 'Business Consultancy/ Business Management' (97% are planning to hire), 'Consumer Goods/ FMCG' (95% are planning to hire), 'Hospitality/ Recreation/ Entertainment' (94% are planning to hire), 'Banking/ Finance' (93% are planning to hire), and 'Commerce/ Retail/ Trade' (92% are planning to hire) were the top five.

### What's in Demand

In terms of candidates' skills that are in demand this year, communication was key for companies across the region. In Kuwait, good 'communication skills in Arabic and English' emerged as a top skill to look for in a candidate for 79% of employers, with 51% saying being a 'team player/cooperative/helpful/flexible' is a top skill. These were followed by 'ability to work under pressure' (45%), 'ability to take on new challenges' (41%), a 'desire to make a difference' (40%), and 'good leadership skills' (40%).

Regarding educational and academic qualifications, 'business management' (36%) emerged as the most sought-after qualification, followed by 'engineering' (23%), 'commerce' (16%), 'administrative qualifications' (16%), and 'computer science qualifications' (15%). For employers looking to hire in Kuwait, nearly three in ten (29%) say they are looking for 'sales and marketing' experience, with just over a quarter (27%) seeking 'managerial' experience and another quarter (25%) seeking 'mid-level experience between 3 and 7 years'. Meanwhile, just over a fifth (21%) are looking for candidates with 'IT/computer' experience, another fifth (21%) are looking for candidates with 'junior level experience of less than three years', and yet another fifth (21%) are looking for candidates with 'senior level experience between 7 and 10 years'.

Local

# Ministers examine recommendation by the Economic Affairs Commission

## Government names new head for Silk City Authority



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah presides over the Cabinet's weekly meeting yesterday. — KUNA

KUWAIT: The Cabinet held its regular weekly session yesterday at Bayan Palace presided by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Following the session, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh stated that the ministers at the session's onset welcomed the president of the Comoros, due to arrive in the country today.

The ministers examined a recommendation by the Economic Affairs Commission with respect of the document about Kuwait strategy for sustainable energy security and decided to assign the Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water to form a panel for implementing the document in two sections: diversifying resources and rationing consumption. A report should be submitted to

the cabinet every three months about the task results.

The executives examined recommendations by the legal affairs panel approving a bill with respect to aviation cooperation between the Directorate General of Civil Aviation with the British Civil Aviation Authority, a separate bill on a cooperation memo with Serbia in the oil and gas fields, another one concerning a memo for technological, information and transport cooperation with Iraq, in addition to another one about cooperation with Mexico in sports as well as a MoU with Turkey in sports in addition to a final memo for cultural and technical cooperation with Albania.

They endorsed the bills and referred them to His Highness the Amir. Then, the ministers went through a recommendation by the public services commission

regarding visual display, presented by the Public Institution for Social Security (PISS) with respect to Kuwait Medical City. They tasked the PISS with studying the project and reporting back to the council of ministers in two weeks. Meanwhile, they mourned Hashem Al-Rifaei who had passed away noting his achievements at various levels.

The Cabinet also approved a bill appointing Faisal Al-Medlej as head of the apparatus for developing the planned Silk City and Boubyan Island, succeeding Abdulaziz Al-Ibrahim, who had tendered his resignation.

### Chief lawmaker grateful

In another development, Kuwait's top lawmaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim said yesterday that he was pro-

foundly thankful to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his determination to protect the nation's best interests. "I sincerely thank His Highness the Amir, along with 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 for their supportive messages," Al-Ghanim told a press conference in parliament. Al-Ghanim spoke proudly of his country's diplomatic action to endorse the Palestinians' inalienable rights over the holy city of Jerusalem, noting that such shrewd diplomacy would be used in response to Israel's transgressions. He went on to applaud Kuwaiti diplomats abroad for their unbridled dedication to protecting their country's reputation. — Agencies

## Officials meet to discuss domestic help issues

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Relations and Security Information Department at the Interior Ministry said Director General of Residency Affairs Maj Gen Talal Marafi held a meeting with the chairman and board members of the Domestic Help Offices Association in the presence of Assistant Director General for Residency Affairs Maj Gen Abdullah

Al-Hajiri, Director Of The Central Department for Entry and Exit Procedures Col Hamad Al-Tuwah and Assistant Director of the Domestic Help Department Sukaina Ghuloum. The meeting discussed obstacles and demands of DHOA and how to simplify domestic help transactions.

Maarafi said the board of DHOA will meet with the foreign ministry to discuss the issue of bringing in domestic help. He added that there is no objection to bring in domestic help from countries that do not have embassies in Kuwait provided that the passport of the helper is valid for more than three years. Maarafi lauded the coordination between DHOA board of directors and the residency affairs department to find practical solutions for domestic help problems.



## Kuwait exports increased 22.1%

KUWAIT: Kuwait's exports in January 2018 were in the range of KD 1,755 million (\$5.6 billion) - with a 22.1% increase. Imports stood at KD 955 million (\$3.1 billion) with a 7.0 percent increase compared with January 2017, according to Kuwait Central Statistical Bureau. Also in January 2018, balance of trade was KD 800 million (\$2.6 billion), while it was KD 545 million (\$1.8 billion) in January 2017 with a 46.8% increase. In the same month, volume of trade increased 16.3% compared with January 2017. Trade of volume was KD 2,710 million (approx six million dollars) in January 2018 while it was KD 2,329 million in January 2017.

Coverage rate was 183.8% in January 2018, while it was 161.1% in January 2017. In January 2018, coverage rate (excluding oil) was 17.8% while it was 16.6% in January 2017. Mineral fuels and oil were forefront in exports according to chapters for January 2018, the top categories for exports were "mineral fuels and oils" (KD 1,585 million, approx USD five million) with share of 90.3% and then "Organic chemicals" (KD 55.3 million, approx \$16 billion) 3.2%, "Plastics and articles thereof" (KD 29.3 million, approx \$96 million) 1.7%.

Electrical Machinery and Equipment were forefront in imports.

### Food security system

Meanwhile, the Chairman and General Director of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah has stressed on the keenness to develop the authority and update its activities to improve the agricultural, animal and fish sectors so as to achieve sustainable development and food security. In a statement yesterday, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousef expressed sincere thanks and appreciation for his assumption of the position. Since the founding of the authority in 1983, the authority has been a cornerstone in the society for its important role in achieving Kuwait's food security system.

The authority contributes in the national economy by supervising on the sectors that occupy a large segment of society, he added. He pointed out that he will do his utmost to enrich the authority's march, increase its productivity and raise the level of awareness to preserve natural resources, provide aid and assistance to all and support small projects with agricultural activity, in addition to work to solve problems and overcome the obstacles that delay the growth of the authority and limit its achievements. — Agencies

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Photo shows the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Center (JACC). The Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Centre is a multidisciplinary public space. JACC provides a space for dialogue to share and showcase skills and knowledge, giving younger voices a forum in which to speak. The cultural centre is a platform for educational and cultural exchange; moreover, it functions as an influential entertainment and culture powerhouse and productive space for the region.—KUNA

# Kuwait-drafted statement blocked by UNSC member

## Arab countries denounce Gaza massacre

**NEW YORK:** Kuwait, promptly responding to the incidents on the eastern borders of Gaza Strip, circulated a draft press statement to the UN Security Council members yesterday but the draft was blocked. The Kuwaiti mission to the UN demanded an urgent session by the Council and started lobbying for a consensus among the 15 members of the Council.

The Council convened last night and Kuwaiti mission tabled a balanced statement, but regrettably a member of the Council opposed it, diplomats said. Kuwait has been

keen on tabling a balanced draft that could reflect a single stance by the Council and win backing from all Council members, they pointed out. Though the statement was unreflective of Kuwait's firm support to the Palestinian people and worded in a way that could suit the stances of all members. It was opposed by a Council member, and - thereby blocked.

Kuwait and the other Arab countries, supportive of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, strongly denounced the massacre committed by the Israeli forces

against the Palestinians. However, a member of the Council blocked the draft of which KUNA received a copy. The draft press statement expressed grave concern of the Security Council at the situation at the border of Gaza, reaffirmed right to peaceful protest and expressed sorrow at loss of innocent Palestinian lives.

It called for an independent and transparent investigation into these incidents, urged respect for international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including protection of civilians. The draft called upon all

sides to exercise restraint and prevent a further escalation, asserted need to promote the prospects for a Middle East peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians, based on the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

It noted that Acting Under Secretary General for Political Affairs, Taye-Brook Zerihoun, briefed the council on the situation at the border of Gaza, where Israeli forces killed at least 16 Palestinians and injured over 1,400 others.—KUNA

## KIB sponsors 'Made in Kuwait 2' Expo

**KUWAIT:** Under the umbrella of its all-encompassing social responsibility program, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) offered its support and sponsorship to the 'Made in Kuwait 2' Exhibition, which was recently held at the Avenues Mall. The three-day exhibition saw the participation of a large number of talented Kuwaiti youth spearheading various small and medium sized businesses.

Addressing KIB's participation in the exhibition, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at the Bank, said: "Our sponsorship of this exhibition in its second edition comes as part of our continued efforts to remain dedicated supporters of national development - and all programs that promote it. It is also in line with our mission to support Kuwaiti youth, local startups, Kuwaiti-bred small and medium sized businesses and locally-made products." He further added: "We have always sought to encourage national industry and local businesses, for there is no doubt that a more advanced industrial sector reflects positively on national development and the overall economic welfare of our country."



Najia was quick to point out that 'Made in Kuwait' serves as a hugely positive addition to the efforts being made to advance the industrial sector in Kuwait. He also noted that the exhibition showcases the importance of locally-made products: which serve as a high-quality, competitively-priced alternative to all other products available on the market. It serves to note that KIB's sponsorship of the 'Made in Kuwait 2' Exhibition comes in line with the Bank's comprehensive social responsibility program. Through this program, the Bank continuously seeks to participate in and support a wide array of national youth programs and initiatives, aiming to encourage aspiring young talents and achieve real positive social impact.



## Food and nutrition inspectors issue warning notices

By Meshal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Capital and Farwaniya food and nutrition inspectors filed 18 citations and issued eight warning notices while inspecting foodstuff stores and restaurants in Farwaniya and Riggae. Farwaniya inspectors' manager Sattam Al-Sehali said that his team filed 16 citations including for allowing workers without health certificates to handle food, hiring such workers and violating cleanliness conditions. Capital inspectors' manager Salman Al-Otaibi said his inspectors filed two citations and issued four warning notices while inspecting stores in Shuwaikh industrial area and Mubarakiya.

### Support local products

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Assistant Undersecretary for Cooperation Affairs Abdulaziz Shuaib stressed that the ministry fully supports local products, Kuwaiti youth, needy families and entrepreneurs in various co-ops. Speaking on the sidelines of opening the small projects and productive families exhibition at Saad Al-Abdullah Co-op, Shuaib said a special team with elements from MSAL, the Cooperative Societies Union, Wafer Company, the Agricultural Products Company, Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources and the Ministry of Commerce has been formed to discuss direct vegetable and fruit purchase decisions. He added that the exhibition has 40 booths.

Commenting on co-op activities, Shuaib said co-ops with the highest net profits, shareholders' profits and rate of supporting entrepreneurs will be honored by the ministry. Saad Al-Abdullah Co-op board chairman Fawwaz Al-Mutairi said the co-op provides full support to entrepreneurs and productive families exhibitions to serve the area's residents. He added that the exhibition is for a month and will be extended during Ramadan.

### MoH mega projects

Health Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs Dr Majeda Al-Qattan said the ministry is keen on enrolling the private sector into contributing in executing mega projects in progress such as Jaber Hospital, the nine medical towers and new hospitals being built in collaboration with other ministries. Speaking on opening the 9th Kuwait Health Conference (Medikia) on behalf of Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah, Qattan stressed that participation of specialized companies in the conference will encourage more participation in mega medical projects, which reflect the government's keenness and seriousness in executing the development plan blessed by HH the Amir. Qattan added that Medikia is a forum for local and international medical companies displaying the latest in medical facilities' design, construction, equipment and management, which is needed to develop Kuwait's medical infrastructure as per the state's development plan.

### Missing photographer

Lawyer Ali Al-Ali, the attorney hired by the family of missing photographer Sabah Al-Jandail, said he filed a complaint with the public prosecutor after getting new evidence that his client was kidnapped and killed by his companions. He added that he demanded a full investigation in this regard.

### Special symposiums

The research and studies manager at the Ministry of State For Youth Affairs Nasser Al-Shaikh said the ministry is in the process of developing its policies towards the youth and called for combining all related bodies' efforts to empower Kuwaiti youth according to well-defined plans in education, employment, creativity, security, culture and all developmental elements. Accordingly, Shaikh invited all concerned parties to take part in special symposiums to be held at Shaheed Park on April 3, 4 and 9 from 5 to 8 pm to discuss those strategies.

### Allocating land plots

Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan yesterday witnessed signing an agreement with the Small and Medium Enterprises Fund and Public Authority for Industry to allocate land plots in Saffareen and Ardhiya industrial area for entrepreneurs.

Local

# Agility supports more than 480 Syrian refugee families

## Employees participate in collection drive in partnership with UNHCR

**KUWAIT:** Agility, a leading global logistics provider, has concluded an internal fundraising initiative to support the activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). For the second year in a row, Agility employees in 28 countries donated to the month-long fundraising campaign, and Agility matched all employee contributions. Over 2017 and 2018, Agility has helped more than 480 Syrian refugee families - approximately 2,400 people.

All funds raised will be channeled through UNHCR to support its cash assistance program helping most vulnerable refugee families living in Jordan. Through the innovative iris scan technology employed by UNHCR, families receive monthly cash distributions, with donations delivered directly to recipient families through ATM machines. Jordan is among the first countries in the world to use iris scanning technology enabling refugees to access funds made available by UNHCR, without the need for a bank card or PIN code. Cash assistance programs have proved to be one of the most cost-effective ways to deliver aid, and also have the double benefit of supporting the local economy in Jordan's urban environment.

Ali Mikail, Senior Vice President, Agility GIL Kuwait and Levant said, "At Agility, we work with customers, employees, industry partners and non-governmental organizations to do our part in ensuring a more sustainable future. We are strongly committed to social responsibility activities where we believe in their importance and impact on society and we understand the role our company has in supporting people in need. Refugees are people who need assistance and we're glad to partner with organizations like UNHCR to provide displaced people with the needed support."

UNHCR is dedicated to the protection of refugees and forcibly displaced individuals, and to ensure everybody has the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge, having fled violence,

persecution, war or disaster at home. UNHCR helps save lives and build better futures for millions forced from home, by offering assistance and durable solutions in emergencies and crises. UNHCR and partners provide refugees and other persons of concern with a network of services including shelter, clean water, sanitation and healthcare, as well as cash based interventions to the most vulnerable.

Dr Hanan Hamdan, Head of UNHCR Office in Kuwait, said, "We thank Agility and its employees for their contribution and support to our humanitarian operations in Jordan. This initiative comes as an extension to the partnership between UNHCR and the Kuwaiti private sector, well known for its response to humanitarian crises around the world. Agility's contribution will help alleviate the challenges many refugees in Jordan face."

Agility has a globally recognized corporate social responsibility (CSR) program, covering humanitarian logistics, community volunteerism, fair labor and environmental sustainability. Agility's humanitarian logistics program has supported humanitarian partners, including the United Nations World Food Program, in more than 50 pro-bono projects related to natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies. Since 2006, Agility has completed more than 1,700 community education, health or environment projects affecting more than one million people in 80 countries, including the construction or refurbishment of 38 schools in 18 countries.

In addition, Agility has trained more than 10,000 employees on the company's fair labor policies and practices in 15 countries. Agility has received a silver rating from EcoVadis, an independent supplier sustainability rating agency, and the CSR program is ranked in the top 9% of the supply chain & transportation industry. To find out more about Agility's corporate social responsibility activities, please visit the company's CSR page [www.agility.com/EN/csr](http://www.agility.com/EN/csr).



**KUWAIT:** Syrian refugee Ghareeb and his family are pictured outside their shelter at Zaatari refugee camp, Mafraq Governorate, Jordan.

## Kuwait distributes food packages to Iraqi families

**BAGHDAD:** The United Iraqi Medical Association for Relief and Development, the liaison of the Kuwaiti Society for Relief, has begun distributing a large number of food baskets to

families returning to Kirkuk province, north of Baghdad. Ahmad Al-Heiti, head of the Iraqi association, told KUNA that 1,025 food baskets were distributed to those families, within the framework of the "Kuwait by your side" campaign. He added that about 5,000 food packages will be doled out to the families over four days in a row. Every basket is 30 kgs and includes rice, sugar, tea, flour, oil and basic needs, he noted. The campaign offered support to displaced families over the last period that included the distribution of aid and the building of schools and medical centers. —KUNA



**Kuwait distributes food packages to families returning to Kirkuk. —KUNA**



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Painful home coming in battle-torn Marawi

## Congo migrants claim life better, safer in Rwanda

Page 9

Page 8



GAZA CITY: Palestinian Christian youth carry a cross as they attend Easter prayers at the Church of Saint Porphyrius. —AFP

# Israel rejects probe of Gaza violence

## The bloodiest day in the conflict since 2014 war

**JERUSALEM:** Israel rejected calls for an independent probe yesterday after its soldiers killed 16 Palestinians and wounded hundreds more when a major demonstration led to clashes along the border with the Gaza Strip. Israel's military has faced questions from rights groups over its use of live fire on Friday, the bloodiest day in the conflict since a 2014 war, while Palestinians accuse soldiers of firing on protesters posing no threat.

Both UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and EU diplomatic chief Federica Mogherini have called for an independent investigation. On Saturday, the United States blocked a draft UN Security Council statement urging restraint and calling for an investigation of the violence, diplomats said. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised soldiers' actions for "guarding the country's borders," while Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman said the protests were not a "Woodstock festival".

Lieberman said calls for an independent investigation were hypocritical and on Sunday repeated his rejection of such an investigation. "There will be no commission of inquiry," he told Israel's public radio. "There will be no such thing here. We shall not cooperate with any commission of inquiry."

Netanyahu also hit back at Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan over his sharp criticism of what he called Israel's "inhumane attack" in Gaza. "The most moral army in the world will not be lectured to on morality from someone

who for years has been bombing civilians indiscriminately," Netanyahu tweeted. He has previously labeled Erdogan as someone who "bombs Kurdish villagers".

### 'Hard to believe'

On Friday Israeli troops opened fire on Palestinians who strayed from a main protest camp attended by tens of thousands and approached the heavily fortified fence cutting off the blockaded Gaza Strip. The military has defended the soldiers' action and said they opened fire only when necessary against those throwing stones and firebombs or rolling tires at soldiers.

It said there were attempts to damage the fence and infiltrate Israel, while alleging there was also an attempted gun attack against soldiers along the border. Israel accuses Hamas, the Islamist group that runs Gaza and with whom it has fought three wars since 2008, of using the protest as cover to carry out violence. In addition to the 16 Palestinians killed, more than 1,400 were wounded Friday,

758 of them by live fire, with the remainder hurt by rubber bullets and tear gas inhalation, the health ministry in Gaza said. No casualties were reported among Israelis.

The armed wing of Hamas said five of those killed were its members who were participating "in popular events side-by-side with their people". The Israeli army alleges 10 of the dead had "documented terror backgrounds" in Hamas and other groups and were killed "whilst carrying out acts of terror". Unverified videos being shared online have fuelled the debate, including one appearing to show a protester running with a tyre being shot while seeming to pose no threat.

Israel's army has issued a statement saying footage is being "edited and fabricated," without referring to specific videos. Rights groups including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have criticized Israel's use of live fire. Israel had deployed troop reinforcements along the border, including more than 100 special forces snipers, saying it would prevent attempts to break through the fence. "While some Palestinian demonstrators have

thrown stones and other objects towards the fence, it's hard to believe how this would be an imminent danger to the lives of well-equipped soldiers protected by snipers, tanks and drones," Amnesty said.

### More protests ahead

The protest, which includes tents erected at various areas, is designed to last six weeks, ending around the time the United States moves its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in mid-May. The embassy move has deeply angered the Palestinians, who see Jerusalem's annexed eastern sector as the capital of their future state. But while tens of thousands attended Friday's start of the protests, demonstrations have since dwindled. Several hundred attended on Saturday, while on Sunday dozens milled around protest tents.

The protests may however again see large crowds after Friday's main Muslim prayers and for upcoming key dates. May 14 will mark 70 years since the creation of Israel and is when the United States is expected to open its new Jerusalem embassy. Palestinians will mark what they call the Nakba, or "catastrophe," the following day. The Nakba commemorates the more than 700,000 Palestinians who either fled or were expelled from their homes in the war surrounding Israel's creation in 1948. Gaza's protest is in support of refugees, including those in the Palestinian enclave who want to return to their former homes in what is now Israel. —AFP



## Netanyahu hits back at Erdogan's comments

International and Human Rights Watch have criticized Israel's use of live fire. Israel had deployed troop reinforcements along the border, including more than 100 special forces snipers, saying it would prevent attempts to break through the fence. "While some Palestinian demonstrators have

## 'Final evacuation deal' reached for Ghouta

**DOUMA:** A final deal has been reached for fighters and civilians to leave the last opposition-held pocket of Eastern Ghouta, a monitor said yesterday, paving the way for Syria's regime to retake the onetime rebel enclave near Damascus. The deal brokered by regime ally Russia would see fighters with the Jaish Al-Islam rebel faction leave Ghouta's main town of Douma for opposition-held territory in northern Syria, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

There was no immediate confirmation from the rebels, but pro-regime newspaper Al-Watan quoted "diplomatic sources" as saying the agreement would see fighters give up heavy weapons and leave Douma for northern Syria. The retaking of Eastern Ghouta would mark a major milestone in President Bashar Al-Assad's efforts to regain control of territory seized by rebel factions during Syria's seven-year civil war. Backed by Russia, Assad's forces have scored a series of victories over rebel forces in recent years, often through campaigns of siege, aerial bombardment and ground offensives that have drawn widespread international condemnation.

The Observatory, a Britain-based monitoring group, said yesterday's deal provides for Jaish Al-Islam fighters and their families, as well as civilians who want, to be evacuated to rebel-held areas in the northern province of Aleppo. These include the areas of Jarabulus and Al-Bab, which are largely held by pro-Turkey rebels, it said. It will also see Russian military police enter the town and government institutions return to the area, the monitor said.

### 'End to carnage'

Regime forces had already retaken more than 95 percent of Eastern Ghouta in a six-week air and ground blitz that has killed hundreds of civilians and forced tens of thousands from their homes. Yesterday, Pope Francis called for an end to "carnage" in Syria in his Easter message. "Today we implore fruits of peace upon the entire world, beginning with the beloved and long-suffering land of Syria," the pontiff said.

Syria's conflict has killed more than 350,000 people since 2011, and spiraled into a complex war involving world powers. Appealing to the "consciences of all political and military leaders," Francis urged "that a swift end may be brought to the carnage". Successive evacuation deals were reached with rebel forces in parts of the enclave, with more than 45,000 fighters and civilians bussed out in recent weeks, according to an AFP tally of figures provided by state news

agency SANA.

More than 4,000 people left the devastated town of Harasta last week under a deal with the Ahrar Al-Sham rebel group. And more than 41,000 evacuated a southern pocket including the town of Arbin this week under another deal with the Faylaq Al-Rahman opposition faction. Tens of thousands of other civilians have fled to regime-held territory. Earlier yesterday an agreement had been reached with civil authorities in Douma for hundreds of civilians to leave for Idlib, a northwestern province still largely outside regime control, the Observatory said.

### 'Choice of dying or leaving'

A civilian committee taking part in the negotiations with Russia said a deal had been reached "to evacuate humanitarian cases to northern Syria". It gave no further details nor did it say when the planned evacuations would start. The Observatory said evacuations were underway under that deal with civilians-including the sick or wounded, or family members of the Faylaq Al-Rahman rebel group-to head towards Idlib.

Talks with Jaish Al-Islam for the evacuation of Douma had dragged on for several days, with residents growing nervous. "Of course I would rather leave. There are no more homes here, not a single place to settle," said Abu Rateb, 30. "But I won't go to regime-held areas to join ranks with the Syrian army," he said, adding he would prefer



A handout picture released by the official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) shows buses waiting to take members of the opposition evacuated from the rebel-held city of Douma in the Ghouta region. —AFP

to go to Idlib. Haitham, 38, a media activist who did not give his surname, said he would rather stay in his hometown.

"To abandon your home is to abandon your soul," he said. "But if they give us the choice of dying or leaving, it will be another matter." Syria's army had on Saturday vowed

to finish off rebels in Douma. A statement said the military would press on with "fighting in the area of Douma to rid it of terrorism", in reference to the rebels. The regime assault since February 18 has killed more than 1,600 civilians, the Observatory says, and devastated entire neighborhoods. —AFP

International

# Pope urges end to 'carnage' in Syria in Easter message

## Appealing to the 'consciences of all political and military leaders'

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis yesterday called for an end to "carnage" in Syria and "reconciliation" in the Middle East in his traditional Easter message. "Today we implore fruits of peace upon the entire world, beginning with the beloved and long-suffering land of Syria," the pontiff said in the "Urbi et Orbi" (To the City and the World) address.

Appealing to the "consciences of all political and military leaders," Francis urged "that a swift end may be brought to the carnage" in Syria as 80,000 pilgrims listened in St Peter's Square and millions watched the speech broadcast live around the world. The head of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics asked that "provisions be made to facilitate access to the aid so urgently needed by our brothers and sisters, while also ensuring fitting conditions for the return of the displaced" to Syria.

As he spoke, a final deal was reportedly reached for fighters and civilians to leave the last opposition-held pocket of Eastern Ghouta. That would mark a major milestone in Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's efforts to regain control of territory seized by rebel factions during the seven-year civil war which has left some 350,000 dead and displaced millions.

The 81-year-old Francis said the Holy Land was "also experiencing... the wounds of ongoing conflict that do not spare the defenseless", singling out the conflict in Yemen where some 10,000 people have died since March 2015.

Francis then prayed for the "fruits of dialogue for the Korean peninsula" and that the "discussions under way may advance peace and harmony within the region".

“Conflict do not spare the defenseless”

### 'Relationships of trust'

"May those who are directly responsible act with wisdom and discernment to promote the good of the Korean people and to build relationships of trust within the international community," the Argentine pope said. February's Winter Olympics triggered a fast-moving rapprochement that will see the North's Kim Jong Un sit down with the South's President Moon Jae-in in late April, with a US summit with President Donald Trump planned for May.

Francis also spoke of "hunger, endemic conflict and terrorism" in Africa, calling for dialogue and mutual understanding in strife-torn DR Congo and South Sudan. Earlier yesterday, the pontiff celebrated Easter mass in the flower-bedecked square, which was under tight security. Tourists and clergy alike formed long queues to have their belongings checked and pass through metal detectors to access the mass on the holiest day in the Christian calendar, marking Jesus's resurrection.

"Rome is the centre of the Catholic faith," anti-terror prosecutor Federico Cafiero de Raho said Saturday. "For those who believe in the radical form of holy war, Rome represents so many things put together—there's the pope, the Vatican..." Italian authorities are concerned that some of the estimated 120 radicalized Italians who left for Syria or Iraq to fight with jihadist groups could be returning to the country posing as migrants. Last week saw a wave of anti-terror arrests, with Interior Minister Marco Minniti warning of a high risk of an attack. —AFP



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis greets the crowd at St Peter's square after the Easter Sunday Mass. —AFP

## Christians mark Easter at Jerusalem's Holy Sepulchre

JERUSALEM: Hundreds of pilgrims filled into Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre—believed to be the site of Jesus's resurrection—for Easter celebrations yesterday. Western Christians marked Easter yesterday, while eastern Orthodox Christians do so on April 8. The eastern Orthodox marked Palm Sunday yesterday and also held mass at the church in Jerusalem's Old City, with worshippers holding palm fronds as is tradition.

Some worshippers prostrated over a stone—where they believe Jesus's body was anointed before his burial—near the towering wooden doors at the entrance to the church. The church is built at the site where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected. A recently

renovated ornate shrine within the church surrounds the cave where Jesus is believed to have been buried.

Easter marks the day when Christians believe the miracle of his resurrection occurred. Catholic Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa held mass at the church yesterday morning near the shrine over the cave, entering dressed in the traditional purple Easter robe. He made reference to the Middle East's numerous conflicts in his homily, saying "our times are marked by death".

"Easter is the ability to come back and look at our history in the light of the promise of life that takes place today," he said. "Yes, today, at Easter, we announce a life that death can no more extinguish." On Friday, Christians traced the route of the Stations of the Cross through the Old City, which pass through the traditional sites of Jesus's condemnation up to his crucifixion.

In March 2017, renovations to the 19th-century shrine covering Jesus's tomb were unveiled following a \$3.7 million project that restored its stones to their original reddish-yellow and reinforced the heavily visited site. The Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Roman Catholic denominations share custody of the church, but disputes between the three had led to renovations being delayed for decades. —AFP



JERUSALEM: The head of the Roman Catholic Church in the Holy Land, Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate Pierbattista Pizzaballa leads the Easter Sunday procession yesterday, 2018 at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. —AFP

## Religion vs rights splits Costa Rica's presidential election

SAN JOSE: Polling stations across Costa Rica opened early yesterday for a presidential election that has split the country between an ultra-conservative evangelical preacher who slams gay rights and a former minister from the center-left ruling party. The result will decide who rules the small Central American nation of five million people for the next four years.

Pre-vote surveys suggest a neck-and-neck race between Fabricio Alvarado, a right-wing 43-year-old preacher, journalist and singer, and Carlos Alvarado (no relation), a 38-year-old former journalist who was a labor minister in the outgoing government.

Fabricio Alvarado surged from nowhere in the first round of the election held in February, triumphing over a field of 13 candidates by fiercely criticizing gay marriage. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights in January urged the recognition of same-sex marriages, setting off a polarizing debate in Costa Rica. The country is both socially conservative and proud of its progressive human rights record.

### A 'photo finish'?

Carlos Alvarado, in contrast, ran on a broad campaign to tackle the priorities identified by his Citizens' Action Party, which has been in power since 2014 under outgoing President Luis Guillermo Solis. Those issues include reining in a steadily climbing deficit, boosting education and upholding ecological standards.

In the first round, the preacher won 25 percent of the ballots against 22 percent for the former labor minister—both well short of the 40 percent required to avoid a run-off. The last pre-election survey in March suggested a very tight election: Fabricio Alvarado was credited with 43 percent support against 42 percent for Carlos Alvarado. "Neither of the two candidates motivates me sufficiently to give my support," the head of the small Liberal Progressive Party, Eli Feinzaig, wrote on his social media accounts.

"But, ultimately, one of them has done enough to earn my clear and unequivocal repudiation," he said, declaring he would vote for Carlos Alvarado. Winning over undecided or ambivalent voters was key for the candidates. "The population still isn't clear on what development model it wants," a political analyst from the Latin American Social Sciences Institute, Gustavo Araya, said.

"This is a photo finish. It isn't statistically clear who will be the victor between these opposing platforms," he said. Some 3.3 million voters were being called to decide the election. Polling was taking place on Easter Sunday, at the end of a four-day holiday weekend. Roads back to the capital San Jose were choked as many voters drove back home to cast their ballots. —AFP

## Protests continue over cop killing in California

SACRAMENTO: About 200 people demonstrated in Sacramento on Saturday to protest the fatal police shooting of Stephon Clark, in the latest of nearly two weeks of rallies since the unarmed black man was

gunned down in his grandmother's yard. Another vigil with about 150 people was held on Saturday night, and a protester was hit by a Sacramento sheriff's vehicle, according to a video posted on the internet and the Sacramento Bee newspaper.

The newspaper said the protester was taken to a hospital by the fire department and later released with bruises. The sheriff's office said in a statement early yesterday that protesters were yelling and kicking the

patrol car. "The collision occurred while the patrol vehicle was traveling at slow speeds," it said.

The statement also said that the patrol car was damaged with dents and a shattered rear window from the protesters. The California Highway Patrol and the sheriff's office are investigating the incident. Saturday's demonstration brought together a multi-racial crowd, many holding signs such as "Stop Police Rage" and "Power to the People". —AFP



**Kuwait Journalist Association will organize the annual Umrah trip to (holy Makkah) for Association members and their families for four days from 9 Sha'aban 1439 AH corresponding to April 25, until Saturday April 28, 2018.**

- Registration will be open until Thursday 12 / 4 for non-Kuwaitis and Thursday 19th for Kuwaitis.

- **The cost for KJA member:**

- 1- Double or triple room: KD 213 per person.
- 2- Single room: KD 293 per person.

**Cost for companion of non KJA members:**

- 1- Double or triple room: KD 313 per person.
- 2- Single room: KD 393 per person.

- The trip includes an airline economy (Kuwait - Jeddah - Kuwait) ticket + stay at Dar Al-Tawheed hotel in Makkah + meals + transfer from and to airport + exit fees.

- For colleagues who wish to visit Madinah a bus will be provided that will leave Thursday 26 / 4 morning and will return the same day evening.

- The member will not be considered registered until after filling the form and make full payment, and bring a photocopy of the passport or civil ID that must be valid for six months at least as for non Kuwaitis they must bring the original passport with residency permit that should be both valid for at least six months and a valid Umrah visa.

- For more information call KJA Secretariat at:  
**24841033 - 24843351 - 99202402**

- Secretariat hours are 9:00 am - 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm.  
Friday and Saturday are holidays.

- Priority is according to registration.

**Temporary address of KJA: Industrial Shuwaikh, Sahafa Street, Al-Balagh Magazine Bldg. second floor, lot 75, in front of Khaldiya area.**

## International

# Painful homecoming for residents in Philippines' battle-torn Marawi

## 'I have become a beggar, asking my relatives for things to eat'

**MARAWI:** After fleeing for their lives nearly a year ago, some residents of the battle-scarred Philippine city of Marawi were allowed back yesterday for the first time to dig through the rubble that was once their homes. Swathes of the southern city were destroyed in five months of house-to-house fighting between troops and jihadists loyal to the Islamic State group that killed nearly 1,200.

The stunned and tearful residents, who once lived in what became the main battle zone, had not been allowed home until now due to fears of unexploded bombs still buried in the ruins. Authorities finally relented as rebuilding plans are moving forward, which will likely result in many of the worst-hit areas being razed.

Yesterday some 7,000 residents returned, digging charred furniture and broken toys from the rubble left by the battles that broke out in May 2017. "I cried in anger, pain," Samsida Mangcol, 44, said of the moment she saw what was left of her bridal boutique, which now has "I love ISIS" spray-painted across one its walls.

"I used to rent out clothes but now I have become a beggar, asking my relatives for things to eat and wear," the mother-of-three said as she caressed a ruined wedding gown. Marawi on Mindanao island, the principal Islamic city in the mainly Catholic Philippines, was besieged by hundreds of local and foreign gunmen waving black IS flags who attacked it in what authorities said was an attempt to establish a Southeast Asian base.



### Stunned and tearful residents

#### 'We crawled in fear'

Over the course of the next month other groups of residents will be allowed to return for up to three days each, to view their old homes and salvage what they can before rebuilding starts. Yesterday's group walked forlornly through streets littered with rubble, twisted metal and the skeletons of bullet-riddled cars. "Our house was still new when we left it. We had prepared everything for Ramadan (the Islamic fasting month)," said Maimona Ambola, a 44-year-old mother of seven. "A bomb has destroyed it all. Our bed has turned into ashes."

The battle, which ended in October, was the biggest security crisis under firebrand President Rodrigo Duterte. The destruction was similar to that inflicted on Aleppo or Mosul, military and local officials say. Many of the city's 200,000 residents fled their homes in a rush for safety, including more than 10,000 people from the so-called "ground zero." They have since been living in evacuation centers or with relatives in other towns.

Months after the fighting ended, residents still visited at their own risk. The conflict zone has 53 unexploded bombs from military airstrikes weighing as much as 226 kilograms (500 pounds) as well as explosives left behind by the militants, according to Colonel Romeo Brawner, deputy commander of the military task force in Marawi.

"We lack the equipment to excavate the bombs. One bomb we recovered, for example, took us five days because we had to dig 10 meters deep and 10 meters



**MARAWI CITY:** A resident tries to collect salvageable belongings from her destroyed house during a visit to the main battle area. —FP

wide," Brawner told AFP, adding the military aimed to finish the effort by June. The threat posed by those bombs as well as memories of their flight, were uppermost in the minds of yesterday's visitors. "We crawled in

fear... We brought nothing but the clothes on our backs. We left because we thought the soldiers were about to respond and there would be a gunfight," said Mangcol, the bridal shop owner, of her escape. —AFP

## Boat carrying Rohingya stops on Thai island

**BANGKOK:** A boat carrying dozens of Rohingya refugees trying to reach Malaysia briefly stopped on a Thai island, an official said yesterday, as fears grow about overcrowded camps for the stateless minority fleeing violence in Myanmar. Nearly 700,000 Rohingya Muslims have sought shelter in southern Bangladesh since Myanmar launched a brutal crackdown on insurgents in August that the US and UN have called ethnic cleansing. But the refugees have arrived to find cramped settlements and often squalid conditions in Cox's Bazar, where hundreds of thousands who fled previous waves of persecution are already living.

An agreement to repatriate Rohingya from Bangladesh to Myanmar's Rakhine state has yet to see a single refugee returned. Rohingya migrants attempting the boat routes south have been a rare sighting since Thai authorities clamped down on regional trafficking networks in 2015, leaving thousands of migrants abandoned in open waters or jungle camps.

The Rohingya boat arrived off Thailand's western coast in Krabi province early Sunday due to bad weather. Images showed the passengers being interviewed on shore and then getting back into the boat before departing. Krabi governor Kitibodee Pravitra confirmed that the people travelling on the boat were Rohingya but did not know where they had come from.

"The initial report said they were docking near Koh Lanta this morning to avoid the storm," he said, referring to an island popular with tourists. "They want to go to Malaysia." The Rohingya on board would continue toward their destination, he said. He said there were about 56 women, men and children on board.

Many of the Rohingya ensnared in the 2015 boat crisis wound up in Muslim-majority Malaysia and Indonesia as Thailand stuck to a policy of not accepting the vessels. Bangladeshi economic migrants have also taken the boat routes. There are nearly 70,000 Rohingya refugees and asylum seekers living in Malaysia, according to the most recent statistics from the UN refugee agency. —FP



**This handout photo released and taken by the Royal Thai Army shows a member of the Royal Thai Navy rescue team assisting Rohingya refugees to board their wooden boat. —AFP**

## 10 dead as building struck by car collapses in India

**NEW DELHI:** Ten people have died after a car crashed into a dilapidated building in central India and brought down the near century-old structure, burying them beneath rubble, police said yesterday. The freak accident in Indore on Saturday evening is the latest building disaster in a country infamous for poor construction and safety standards.

The driver lost control of his vehicle and struck a pillar holding up the near 100-year-old structure, said police deputy inspector general Harinarayanchari Mishra. "The impact was such that the entire building collapsed," he told AFP. "Rescue workers pulled out 12 people from the rubble, 10 of them were already dead. The other two are being treated in hospital."

Images from the scene showed battered and bloodied corpses being pulled from twisted piles of brick and concrete. The rubble was being cleared with cranes and industrial equipment.

Building disasters are common in Indian cities where millions are forced to live in cramped, run-down properties due to spiralling real estate prices and a lack of proper housing.

Activists say owners often cut corners on construction to save costs with little regard to safety. Some 30 people perished in September last year when a 117-



**INDORE:** This photograph taken on March 31, 2018 shows Indian police, rescue teams and residents taking part in rescue operations after a building collapsed. —AFP

year-old apartment building collapsed in India's financial hub of Mumbai. And in 2013, 60 people were killed

when a residential block came crashing down in one of the country's worst housing disasters. —AFP

## B'desh lawyer disappears after Islamist trials

**DHAKA:** A prominent Bangladeshi lawyer who fought the state's case in a high-profile murder trial against Islamist extremists has disappeared, police said yesterday, with grave fears for his safety. Ratish Chandra Bhowmik, a respected prosecutor and champion of minority rights, has not been seen since he left his home in Rangpur early Friday morning.

His disappearance comes a fortnight after seven militants from the Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh were sentenced to death for murdering the caretaker of a Sufi shrine in November 2015. Bhowmik led the case that saw nearly a dozen hardliners from the homegrown extremist group convicted for killing the caretaker because they considered him a heretic. Lawyers in the northern Bangladeshi city have staged protests calling for information about their colleague.

"We are concerned and worried," said Abdul Malek, a lawyer who represented the state with Bhowmik in the trial against the militants. Bhowmik, a Hindu and leading cultural activist, also led the state's prosecution against five JMB extremists sentenced to death for the murder of 66-year-old Japanese farmer Hoshi Kunio in 2015.

Rangpur regional police Chief Khandaker Golam Faruque said that Bhowmik had refused the offer of an armed escort during the high-profile trials. "There was no threat against him. His family filed a complaint about his disappearance on Friday night," Faruque said. JMB regrouped after the execution of its founder and top leadership in 2007 and has been blamed for a wave of attacks on religious minorities, atheist bloggers and foreigners in recent years.

In July 2016, suspected JMB militants stormed a Dhaka cafe and massacred 22 hostages, including 18 foreigners, in an assault claimed by the Islamic State group. Bangladesh has been waging a campaign against JMB and other homegrown militant outfits in the wake of the attacks. Security forces have shot dead more than 70 alleged militants in a crackdown since the cafe assault. Hundreds of suspected Islamists have also been arrested, and scores have been sentenced to death. —AFP

## 16 killed as fighting rages across Kashmir

**SRINAGAR:** Sixteen people have been killed in Indian Kashmir in some of the fiercest fighting this year in the restive Himalayan region, police said yesterday, as authorities braced for more violence. A total of three Indian soldiers and 11 suspected militants died in several clashes south of Srinagar, the main city of the region divided between India and Pakistan but claimed in full by both.

Two civilians were also killed and dozens injured when police opened fire on thousands of demonstrators who poured onto the streets, throwing stones and chanting slogans against Indian rule. There were also demonstrations in Srinagar, where authorities ordered all schools shut on Monday as rebel groups called for protests. Seven of the militants were killed along with two soldiers in a protracted shootout in the village of Dragad, where helicopters were seen swooping low over the battle zone.

Another man, described by Indian authorities as a militant, was gunned down in a brief exchange of fire in Dialgam. Security forces were still taking fire from gunmen

in the village of Kachdora, where one soldier and three insurgents had been killed, local police chief Shesh Paul Vaid said. "It is a massive operation. The fight is still on," inspector-general of police Swayam Prakash Pani said.

Many civilians in Kashmir-India's only Muslim-majority state-support rebels who have been fighting for decades for independence or for a merger with Pakistan. Tens of thousands, mostly civilians, have died. Pakistan—which has fought three wars with India over control of Kashmir condemned the violence as a "mindless killing spree" and said those slaughtered were innocents.

"Such cowardly actions of the occupying forces only serve to fortify the resolve of the Kashmiri people," its foreign office said in a statement yesterday. Last year was the deadliest of this decade in the region, with more than 200 alleged militants killed in a counter-insurgency offensive dubbed "Operation All Out". That upsurge in violence has escalated in 2018, with 49 militants already killed this year. The weekend clashes were the worst since a three-day skirmish in the forests of northern Kashmir last month left ten dead-five unidentified militants and five government forces. Kashmir has been divided between nuclear-armed India and Pakistan since the end of British colonial rule in 1947. —AFP



**SRINAGAR:** Indian Kashmiris clash with Indian policemen during unrest following gun fights between suspected militants and Indian forces in South Kashmir. —AFP



International

# Expelled Russians arrive home as Moscow warns against UK travel

## They could be singled out for harassment by local authorities

**MOSCOW:** Russian diplomats expelled from the United States arrived in Moscow yesterday, with post-Cold War tensions peaking in the wake of a nerve agent attack on a former spy in Britain. A deepening crisis in ties between Russia and the West has over the past weeks seen the biggest wave of tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions in recent memory.

In further signs of tension, Russia warned its nationals on Saturday to think twice before travelling to Britain, where it said they could be singled out for harassment by local authorities. By expelling 60 Russian diplomats, the US joined a score of Britain's allies in responding to the poisoning of former double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in the English city of Salisbury on March 4.

Two planes arrived at Moscow's Vnukovo airport yesterday, bringing home a total of 171 people—the 60 diplomats and their families—from Washington and New York. Russian television showed passengers disembarking from a government plane while several buses waited to pick them up. More than 150 Russian diplomats have now been ordered out of the US, EU members, NATO countries and other nations.

Britain has said it is "highly likely" that Russia was responsible for the Skripal attack using the Soviet-designed Novichok nerve agent. Russia has angrily denied any involvement. The US alleged the 60 diplomats were "spies" and sent them home from posts around the country and at the Russian mission to the United Nations, as well as closing Russia's consulate in Seattle. However Washington

has since said that Russia is free to apply to accredit more diplomats to replace those expelled. Moscow responded by expelling 60 US diplomats and closing Washington's consulate in Saint Petersburg on Saturday.

### 'Work to improve ties'

US President Donald Trump has often appeared reluctant to criticize Russian leader Vladimir Putin and has said the two could meet for a summit in the near future. "Now the consulate is closed but our work to improve Russian-US ties is continuing," the US embassy in Moscow said on Twitter. Moscow also issued further retaliatory measures against Britain on Saturday, demanding that London further slash its diplomatic presence.

## US alleged the 60 diplomats were 'spies'

"Russia suggested parity. The British side has more than 50 more people," foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said. The call came after 23 British diplomats were expelled from Russia last month. Moscow also closed a British consulate in Saint Petersburg and suspended all projects of the British Council for the first time in nearly 60 years.

### 'Threatening rhetoric'

The Russian embassy in London urged Russians to think carefully before travelling to the UK or sending children to summer school there. The embassy warned that British authorities including police could single out Russians for additional checks, citing "the anti-Russian policies and an escalation of the British side's threatening rhetoric".



WASHINGTON: Russian diplomats expelled by the US after a nerve agent attack on a former spy, leave their embassy. —AFP

Britain acknowledged Saturday that border officials had searched an incoming Aeroflot flight from Moscow in what Russia blasted as an act of "blatant provocation". Britain said it conducts routine checks on aircraft to protect the UK from organized crime and people attempting to bring harmful substances into the country.

Earlier this week Moscow summoned British ambassa-

dor Laurie Bristow, giving London a month to cut the number of diplomatic staff in Russia to the same number Russia has in Britain. He was handed a protest note over the "provocative and unfounded actions of the British side which instigated the unwarranted expulsion of Russian diplomats from a variety of states," the Russian foreign ministry said. —AFP

## Congo migrants claim life is better and safer in Rwanda

**GOMA, DR Congo:** A small but remarkable new migration is taking place in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, as well-heeled Congolese up sticks to live in Rwandan towns lying just across the border. Gisenyi and Kamembe, on the northern and southern tips of Lake Kivu respectively, are seen as more stable, more secure and with a better standard of living than their sprawling, troubled Congolese neighbours, the cities of Goma and Bukavu.

"In 2013 I received threats in Goma. I was evacuated to Gisenyi. I went back to Goma a year later. I was still worried for my safety. Three friends in my district were killed," said Jacques Kahora, a humanitarian worker who settled permanently in Gisenyi in 2016. Adrien, a 28-year-old employee with an NGO, has been renting a house in Gisenyi for 80 dollars (65 euros) a month for almost a year, roughly half of what he would pay in his home town of Goma.

Each day he nips back across the border to Goma, a matter of a few kilometers, to work and see family and friends. "I mainly do it for access to certain basic things, like water and electricity. In Gisenyi, there are hardly any power cuts, but in Goma they happen daily—sometimes you can go a whole week without electricity," said Adrien.

Rwanda also offers a high-performance wifi service, which is used by residents of Goma and Bukavu whenever Congolese authorities cut internet access as part of a crackdown on anti-government protests. Like Adrien, most of the Congolese nationals still work in Goma or Bukavu and only spend the night in Rwanda. "Here all we bring is sleep," says Leston Kambale, 38, who moved to Gisenyi eight years ago and has put his three children into Rwandan schools.

"As an IT specialist, I needed electricity 24 hours a day. And there's also the question of safety. Here in Gisenyi, you can walk around from dusk to dawn without a problem," he added. To cross the border, Congolese must pres-



GISENYI, Rwanda: A Congolese woman from the neighboring city of Goma sits at the Tam Tam beach resort. —AFP

ent their passport or special authorisation issued by the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (ECGLC) at the two brand-new customs posts on both sides of the border.

People returning at night have to watch the time, as the Congolese border post closes at 10 pm. To live in Rwanda, the Congolese must pay 20,000 Rwandan francs (about \$23) to obtain a two-year residence permit—more than a week's average pay in this part of the world, but a modest sum for middle-class Congolese.

### '1,000 hills, 1,000 holes'

How many Congolese live part-time or permanently in Rwanda is unclear. But anecdotal evidence—the numbers of people looking for homes or building plots, and rising prices driven by the demand—suggests the movement is gaining momentum. On Sundays, young people from Goma, which lies on the northern tip of Lake Kivu, cross the border to enjoy a day of relaxation on the Tam-Tam beach, a popular well-tended spot on the shore.

"In Goma, there are only private properties on the lake-

side. Here in Gisenyi, we can still go for a swim," says Guilain Balume, a journalist met between the paddle boats and the volleyball pitch. At the southern end of the lake, Congolese people are leaving overpopulated Bukavu, where houses with steep roofs are clustered together on rising hillsides. They head for Kamembe, close to Cyangugu on the frontier.

"More than 900 families have left Bukavu to live in Kamembe," said Patient Bashombe, a lawyer in charge of the coordination bureau for civil society in DR Congo's South Kivu province. "Rwanda is the 'Land of a Thousand Hills' and we live in the Land of a Thousand Potholes," a Congolese driver, Jean, said drily as he contemplated a cratered local road.

At the Goma-Gisenyi border post, an aged Congolese man was returning "back home" to Rwanda after a Sunday spent with the family in Goma. Referring to Rwandan military involvement during the Second Congo War, which officially ended in 2003, the man quipped, "The Rwandans conquered us by force of arms. Today we are conquering them economically." —AFP

## Hundreds rally in Berlin calling for Puigdemont's release

**BERLIN:** Hundreds of Catalan independence supporters marched in Berlin yesterday to demand the release of ex-regional president Carles Puigdemont, who was arrested in Germany last week and faces extradition to Spain on rebellion charges. Huddled under umbrellas in the rainy German capital, the protesters walked from Brandenburg Gate to the justice ministry, carrying banners that read "Free Puigdemont and the Catalan political prisoners" and "Spain is not a democracy".

Many also waved Catalonia's blue, yellow and red separatist flag as they took part in the rally organised by the German branch of the Catalan National Assembly (ANC), a major grassroots pro-independence group. "What we want to say is simply: free our elected Catalan politicians," said 34-year-old marketing worker Monica Zaldivar, who accused the Spanish government of using the courts to go after Catalan leaders instead of trying to find a political solution. "For me, it's about democracy in Spain," she said.

One of the organizers, Ferran Cornella, told AFP he estimated the crowd to number "400 or 500" people, while police gave a tally of around 200 demonstrators. Puigdemont was arrested by German highway police last Sunday as he was travelling from Finland back to Belgium, where he has been living in self-imposed exile since Catalonia's failed independence bid last October.

The detention came two days after a Spanish judge issued international arrest warrants for Puigdemont and other fugitive separatist leaders. They have been ordered to stand trial for rebellion, misuse of public funds and disobeying the state for organizing last year's referendum on Catalan independence, which Madrid deemed illegal.



BERLIN: Protesters hold a banner reading "Free Puigdemont" while taking part in a demonstration organized by the pro-independence association ANC (National Assembly of Catalonia) to demand the release of former Catalan regional president Carles Puigdemont who is detained in a prison in Neumunster. —AFP

Puigdemont's arrest has sent tensions soaring at home, triggering a wave of protests in the wealthy northeastern Spanish region.

Demonstrations in Barcelona last Sunday descended into violence, leaving around 100 people lightly injured in clashes with police. German judges have ordered Puigdemont to remain in custody in the northern town of Neumunster as they mull Spain's request

for him to be handed over. They have 60 days to make a decision. German media say the request has been complicated by the fact that rebellion, which carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in jail in Spain, is not a crime under German law. In a message relayed through his lawyer earlier this week, Puigdemont vowed to "never surrender" and continue his fight for regional independence. —AFP

### News in brief

#### Russian governor resigns

**MOSCOW:** The longtime governor of a Russian region where a huge mall inferno killed dozens of people—most of them children—resigned yesterday after bitter criticism over his response to the tragedy. Aman Tuleyev, who had been at the helm of the coal-mining region of Kemerovo since 1997, said in a video address that he could no longer remain at his post with "such a heavy burden" and that quitting was "the only right choice". The Kremlin swiftly said that President Vladimir Putin had accepted his resignation. Tuleyev's move is unusual as top officials in Russia rarely resign over failings in the emergency response to deadly tragedies. But the huge fire which ravaged a shopping centre in the Siberian industrial city of Kemerovo last Sunday, killing at least 64 people including 41 children, plunged Russia into shock. Some parents lost all their children, and the youngest victim was a two-year-old boy. —AFP

#### Indian mob kills man

**NEW DELHI:** Two people were arrested after an angry mob beat to death a man accused of raping an eight-year-old girl on the rural outskirts of New Delhi, police said yesterday. The man identified as Jitendra was set upon by a crowd after being accused of assaulting the girl in Ghaziabad district, just 20 kilometers from India's capital. "He was dragged out from his house and beaten to death," said Ghaziabad's rural police superintendent Arvind Kumar Maurya of 25-year-old Jitendra, who goes by one name. "We have arrested two people over the lynching. One of the two is a family member (of the girl) and the other is a neighbor." Police were also investigating the alleged sexual assault as part of their inquiries, he added. Vigilante justice is not uncommon in India, and those accused of rape have been attacked or paraded through the streets naked as punishment. Cases can take years to drag through India's courts and aggrieved parties have been known to take matters into their own hands. —AFP

#### Korea sends warship to Ghana

**SEOUL:** South Korea has deployed an anti-piracy warship to the sea off Ghana after three South Korean sailors were kidnapped by pirates, Seoul's foreign ministry said late Saturday. The 500-tonne Marine 711 with about 40 Ghanaian and three South Korean sailors was boarded by unidentified pirates last Monday. The pirates seized the three South Koreans and escaped on a separate speedboat, with their current whereabouts unknown. The Marine 711, registered in Ghana, later arrived at a port at Ghana where the Ghanaian sailors disembarked, according to the South's Yonhap news agency. South Korea's military said the pirates had been identified as Nigerians, Yonhap reported. Munmu the Great, a South Korean warship that had been involved in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, had been sent to the nearby sea, it said. "We are closely coordinating with local countries including Ghana, Nigeria, Togo and Benin as well as the US and the EU to locate our nationals and secure their release," the foreign ministry said. —AFP

#### Three die in Swiss avalanche

**GENEVA:** Three Spanish cross-country skiers died after being engulfed by an avalanche in the Swiss Alps, police said yesterday. Police in the canton of Valais said two fellow skiers survived the avalanche, which hit Saturday afternoon as they headed for the Fiescheralp area at an altitude of some 2,450 meters. Spain's foreign ministry confirmed to AFP the three casualties were Spanish nationals. The ministry did not give further details but said its officials were in contact with Swiss authorities. "According to the investigation, the victims are Spaniards. Formal identification of the deceased is under way," a police statement said, adding that another group nearby managed to raise the alert. The five swept away were all wearing detection devices, helping rescuers to locate the two survivors and airlift them to hospital. However, poor visibility hampered an operation which had to be broken off overnight before rescuers recovered three bodies yesterday. —AFP

## Analysis

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ADVERTISING : 24835616/7  
FAX : 24835620/1  
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163  
ACCOUNTS : 24835619  
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.  
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

## Pfizer seeks miracle drug

It has been 20 years since Viagra was introduced, and Pfizer is still searching for another drug with as much earning power as the revolutionary blue erection pill. If anything, the chances for another miracle drug may be waning as the pharmaceutical giant constrains its research and development budget amid broader cost-cutting efforts. Pfizer forecasts it will spend \$7.4 to \$7.9 billion this year on R&D, compared with \$7.7 billion last year, according to projections released in February.

That is below the R&D of rivals such as Merck and Johnson & Johnson, which plan more than \$10 billion in spending. Pfizer's restraint means walking away from entire areas of medical research. In January, the world's number two pharmaceutical company by sales ended its research programs into treatments for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, cutting 300 jobs and saying it would reinvest the funds in other domains. Pfizer also signaled it could sell its consumer healthcare business, which includes popular over-the-counter products such as the anti-inflammatory drug Advil, multivitamin Centrum and the ubiquitous ChapStick lip balm.

### Sharing the risks

Pharmaceutical R&D is a tricky business in the United States, where there is extensive clinical testing and back-and-forth with the Food and Drug Administration before introducing a new drug. Once launched, pharma companies also are under increased pressure to keep drug costs low following a number of controversies over runaway pill prices. The cost of bringing a new drug to market requires an average of \$2.6 billion, according to the Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development.

That's a heavy investment considering that in the last 20 years there have been just 19 treatments that have generated at least \$1 billion in annual revenue for their first five years, according to the QuintilesIMS Institute, a healthcare data and research company. Against this backdrop, Pfizer has increasingly opted for a model where it shares the risks and benefits with other drug makers. It has announced strategic partnerships with Merck and Bristol-Myers Squibb, while also collaborating with biotechs and university researchers in areas such as oncology and immunology. Pfizer also finances some research through a venture capital-type unit, Pfizer Venture Investments.

### Acquisitions

Pfizer has had other highly lucrative drugs besides Viagra, including the anti-cholesterol drug Lipitor, the anti-depressant Zoloft and the anti-inflammatory drug Celebrex. The company said it is confident of future success. "Our current pipeline is poised with an opportunity to deliver up to an additional 15 potential blockbuster over the next five years," a Pfizer spokesman said. The spokesman noted that the company's R&D budget has been "very consistent" at around \$7.65 billion the last three years.

But revenue dropped slightly last year to \$52.5 billion. While the group expects sales to rise in 2018, at most it would go up just five percent, according to company projections. Key challenges include the arrival of new generic products and the growth of the biosimilar market, which allows for substitutes to traditional drugs. The arrival of biosimilars in Europe has cut into sales of the anti-inflammatory drug Enbrel and Viagra itself has seen revenue drop as generics have been launched in the US and Europe.

Wall Street analysts consider Pfizer a likely candidate for a mega merger. Pfizer's efforts at giant takeovers of AstraZeneca and Allergan may have fizzled, but it has bought smaller companies in the very recent past. In 2016, Pfizer acquired Medivation and Anacor, which added to its portfolio Xtandi and Eucrisa, treatments for prostate cancer and eczema. In 2015, Pfizer supplemented its own biosimilar business with the purchase of Hospira. —AFP

## Cartoon for the Soul



## 50 years later, echoes of 1968 resonate in US

US troops in a never-ending war. Students marching in the streets. Women demanding respect. Black athletes protesting for racial justice. Political upheaval. Today's headlines? Yes. But they also could be from 50 years ago - 1968 was a year so eventful that it's become known as "The Year That Changed America." "Assassinations, riots, rebellions, protests, disorder and chaos - 1968 was a year of really extraordinary shocks, shocks that I think still reverberate through today," said David Farber, a history professor at the University of Kansas. "The 1960s are this incredibly turbulent, tumultuous decade of politics and 1968 really sticks out," said Amy Bass, a history professor at The College of New Rochelle.

Some Americans are thinking "the people are rising and will have a voice," said Bass, author of "One Goal". "And then there's this other faction, (Richard Nixon's) so-called 'silent majority' who sees the 1960s as America as coming apart at the seams." Rocking America in 1968 was the assassination in April of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr and that of Democratic presidential hopeful Robert F Kennedy just two months later.

By then, the country was already reeling. In January, North Vietnamese troops had launched the Tet Offensive, a blitz on South Vietnam that would eventually turn the US public against a war that was America's longest until the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan. US college campuses were gripped by anti-war protests and 700 students were injured in clashes with police at New York's Columbia University in April 1968.

### Students again on the march

The war in Afghanistan has spawned no such protest movement despite entering its 17th year. This can be explained in part because it stemmed from 9/11 - a direct attack on the US - but also because the military draft was eliminated in 1973, said Columbia University history

professor Todd Gitlin. "And the intensity of the war is far less," said Gitlin, author of "The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage". "It's off the screens for Americans and the body bags are few and far between, relatively speaking."

US students are on the march once again though - not to oppose an unpopular war, but to demand tougher gun laws. "There's a big difference, however," Gitlin said. "The high school students are actually starting something." In the largest student protest in decades, hundreds of thousands took part on March 24 in the "March for Our Lives" organized by teenagers from a Florida high school where 17 people were shot dead in February. "The political system again seems frozen for students today and they're trying to find answers that don't fit normal electoral politics," Farber said.

Students were not the only ones protesting in the 1960s - the decade was marked by the civil rights movement led by King. King notably advocated non-violence but his April 4, 1968 assassination in Memphis, Tennessee sparked riots in several US cities. Fifty years on, the banner for racial equality has been taken up by the Black Lives Matter movement and its protests against police misconduct and the use of force.

### 'How should women be treated?'

One of the iconic images of 1968 is that of Tommie Smith and John Carlos, winners of the gold and bronze medals in the 200-meter dash at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City, raising black-gloved fists as the Star-Spangled Banner played. Five decades later, a black athlete has once again become one of the most visible symbols of the struggle for racial equality. Colin Kaepernick, the former quarterback of the San Francisco 49ers, has cited Smith and Carlos as an inspiration for his decision to kneel during the playing of the national anthem - a protest which has drawn sharp criticism from President Donald Trump.

room and he was on top of me. I knew what had happened but I couldn't process it."

### Insults and threats

Ito likened questions by a nurse who treated her at hospital to an "interrogation" and worse was to follow as male police officers ordered her to re-enact her rape with a life-size doll. "I had to lie down on the floor and they placed this doll on top of me and started moving it," Ito told AFP. "They were asking 'was it like this?' and taking photos. That was like a second rape." The police, who had taken weeks to open a criminal investigation, told Ito they were going to arrest Yamaguchi, she said - before they suddenly backed off. Ito has since filed a civil lawsuit against Yamaguchi, who denies any wrongdoing. "I received emails and messages calling me a slut, a prostitute," said Ito, who released a book about her ordeal and recently gave a news conference at United Nations headquarters in New York. "There were also threats so I did fear for the lives of my family. I was scared. I couldn't go out."

Ito's case led to some discussion in Japan, but in a country where just four percent of rape victims go to the police, according to a 2015 government survey, only a handful of other women came forward. "The #MeToo movement obviously hit some kind of tipping point for that to happen - the Harvey Weinstein thing," said Sachi Nakajima, a domestic abuse survivor and founder of Resilience, a non-profit organization to help victims of abuse. "Shiori's case is causing a little bit of a ripple but it's not a tipping point. Nothing is happening, nobody is getting arrested, even in her case." Nakajima blames Japan's century-old sex crime law, which parliament only last year amended to widen the definition of rape and increase prison sentences. "It's like trying to move a mountain with a shovel," said the 54-year-old. "Rape law amended after 110 years? The pace is beyond glacial."

### 'Men feel entitled'

Justice ministry figures show that only a third of rape cases currently reach court and last year only 285 of the 1,678 people tried for sex crimes (17 percent) were sen-



In this file photo taken on Aug 28, 1963, civil rights leader Martin Luther King waves to supporters during the "March on Washington" on the Mall in Washington. —AFP

Kaepernick and Black Lives Matter have been subjected to "vilification much like what we saw in response to the Black Power movement in the late 1960s," said Susan Eckelmann Berghel, an assistant professor of history at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. The women's movement in the United States also took on a new dimension in 1968 with a protest by hundreds of women in Atlantic City against the Miss America beauty pageant.

"They tried to ask a very difficult question, which was 'How should women be treated?'" said Farber. "Which is the kind of question we're still asking." "That doesn't get settled in a year or a decade," Gitlin said. In Jan 2017, hundreds of thousands of women took to the streets to protest Trump's inauguration, he noted, and the #MeToo movement is "the next wave of a similar sentiment". Eckelmann

Berghel said another echo in 2018 of 1968 could be what some see as the "shortcomings of the promises of a liberal presidency".

President Lyndon Baines Johnson unveiled ambitious plans to abolish poverty and racial injustice under the banner of the Great Society. But Johnson, wearied by the Vietnam War, shocked the nation in March 1968 by announcing he was not running for re-election. That paved the way for the election of Nixon, a conservative Republican who promised Americans he would restore order to a chaotic decade. And just as Johnson did not win the "War on Poverty," the election of Barack Obama, America's first black president, did not lead to a "post-racial society". Trump reached into Nixon's 1968 playbook to win the White House, Farber said, creating his "new version of conservative populism". —AFP

## Japanese women confront grim taboo by saying 'me too'

When Rinko Nakajiri was first raped by a producer who seduced her with the promise of a record deal, the 17-year-old singer kept quiet, terrified about her career prospects. Twenty years later, the Tokyo housewife has long since abandoned the music industry and is facing her demons, encouraged by the global #MeToo movement triggered by accusations of rape against movie mogul Harvey Weinstein. Despite widespread allegations of misogyny and sexual violence from Hollywood to Hong Kong, however, there has been relatively little support for the campaign in Japan, where victims are often told to keep quiet.

"It's almost impossible to talk about it in Japan," Nakajiri told AFP. "There's a terrible stigma about rape. People would rather you kept it bottled up." "It happened in a recording studio late at night," added the mother of two, who says she quit music after three years of sexual abuse. "And many times after that, I was afraid if I resisted or reported it, my career would be over." In patriarchal Japan, where a culture of silence persists when it comes to sexual assault and harassment, raising the alarm comes at a price. Journalist Shiori Ito refused to suffer in silence and went public last year. The 28-year-old accused a television newsman with close ties to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of raping her after inviting her to dinner to discuss a job opportunity in 2015. Ito was savaged online for daring to break her silence and even received death threats.

"The last thing I remembered was when I went to the bathroom at the sushi restaurant," said Ito, who suspects her alleged attacker, Noriyuki Yamaguchi, drugged her and claims police failed to test for substances. "When I regained consciousness, in intense pain, I was in a hotel



In this picture taken on Jan 30, 2018 Japanese Journalist Shiori Ito, who accused a television newsmen of raping her in 2015, poses for a picture in Tokyo. —AFP

tenced to more than three years in prison. Taxi driver Kazuyo Saito stopped working at night to reduce the risk of being assaulted. "Male passengers who have just rolled out of a hostess bar sometimes try to carry on flirting in that vein," said the 42-year-old. "They would ask for a quickie and I'd say 'I'm trying to work here, give me a break!' I just brushed it off."

Japan has one of the worst records in the world in terms of female political representation. Women hold just over 10 percent of seats in the lower house of parliament, putting Japan joint 158rd among 193 countries - below Syria and Congo - in 2017, according to Inter-Parliamentary Union data. Nakajima believes Japanese women need to become empowered before attitudes towards sex crimes change. "A lot of men feel like they're entitled to women's bodies," she said. "The definition of consent is so warped in Japan. If you walked into a police station to report a burglary, they don't say 'why weren't you home at that hour?' It's like 'you must have enticed him' or 'that's a short skirt!' We have to start looking at women's position in society because that explains a lot of the problems," she added. —AFP



A man and a woman stand in front of two "snow hares" on the island of Fehmarn in northern Germany yesterday. — AFP

## Trump says DACA deal is off, threatens NAFTA

WASHINGTON/IXTEPEC, Mexico: US President Donald Trump said yesterday that there will be no deal on legalizing the status on young adult immigrants known as Dreamers, declaring on Twitter that the US-Mexico border is becoming more dangerous. After tweeting a "Happy Easter" message, Trump followed with: "Border Patrol Agents are not allowed to properly do their job at the Border because of ridiculous liberal (Democrat) laws like Catch & Release. Getting more dangerous. 'Caravans' coming. Republicans must go to Nuclear Option to pass tough laws NOW. NO MORE DACA DEAL!"

He also threatened to kill the North American Free Trade Agreement, which is currently being renegotiated with Mexico and Canada. DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) is the program created in 2012 under Democratic former President Barack Obama that Trump sought to rescind last autumn. Designed for individuals brought to the United States as children by parents who were undocumented immigrants, the program shielded the individuals from deportation and gave them work permits.

Trump had said he was open to brokering a deal with congressional Democrats who want to protect DACA in exchange for funding to build a US-Mexico border wall, a frequent campaign trail promise. He insisted during his run for the White House that Mexico would pay for the wall. Although Trump threatened a veto last month of an omnibus spending bill because it did not address the fate of Dreamers and did not fully fund his border wall, he did sign the bill.

In the months after Trump took office, the number of apprehensions of illegal crossers along the U.S.-Mexico

border dropped dramatically, from more than 42,400 arrests in January 2017 to a low of around 15,700 in April, according to data from US Customs and Border Protection. Since then, the number of arrests has risen and in the first months of 2018 was above the levels seen during the Obama administration.

Trump is spending the Easter holiday at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida. "Mexico has got to help us at the border," the president told reporters on his way into an Easter church service. "A lot of people are coming in because they want to take advantage of DACA. They had a great chance. The Democrats blew it." His DACA tweets came shortly after a report on the Fox News Channel's Fox & Friends program, one of Trump's favorites, that a "caravan" of mostly Honduran migrants was crossing Mexico and headed to the United States, "either illegally or by asking for asylum".

More than 1,000 would-be migrants have passed through Mexico's southern states of Chiapas and Oaxaca in recent days in a so-called "refugee caravan" organized by US-based immigrant advocacy group Pueblo Sin Fronteras. In the town of Ixtepec, more than 1,500 men, women and children from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala waited in a sweltering warehouse on Saturday, mattresses rolled and bags packed, as local authorities and immigration officials from Mexico's federal government organized 15 buses to take them to their next stop on the long journey north.

By traveling together, the immigrants hope to protect themselves from the crime and extortion that makes the route through Mexico dangerous. They say some but not all of them will seek asylum if they reach the United States. A guest on yesterday's Fox & Friends show, Brandon Judd, head of the National Border Patrol Council union, said illegal immigrants benefit from the "catch and release" program that Trump referenced in his tweet. Under it, they can be freed while awaiting court hearings if detained in the United States.

If recent border crossers do not claim asylum, they can



PALM BEACH, Florida: US President Donald Trump, with First Lady Melania (right) and daughter Tiffany, arrives for Easter service at the Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea yesterday. — AFP

usually be deported quickly. But if they say they fear targeted violence or persecution in their home countries, they can begin the long process of petitioning for asylum in immigration court. In such instances, the government can choose to release those individuals while their cases are processed. Trump and his attorney general, Jeff Sessions, have often criticized the Obama administration for routinely paroling asylum seekers.

That situation has changed: Last month, the American

Civil Liberties Union filed a class-action lawsuit on behalf of nine plaintiffs alleging that US Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were now detaining almost all adults who seek asylum at a port of entry. Trump said on Twitter on Sunday that Mexico is doing "very little, if not NOTHING," to stop the flow of people across the southern border. "They must stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA. NEED WALL!" — Reuters

Kuwait Times

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## Sports

# Joshua beats Parker on points in world heavyweight title fight

## Parker's first defeat in his 25-fight pro career

**CARDIFF:** Anthony Joshua was taken the distance for the first time in his professional career before winning a unanimous points decision in his world heavyweight title unification fight with Joseph Parker in Cardiff on Saturday. After 12 rounds, Britain's Joshua triumphed 118-110, 118-110, 119-109 on the three judges' scorecards. Victory extended the London 2012 Olympic champion's perfect professional record to 21 wins from as many bouts but all of his previous successes had been by way of knockouts. It also saw International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Association champion Joshua add Parker's World Boxing Organisation belt to his collection. This result was New Zealand boxer Parker's first defeat in his 25-fight pro career.

Saturday's contest in front of a 78,000 capacity crowd at the Principality Stadium was the first time two previously undefeated heavyweight champions had met for a world title in Britain.



### Closer to a bout against Deontay Wilder

**'FINESSE'**  
Joshua's win should move him closer to a bout against Deontay Wilder, the American who holds the World Boxing Council's version of the heavyweight title. Wilder had been due at ringside but didn't show and a confident Joshua, speaking to Sky Sports, after his win was confirmed, said: "I want Wilder... Get him in the ring and I'll knock him spark out." Joshua added: "That is 21 professional fights with six world title fights in it. "My strategy was to stick behind the jab and that secured me another world title belt."

And he insisted he felt no disappointment in going 12 rounds. "I know the bookies say I might get a knockout but forget the hype, Parker was a world

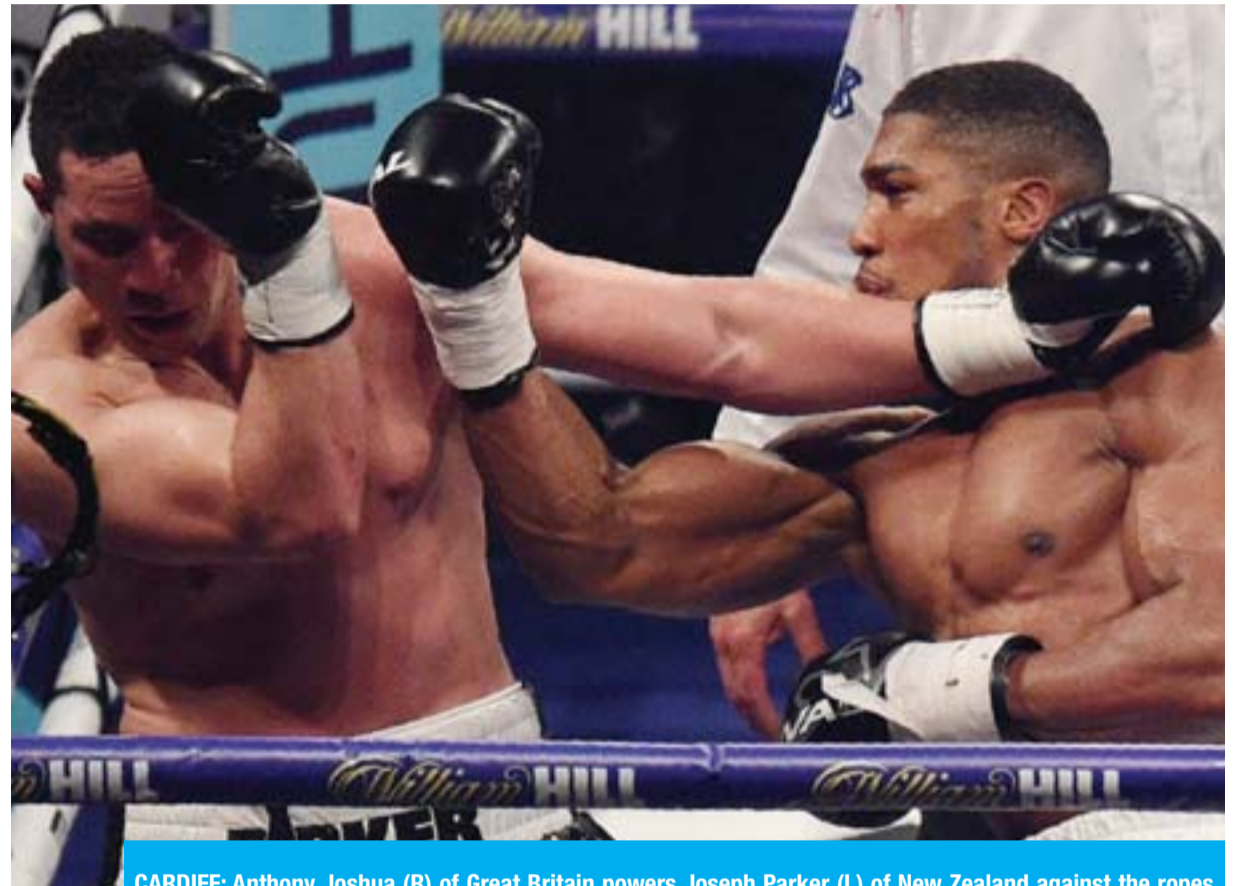
champion," Joshua said. "This was a boxing match, not a fight. Parker said this would be war, I said this would be boxing finesse." With Joshua earning a reported £15 million (\$21 million, 17 million euros) and Parker £7 million, this was easily the biggest fight of the beaten boxer's career.

The way in which referee Giuseppe Quartarone refused to let any inside close-quarter work develop proved a frustration to both boxers and Parker said: "We could have worked inside more, we can't change it. "Of course, I'm young, fit and strong, I'm fit to go 12 rounds, thanks to all the New Zealanders here and back home," he added. "He (Joshua) is a good big man and was better on the day. We'll be back."

#### WRAP ROW

Shortly before the bout started, Parker's promoter, David Higgins, came to the press seats at ringside to allege Joshua's camp had tried to get his boxer's hand wraps changed in a bid to unsettle his man, although he added the wraps eventually remained as they were once British Boxing Board of Control general secretary Robert Smith had been consulted. Joshua had weighed in at 17st 4lbs (110.4kgs) on Friday, well down from a career high of 18st 2lbs (115.5) against Carlos Takam last time out, while Parker came in at 16st 12lbs (102.3).

As Parker's mother looked on from ringside, Joshua took charge. A cut around Parker's left eye was evident from the third round. Joshua tagged Parker with a solid left in the fourth and landed again seconds before the bell ended that round. But Parker made some good connections in the fifth and there was a furious exchange early in the sixth, before



**CARDIFF:** Anthony Joshua (R) of Great Britain powers Joseph Parker (L) of New Zealand against the ropes during their heavyweight unification bout at Principality Stadium in Cardiff on Saturday. — AFP

Quartarone intervened. Joshua, having been struck late when the referee tried to break up the fight, incurred the wrath of Parker's trainer, Kevin Barry, when he too landed late in the eighth round.

Both boxers were hampered by Quartarone's interventions just when it seemed either one of them might

unload with a sequence of punches. The cut round Parker's left eye worsened and blood emerged from the wound in the tenth round.

But a game Parker kept going and the boos at the end of the contest appeared to be aimed at the referee rather than the boxers. — AFP

## Poulter leads in Houston, eyes Masters ticket

**HOUSTON:** Ian Poulter kept alive his dream of a ticket to next week's Masters on Saturday, firing a seven-under-par 65 to grab a share of the third round lead at the Houston Open. The English Ryder Cup star, who must win in Texas this weekend to snare the final invitation on offer for Augusta National, produced seven birdies and no birdies to move to 14 under.

Poulter was joined at the top of the leaderboard by Texas resident Beau Hossler, who drained a birdie on the last to move to 14 under with a 69. Poulter's performance was the latest twist of a roller coaster week for the 42-year-old, who was informed incorrectly during the WGC-Dell Technologies Match-Play championship in Austin that he had earned a place at Augusta. He later learned that that information was wrong, just 10 minutes before he teed off in a semi-final with Kevin Kisner, which he duly lost. Poulter, who delayed his decision to compete in Houston, said he had still been irked by the mix-up when he arrived this week, shooting a 73 in the first round as he attempted to force the pace. "Maybe I was a bit angry on Thursday, maybe I was kind of forcing, trying to force my way into a tournament," Poulter said. "It didn't work, had to rethink it, had to kind of blow the cobwebs out Thursday night and reset and go again."

Although one strong round on Sunday could vault him into the Masters, Poulter said he would be relaxed either way. "I'll have no emotion at all. I'm going to go play golf," he said. "I'm in a no-lose situation. I haven't won a stroke play event on the PGA Tour and I'm in a position where I've got an opportunity to." Poulter had earlier kick-started his third round with four birdies in his opening eight holes.



**HUMBLE:** Ian Poulter of England hits his tee shot on the second hole during the third round of the Houston Open at the Golf Club of Houston on Saturday in Humble, Texas. — AFP

He then holed a 13-foot birdie putt at the par-4 10th hole to move to 12-under ahead of a superb tee shot to just seven-feet at the par-3 16th. He then split the fairway at 17 to land his second shot to just six-feet for a seventh birdie and a 65.

Poulter headed to the scorer's hut leading at 14-under par and waited as Hossler, the overnight leader, did his best to match his English rival's effort. The 23-year-old struggled with just one birdie in his opening 10 holes only to drop a shot at 11 before the Austin resident steadied to birdie the next two holes and move to 13-under par.

He came to the last and duly delivered the birdie to

tie Poulter, and much to the wild applause of a partisan Texas crowd. While both Poulter and Hossler are desperately seeking the win to qualify for Augusta there are four players in third place at 12-under par and if any of those should win they will be heading to the Masters instead. They include - Australia's Greg Chambers (65), Argentina's Emiliano Grillo (67), American Kevin Tway (69) and Ireland's Paul Dunne (69). Looming at 11-under par are two players already qualified for the Masters, Sweden's Henrik Stenson and American Matt Kuchar who signed for 69s. Jordan Spieth is four off the pace at 10 under after a third round 71. — AFP

course in Rancho Mirage, 16 kilometres southeast of Palm Springs.

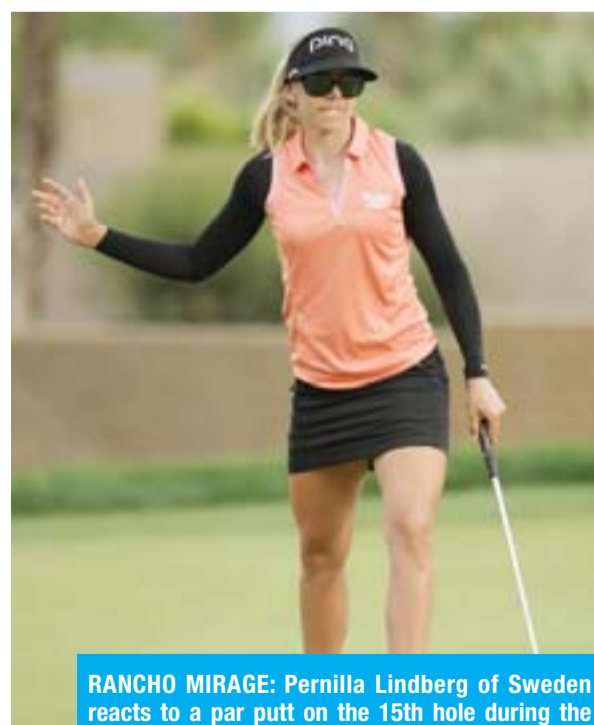
She has never held a 54-hole lead in a regular Tour event let alone a major like the ANA. The Swede takes a slim lead into the final round ahead of Amy Olson of the US, who shot a 68 to reach 11-under 205. Park (74) is four back at 10-under in a pack of players that also includes Park In-bee, Moriya Jutanugarn, Jennifer Song, Jodi Ewart Shadoff and Charley Hull at 10-under par.

Lindberg started her round tied with Park at 12-under. Park, who shot 10 strokes higher on Saturday than her second round 64, hung in there until officials put the pair on the clock for slow play on the back nine.

That's when everything change for Park who had three bogeys and a double bogey in her next five holes. She needed multiple shots just to get out of a bunker on the par-four 15 and finished with a double bogey six.

"It was a rough day out there today," Park said. "I'm just going to focus on what I need to do for tomorrow." Lindberg is paired with Olson in Sunday's final round. Olson was a rookie in 2014 and like Lindberg is in unfamiliar territory as she hopes to win for the first time on Tour.

"I've never been in this position before, but I'm excited about it," Olson said. "I definitely look at it as an awesome learning experience. You can't really learn until you've been there. So, I'm really excited about that." — AFP



**RANCHO MIRAGE:** Pernilla Lindberg of Sweden reacts to a par putt on the 15th hole during the third round of the ANA Inspiration at Mission Hills Country Club in Rancho Mirage, California. — AFP

## Kyokushin Karate Championship

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait will host the Second All Asia Weight Category Kyokushin Karate Championship on Friday April 6th at Kuwait Sports Club starting at 3:00 pm.

The championship will be under the patronage of Public Authority for Sport, and hosted by the Kuwait Committee for the Kyokushin Karate in cooperation with Kuwait Karate Federation.

This championship is considered among the strongest competitions to qualify for World Championship, then the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

The organizing committee will hold a press conference today to give details about the event. Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Singapore, UAE, Mongolia, India, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan and Lebanon will participate.

## Racing down Clermont to reach Champions Cup semi-finals

**CLERMONT FERRAND:** Racing 92 recovered from a shaky start to beat fellow French club Clermont 28-17 away and secure their spot in the last four of the Champions Cup yesterday.

Racing, who quickly trailed 9-0, prevailed thanks to tries by Leone Nakarawa, Marc Andreu and Boris Palu with Maxime Machenaud adding three penalties and two conversions. Three-times runners-up Clermont replied with four penalties by Morgan Parra and Peter Betham's try.

Racing will face Munster in Bordeaux on the weekend of April 21/22 for a place in the final. Clermont opened a 9-0 lead thanks to three penalties by Parra, but Nakarawa reduced the arrears when he dived over after unsettling the hosts' defence with a fine dummy pass. Machenaud converted and put the visitors ahead with a penalty just after the half hour.

But Racing lost focus and were immediately punished. Parra found space in the Racing defence and set up Betham with a long pass for the wing to touch down in the corner.

Machenaud and Parra traded penalties early in the second half. Machenaud then found Dan Carter for the New Zealander's offload to be collected out wide by Andreu, who scored a try.

Just after the reset, Carter slalomed through the Clermont defence, found Teddy Thomas who then set up Palu for Racing's third try as the hosts looked hapless. They thought they could threaten a comeback, but their hopes were dashed when Remi Grosso's try was disallowed for an accidental offside. — Reuters

## Lindberg leads by three heading into final round of ANA

**LOS ANGELES:** Pernilla Lindberg had the hot putter at the ANA Inspiration on Saturday, grabbing a three-shot lead after playing-partner and second round co-leader Park Sung-hyun came unglued after being put on the clock.

The 31-year-old Swede fired a two-under 70 in the third round to reach 14-under 202 as she aims to capture her first title in eight seasons on the LPGA Tour.

"I felt calm out there. I had fun," said Lindberg who rolled in four birdies in her round. "I've been on Tour long enough to still be in a lot of heated moments."

"I just keep collecting experiences each and every year. I've played a lot of golf in my life, and I just feel like the pieces are kind of falling together." Lindberg birdied her first hole of the day en route to breaking the 54-hole tournament scoring record at Mission Hills golf

Sports

# John Wall stands tall as Washington Wizards punch ticket to playoffs

## Visiting Brooklyn beat Miami in overtime

### NBA results/standings

Miami 109, Brooklyn 110 (OT); Boston 110, Toronto 99; Sacramento 96, Golden State 112; New York 109, Detroit 115; Washington 107, Charlotte 93.

#### Eastern Conference

	W	L	PCT	GB
Toronto	55	21	72.4	-
Boston	53	23	69.7	2
Cleveland	46	30	60.5	9
Philadelphia	45	30	60.0	9.5
Indiana	45	31	59.2	10
Washington	42	34	55.3	13
Milwaukee	41	35	53.9	14
Miami	41	36	53.2	14.5
Detroit	36	40	47.4	19
Charlotte	34	43	44.2	21.5
New York	27	50	35.1	28.5
Brooklyn	25	51	32.9	30
Chicago	25	51	32.9	30
Orlando	22	53	29.3	32.5
Atlanta	21	55	27.6	34

#### Western Conference

Houston	62	14	81.6	-
Golden State	55	21	72.4	7
Portland	47	29	61.8	15
San Antonio	44	32	57.9	18
Minnesota	44	33	57.1	18.5
Oklahoma City	44	33	57.1	18.5
Utah	43	33	56.6	19
New Orleans	43	33	56.6	19
LA Clippers	41	35	53.9	21
Denver	41	35	53.9	21
LA Lakers	33	42	44.0	28.5
Sacramento	24	53	31.2	38.5
Dallas	23	53	30.3	39
Memphis	21	55	27.6	41
Phoenix	19	58	24.7	43.5

LOS ANGELES: John Wall made a successful return with a 15 point and 14 assist performance as the Washington Wizards defeated the Charlotte Hornets 107-93 on Saturday to book their spot in the NBA playoffs. All-star Wall was appearing his first game in two months for the Wizards who clinched their fourth playoff berth in the last five seasons. "We don't know who we play and we really don't care who we play. We just want to play well going into the playoffs," coach Scott Brooks said. Otto Porter tallied 26 points and 11 rebounds and Bradley Beal nailed six of eight shots from beyond the arc as the Wizards hit a franchise-record tying 18 three pointers.

Wall last played in January when the American had left knee surgery. His impact was immediate as he made a three pointer on his first shot of the game and finished with 33 minutes of playing time. "It was good to see my first shot go in," Wall said. Washington had lost four of the last

“ I just think turnovers killed us ”

five without Wall to drop into sixth place in the Eastern Conference, heading into the Hornets' matchup. Wall had averaged 19.4 points and 9.3 assists in 37 games before the injury. "That Ferrari is pretty good," Brooks said referring to Wall. "He got a lot of open shots for a lot of players. That's what he does at the highest level in the league." The Hornets, who have now lost two straight, were led by Dwight Howard with 22 points. "I just think turnovers killed us," said Howard, who declined to give Wall credit. "I don't want to say so much that it was John Wall coming back, but I think it was just turnovers."

#### NETS 110, HEAT 109 (OT)

Visiting Brooklyn used a strong second half to get the game to overtime and beat Miami to prevent the hosts from clinching a playoff berth. Dwyane Wade's potential game-winning layup rolled off the rim in the final seconds of overtime to give the Nets their third win in four games against Miami this season. The loss snapped the Heat's nine-game home winning streak. Miami slipped to the eighth seed in the Eastern Conference, a half-game behind Milwaukee.



MIAMI: Rondae Hollis-Jefferson #24 of the Brooklyn Nets and Justise Winslow #20 of the Miami Heat tip off at the start of overtime between the two teams on Saturday at American Airlines Arena in Miami, Florida. — AFP

#### WARRIORS 112, KINGS 96

Kevin Durant recorded 27 points, 10 rebounds and five assists, and Golden State ended a three-game slide with a victory over host Sacramento. Klay Thompson returned from a thumb injury to score 25 points as the Warriors won for just the fourth time in their past 11 games. Quinn Cook added 10 points for Golden State, which received eight points, nine rebounds and seven assists from Draymond Green. Golden State reserve guard Patrick McCaw was taken off the court via stretcher after being undercut while scoring a basket with 41.8 seconds left in the third quarter. The Warriors said McCaw was transported to nearby UC Davis Medical Center.

#### CELTICS 110, RAPTORS 99

Marcus Morris had 25 points and nine rebounds and Jayson Tatum scored 24 as host Boston beat Toronto in a battle of Eastern Conference powerhouses. Terry Rozier added 21 points and seven assists and Al Horford had 14

points for the Celtics, who earned their sixth straight victory and pulled within two games of the Raptors for first place in the East with six games remaining for each team. DeMar DeRozan scored a game-high 32 points with seven assists and seven rebounds, Serge Ibaka had 15 points and 10 rebounds and Jonas Valanciunas had 13 and 11 for Toronto, which suffered its fourth loss in the last seven games following an 11-game win streak.

#### PISTONS 115, KNICKS 109

Andre Drummond had 22 points and 17 rebounds to lead five starters in double-figure scoring as visiting Detroit picked up a crucial win over New York. Michael Beasley had 32 points and streaking point guard Trey Burke added 18 points and 15 assists to lead the Knicks, who lost their third straight game and for the fifth time in six games. Without Blake Griffin, who is sidelined with a bone contusion, the Pistons won their fourth straight game. Detroit remains in ninth place in the Eastern Conference playoff race, 4 1/2 games behind Miami. — Reuters

## Crusaders tame Lions again after gripping struggle

JOHANNESBURG: Defending champions Canterbury Crusaders scored two tries within three minutes to defeat Golden Lions 14-8 in Johannesburg yesterday in a repeat of the 2017 Super Rugby final. It was the match with the fewest points in the competition this season, but also one of the most gripping as two southern hemisphere rugby heavyweights slugged it out.

After trailing 5-0 by half-time at Ellis Park, the New Zealanders won the match through tries in quick succession by skipper Sam Whitelock and Jack Goodhue. The lock and centre struck after 50 and 53 minutes and Mitchell Hunt converted both before a small Easter holiday crowd in the South African financial capital.

It was the fourth win in six outings for record eight-time champions Crusaders and took them joint top of the New Zealand conference with Wellington Hurricanes. Despite suffering a third loss in four matches, Lions lead Western Stormers and Coastal Sharks by seven points in the South Africa standings. Melbourne Rebels top the Australia conference with 20 points after seven rounds, six more than the New South Wales Waratahs. Following recent home wins over Stormers and Northern Bulls, Crusaders completed a hat-trick over South African opponents by taming the Lions. "Playing in Johannesburg is hard on the lungs, body and mind and we did well to overcome the Lions," said All Blacks veteran Whitelock. "It is always tough playing in South Africa and we had to be really smart today against



JOHANNESBURG: Emirates' South African scrum-half Lions Dillon Smit (L) vies with BNZ Crusaders' midfielder Jack Goodhue (C) during the Super Rugby XV match Emirates Lions versus BNZ Crusaders yesterday at the Emirates Airline Park in Johannesburg. — AFP

quality opposition." Lions skipper Franco Mostert, deputising for injured loose forward Warren Whiteley, offered no excuses. "The Crusaders wanted to win this match a little bit more than we did, so let us give all the credit to them."

Lions claimed the lone score of the first half on 14 minutes through a try from Democratic Republic of Congo-born Madosh Tambwe, who finished off slick handling with a try. Crusaders' leading try scorer George Bridge crossed the line twice, but both scores were ruled out for forward passes by Hunt. The introduction off the bench of huge winger Manasa Mataele in the second half gave the visitors

extra pace and power and relentless pressure paid off. Whitelock dived over and Hunt converted from close to the touchline to give Crusaders a 7-5 lead.

That advantage stretched to nine points when a break by Mataele set up Goodhue to score near the posts and Hunt converted. An Elton Jantjies penalty on 77 minutes trimmed the deficit to six points and earned Lions a losing bonus point. The Lions stay in Johannesburg next weekend for a clash with Stormers while Crusaders make the long journey to Buenos Aires for a match against the unpredictable Argentine Jaguares. — AFP

## Rio 'cheat' jibe justified, says swimmer Horton

GOLD COAST: Australian Olympic swimming champion Mack Horton said yesterday he had no regrets over calling out athletes caught cheating-as he did in no uncertain terms at the 2016 Rio Games. Horton tore into China's Sun Yang in Brazil two years ago after robbing him of his Olympic 400 metres freestyle title, sniffing: "I don't have time or respect for drug cheats."

The 21-year-old, currently preparing for the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, had been asked about Sun and South Korean Park Tae-hwan, who had both previously tested positive for banned substances. His comments sparked fury from Chinese journalists who confronted Horton at his victory press conference, demanding to know why he had used such frank language.

The swimmer was savaged by Chinese sports fans and press, and his remarks even triggered a diplomatic row between the countries, with Chinese state-run media calling Australia a "second-class citizen" of the West. But Horton, whose mild manner and Harry Potter-style spectacles belie his toughness, insisted he would not back down if a similar situation arose at the Commonwealth Games.

"Not at all, I don't think I'd change a thing," he told reporters. "I guess I'm proud of how I handled myself in Rio."

"I think athletes know what they're doing and they know that they're responsible for what goes into their bodies," added Horton. "If they're caught cheating or they are cheating it's completely their fault. Hopefully they are a clean Games."

Horton was asked for his thoughts about the discovery of syringes by a cleaner in the athletes' village, which triggered an investigation. Questioned about what he would say to anyone who failed a drugs test in Gold Coast, Horton shrugged: "Er, Cheat!"

Horton, who bagged 4x200m freestyle gold and 1,500m freestyle silver at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, also declared he was back to full fitness



GOLD COAST: Australia's swimmer Mack Horton (R) speaks during a press conference beside teammate Emily Seebohm, ahead of the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, on the Gold Coast yesterday. —AFP

after suffering an allergic reaction to a bee sting last week. "My arm is all good now," he said, the swelling now all but gone. "It was just over the weekend it flared up, which was lucky because I wasn't swimming. "A couple of years ago I was stung

by a bee and lost all my knuckles, but it was nothing compared to this time," added Horton, who had been wearing a protective bandage on his right arm following his brush with the insect. "My whole arm blew up so I assume I'm allergic." — AFP

## Dragons, Warriors stay unbeaten in Australia's NRL

SYDNEY: The St George Illawarra Dragons remain unbeaten at the top of Australia's National Rugby League after a 30-12 win over the Newcastle Knights yesterday. A brutal defence and the brilliance of halves Ben Hunt and English international Gareth Widdop helped the Dragons to a fourth straight win — their best start to a season in the 20 years since the formation of the joint venture.

The New Zealand Warriors are the only other unbeaten team this season after an impressive 30-6 win over the Sydney Roosters. Even though New Zealand Test scrum-half Shaun Johnson stayed home with a groin strain, the Warriors still proved too strong for the fancied Roosters in Sydney.

Two sin-binnings, 33 penalties, a player on report and two key players missing-yet the Cronulla Sharks upset defending champions Melbourne Storm 14-4 at home. It was the Sharks' first win at home for 2018 as they improved their record for the season to two wins and two losses.

The Sharks also managed to frustrate an uncharacteristically error-prone Melbourne, who did not cross the Sharks try-line. Gold Coast Titans wingers Phillip Sami and Anthony Don scored four tries between them in a thumping 26-14 Queensland derby win over the Brisbane Broncos yesterday.

Sami scored a hat-trick as the Broncos dropped out of the top eight, falling three places to 10th with the loss. The South Sydney Rabbitohs scored two tries in the final seven minutes to secure a controversial come-from-behind 20-16 victory against the Canterbury Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs paid the price for poor ball security throughout a match they largely controlled. They failed to close out the game despite several opportunities to put the Bunnies away. The Penrith Panthers routed the North Queensland Cowboys 33-14 in Townsville, with stand-off James Maloney orchestrating a clinical performance.

A first-half onslaught helped the Manly Sea Eagles to a comfortable 32-16 win over the Canberra Raiders. — AFP

## Sports

# South Africa build up 401-run lead over battling Aussies

## S Africa in control despite Australia fightback

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa moved into a powerful position despite a fightback by Australia and an injury to fast bowler Morne Morkel on the third day of the fourth Test at the Wanderers Stadium yesterday.

South Africa finished the day on 134 for three in their second innings, an overall lead of 401. The Proteas, leading the series 2-1, need only to draw to beat Australia in a home series for the first time since 1969/70. But Australia provided the fight that had been promised the previous evening by bowling coach David Saker. From a seemingly hopeless overnight total of 110 for six, they added another 111 runs before being



### Tim Paine made a defiant 62

bowled out. South Africa did not enforce the follow on, with doubts about the ability of Morkel to bowl because of a side strain.

Australia's bowlers then restricted the hosts to a run rate of 2.4 in the second innings. New captain Tim Paine set the example in the morning. Despite batting with a hairline fracture of his right thumb, he made a defiant 62 before being last man out.

Paine and Pat Cummins walked out to resume the Australian innings on a heavily overcast morning, with their team facing the humiliation of being bowled out quickly and forced to follow on.

But they stayed together for most of the morning, with Cummins making a Test-best 50 off 92 balls before he missed a sweep and was leg before wicket to left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj shortly before lunch.

Their seventh wicket partnership was worth 99, the best for any wicket by Australia in the series. Morkel, playing in his last Test before retiring from international cricket, broke down as South Africa toiled in search of a breakthrough, leaving the field two balls into his fourth over of the day.

A South African team spokesman said the injury was in the same area that he damaged in a Test



**JOHANNESBURG:** South African batsman Aiden Markram plays a shot on the third day of the fourth Test cricket match between South Africa and Australia won by South Africa at Wanderers cricket ground yesterday in Johannesburg, South Africa. — AFP

against Bangladesh in October, keeping him out of action for two months. But after being strapped up, Morkel bowled a few gentle deliveries to coach Otis Gibson during lunch and took the field with the rest of the team after the interval, giving hope that he may be able to bowl in the second innings, even if it is not at full pace.

South Africa did not attempt to force the pace in the second innings, although Aiden Markram again struck the ball crisply in making 37 off 56 balls. With a 2-1 lead in the series and only three fully-fit front-line bowlers, South Africa may have wanted not only to build an indomitable lead but to use up time.

Markram's innings took him to exactly 1,000 runs in 18 innings in his first ten Tests. The only South African to reach the mark in fewer innings was former captain Graeme Smith, achieved the feat in 17 innings.

The scoring rate dried up, with off-spinner Nathan Lyon gaining turn and bounce from the golf course end, while Cummins again challenged the batsmen with high-quality fast bowling. AB de Villiers threatened briefly to ignite the scoring rate, but was caught behind when he tried to cut a ball from Cummins that bounced sharply. Opening batsman Dean Elgar was particularly obdurate, scoring 37 not out off 158 balls. — AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**JOHANNESBURG:** Scores on the third day of the fourth Test between South Africa and Australia at the Wanderers Stadium yesterday:

South Africa, first innings, 488	
<b>Australia, first innings (overnight 110-6)</b>	
M. Renshaw c De Kock b Philander	8
J. Burns c Du Plessis b Rabada	4
U. Khawaja c De Kock b Philander	53
P. Handscomb b Philander	0
S. Marsh c De Villiers b Maharaj	16
M. Marsh b Morkel	4
T. Paine c Elgar b Rabada	62
P. Cummins lbw b Maharaj	50
N. Lyon c Elgar b Rabada	8
C. Sayers c Amla b Maharaj	0
J. Hazlewood not out	1
Extras (b3, lb 9, nb3)	15
Total (70 overs)	221
Fall of wickets: 1-10 (Burns), 2-34 (Renshaw), 3-38 (Handscomb), 4-90 (Khawaja), 5-96 (M. Marsh), 6-96 (S. Marsh), 7-195 (Cummins), 8-206 (Lyon), 9-207 (Sayers), 10-221 (Paine)	
<b>Bowling:</b> Philander 18-8-30-3, Rabada 19-7-53-3 (Inb), Morkel 12-2-3-34-1 (2nb), Maharaj 20-3-92-3, Markram 0.4-0-0-0.	

South Africa, second innings	
A. Markram c Handscomb b Cummins	37
D. Elgar not out	39
H. Amla c M. Marsh b Lyon	16
A. de Villiers c Paine b Cummins	6
F. du Plessis not out	34
Extras (lb2)	2
Total (3 wkts; 56 overs)	134
To bat: T. Bavuma, Q. de Kock, V. Philander, K. Maharaj, K. Rabada, M. Morkel	
Fall of wickets: 1-54 (Markram), 2-79 (Amla), 3-94 (De Villiers)	
<b>Bowling:</b> Hazlewood 13-5-20-0, Sayers 8-2-33-0, Lyon 25-11-44-1, Cummins 10-2-35-2	
Match situation: South Africa lead by 401 runs with seven wickets remaining in the second innings. — AFP	

## Shut it! Ex-skipper Taylor says Australia may ban verbals

**SYDNEY:** Former captain Mark Taylor said yesterday that Cricket Australia were considering a ban on sledging, or verbal taunting, after the ball-tampering scandal and fractious current Test series with South Africa.

The cheating crisis in the third Test, which saw Steve Smith and David Warner stripped of the captaincy and vice-captaincy and banned from the sport for a year, followed an ill-tempered start to the series. Cameron Bancroft was also suspended for nine months.

When asked if a ban on sledging was "a possibility", Taylor, a Cricket Australia board member, told broadcaster Channel Nine: "Absolutely. You are not going to stop people talking out on the field. Talking is one thing," he added.

"Abusing, sledging... bullying, verbalising whatever you want to call it is another thing. It's gone too far." The practice of sledging-taunting opponents verbally on the field with the aim of distracting them-has been in the spotlight after Warner and South Africa's Quinton de Kock were involved in a physical confrontation during the first Test.

Warner had said the confrontation was triggered by a jibe about his wife, reportedly in retaliation after De Kock was sledged by the Australian. Taylor would not reveal what his plans were when asked if he would move a motion on the CA board to ban sledging.

"That may or may not happen in a board meeting in three weeks' time that's not to be aired on national television," he said.

His comments came in the wake of outgoing Australia coach Darren Lehmann's vow to "take a leaf" out of the playing style and conduct of teams such as New Zealand, who imposed a no-sledging policy in 2013 after their own crisis of confidence.

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has also called for an end to sledging, saying Tuesday that the "strongest action" needed to be taken as the verbal abuse had gotten "right out of control".

The recent Ashes series was likewise marred by sledging, with tensions between Smith and England bowler James Anderson leading umpire Aleem Dar to have to separate the pair when the Australian was batting.

Anderson described the Aussies as bullies who overstepped the line ahead of the Adelaide Test, with Smith retorting that the Englishman was one of the biggest sledgers in the game. — AFP

## Vince, Stoneman give England scent of victory

**CHRISTCHURCH:** James Vince and Mark Stoneman were the toast of England yesterday as they ended day three of the second Test against New Zealand sensing their first away victory in two years. England, who have not tasted success in their last 12 away Tests, hold a healthy 231-run lead with seven second innings wickets in hand. "A good couple of sessions (on Monday) and we've got a chance of forcing a win," batting coach Graham Thorpe said with their strong position the result of a 123-run stand by Vince and Stoneman for the second wicket. The pair came together at 24 for one after the loss of Alastair Cook with Vince going on to make 76 and Stoneman his highest score in Tests with 60. "Both would have loved to have got 100s and gone on, but they will get a good pat from us in the dressing room," Thorpe said. Joe Root was not out 30 at the end of the day with Dawid Malan on 19 as England ended the day on 202 for three.

BJ Watling, who made 85 in New Zealand's rearguard action to lift their first innings to 278, believed the first session on Monday would likely dictate the outcome. "We're probably fractionally behind. Obviously Vince and Stoneman had a really good partnership," he said.

"Tomorrow morning's a massive session in the game. If we can take four or five wickets in that session we can put them under some pressure and obviously if they come through it then they're in control of the game." Cook went early for 14, continuing a disappointing run for the opener in which he has totalled only 23 in four innings in New Zealand, and has been removed by Trent Boult each time.

But Vince and Stoneman put England's innings back on track, helped by a benign wicket which offered little assistance to the bowlers.

### ANXIOUS MOMENT

Stoneman, whose previous best was 56 in the third Test against Australia three months back, had an anxious moment on 35 when given out caught behind, but the decision was overturned on review.

On 48 he was dropped by Ross Taylor at first slip and he brought up his 50 with a nick off Tim Southee that sailed just past the outstretched arm of wicketkeeper BJ Watling to the boundary.

But on 60 his luck ran out when he tried beating the cordon once too often and another edge off Southee was pouched by a diving Watling. Vince went in similar fashion when he nicked Boult to the sole slip Taylor who made no mistake with the second chance to fly his way. Root and Malan carried England through until bad light stopped play three overs early and will face a further 14 overs on Monday before the new ball is due.

The New Zealand first innings survived nearly



**CHRISTCHURCH:** New Zealand's Trent Boult bowls during day three of the second cricket Test match between New Zealand and England at Hagley Oval in Christchurch yesterday. — AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand:** Scoreboard at stumps on day three of the second Test between New Zealand and England in Christchurch yesterday:

<b>England first innings 307</b> (J. Bairstow 101, M. Wood 52; Southee 6-62, Boult 4-87)		(Southee), 10-278 (Boult)
<b>New Zealand first innings</b> (overnight 192-6)		<b>Bowling:</b> Anderson 24-5-76-4, Broad 22.3-5-54-6, Wood 21-3-69-0, Leach 19-3-52-0, Root 1-0-9-0, Stokes 6-2-17-0.
J. Raval c Bairstow b Anderson	5	<b>England second innings</b>
T. Latham c Bairstow b Broad	0	A. Cook c Watling b Boult
K. Williamson c Bairstow b Anderson	22	M. Stoneman c Watling b Southee
R. Taylor c Cook b Broad	2	J. Vince c Taylor b Boult
H. Nicholls lbw Broad	0	J. Root not out
B. Watling b Anderson	85	D. Malan not out
C. de Grandhomme c Bairstow b Broad	72	Extras: (lb1, w1, nb1)
T. Southee b Anderson	50	Total: (for 3 wickets: 66 overs)
I. Sodhi c Bairstow b Broad	1	Fall of wickets: 1-24 (Cook), 2-147 (Stoneman), 3-165 (Vince)
N. Wagner not out	24	<b>Bowling:</b> Boult 15-3-38-2, Southee 13-3-42-1, de Grandhomme 12-0-37-0 (1w, 1nb), Wagner 15-2-37-0, Sodhi 11-0-46-0.
T. Boult c Malan b Broad	16	Series: New Zealand lead 1-0
Extras: (lb1)	1	
Total: (for 10 wickets: 93.3 overs)	278	
Fall: 1-0 (Latham), 2-14 (Raval), 3-17 (Taylor), 4-17 (Nicholls), 5-36 (Williamson), 6-178 (de Grandhomme), 7-226 (Watling), 8-231 (Sodhi), 9-239		

20 overs at the start of the day. Watling advanced his overnight 77 to 85, Ish Sodhi had a brief stay for one, and Tim Southee made 50 — his fourth Test half century. Neil Wagner and Boult put on a rollicking 39 off 42 deliveries for the last wicket

before Boult was out for 16, leaving Wagner unbeaten on 24.

Stuart Broad finished with six for 54, the ninth-best return in his storied 115-Test career, while Anderson took four for 76. — AFP

Sports

# Mbappe shines as PSG beat Monaco for fifth straight League Cup title

## Lemar, Tielemans and Lopes too clumsy in the box

**BORDEAUX:** Kylian Mbappe played chief tormentor as Paris St Germain beat Monaco 3-0 to claim their fifth French League Cup title in succession on Saturday in a game where video refereeing played its part on Saturday.

PSG, who have now won their last 40 games in the French Cup or League Cup, prevailed through an Edinson Cavani double and a goal by Angel Di Maria, but it was France international Mbappe who caught the eye at the Matmut Atlantique.

The 19-year-old, who is set to be one of France's key players at the World Cup, won PSG's early penalty and set up both the other goals in a man-of-the-match performance. It is PSG's second final victory against Monaco after they beat them 4-1 last year, but it will do little to erase the bad memories from another early exit in the Champions League after they were eliminated in the last 16 this season.

Portugal might sweat over midfielder Joao Moutinho's fitness ahead of the World Cup after he was carried off the pitch on a stretcher with a suspected knee injury.

Clement Turpin, who will be one of the referees at the World Cup in Russia, used the video assistant referee (VAR) technology to award PSG an early penalty

after Kamil Glik had brought down Mbappe. Cavani converted it to put PSG ahead on eight minutes, underlining Ligue 1 leaders PSG's superiority over the likely runners-up.

The Parisians were clearly a cut above and on a lightning-quick counter-attack, Mbappe's delightful pass found Di Maria, who coolly slotted the ball past Danijel Subasic in the 21st minute.

Monaco had promising ideas but Thomas Lemar, Youri Tielemans or Rony Lopes were too clumsy in the box. After being sent through behind the back of the

PSG defence, Lopes's chip shaved Kevin Trapp's left-hand post 10 minutes before the break.

Monaco thought they had pulled one back in the 37th minute through Radamel Falcao, but Turpin disallowed the goal after VAR showed that the Colombia striker was offside when he headed past Trapp.

Leonardo Jardim beefed up Monaco's frontline for the second half, replacing Tielemans with Stevan Jovetic. But PSG were still the more dangerous side as Julian Draxler repeatedly unsettled the Monaco defence, although the visitors had a great chance when Lopes's powerful shot bounced off the crossbar.

Mbappe was a constant threat to the Monaco back four, setting up Cavani for another offside "goal".



Mbappe set to be one of France's key players at the World Cup



**BORDEAUX:** Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian defender Thiago Silva (C) holds the trophy as he celebrates with teammates after victory in the French League Cup final football match between Monaco (ASM) and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) at The Matmut Atlantique Stadium in Bordeaux on Saturday. — AFP

Monaco continued to push but Cavani beat Subasic from close range after collecting Mbappe's through ball five minutes from time to ensure PSG remained unbeat-

en in national cups since early 2014. PSG, who lead Monaco by 17 points in Ligue 1, play the French Cup semi-finals at Caen on April 18. — Reuters

## Ibra-mania as Zlatan's double seals Galaxy fightback

**LOS ANGELES:** Zlatan Ibrahimovic announced his arrival in Major League Soccer with two goals on his debut including an injury-time winner as the Los Angeles Galaxy fought back from three goals down to beat Los Angeles FC 4-3 on Saturday.

Ibrahimovic—who only arrived in California on Thursday—lashed home an imperious volley from 40 yards just six minutes after coming on as a second-half substitute to make it 3-3 at the StubHub Center. The Swede then headed home Ashley Cole's cross in injury time to put Galaxy ahead in an extraordinary finale that lived up to the hype surrounding the veteran striker's arrival from Manchester United. "If you look back, every team I played for, I scored in my first official game. I wasn't going to let that stop today," a delighted Ibrahimovic said afterwards. "I heard the crowd saying 'We want Zlatan, we want Zlatan' And I gave them Zlatan," he added.

Ibrahimovic's winner was the final act of a thrilling first ever derby between the Galaxy and expansion side LAFC, who had surged into a 3-0 lead early in the second half after two goals from Carlos Vela and an own goal from Daniel Steres.

Slack play from LAFC allowed Galaxy to pull a goal back through Sebastian Lletget in the 61st minute after dogged work from Servando Carrasco. The home crowd then roared in appreciation in the 71st minute when Ibrahimovic made his entrance from the substitutes bench. The 36-year-old star had an instant impact and was involved in the build-up which led to Galaxy's second goal, headed in by Chris Pontius from Emmanuel Boateng's cross. Suddenly the Galaxy dared to dream of an improbable comeback, and when Ibrahimovic thundered home his equaliser on 77 minutes the home side had drawn level. Los Angeles Galaxy coach Sigi Schmid hailed Ibrahimovic's "world class" second goal.

"Ibrahimovic is the perfect definition of a guy who always dares to be brilliant," Schmid said. "If you do that, you can pull off things. That's a goal that will go around the world."



**CARSON:** Laurent Ciman #23 and Tyler Miller #1 of Los Angeles FC collide as Zlatan Ibrahimovic #9 of Los Angeles Galaxy scores the winning goal in the second half of the game at StubHub Center on Saturday in Carson, California. — AFP

### LAST WORD

LAFC had a chance to regain the lead when Costa Rican international Marco Urena hit the woodwork late on. But instead it was Ibrahimovic who was determined to have the last word. Former Chelsea and England left-back Cole stormed forwards down the left flank and crossed into the area, and Ibrahimovic guided home the header to launch his MLS career in the most dramatic way possible. Ibrahimovic had talked boldly on Friday of helping restore the Galaxy to their position of dominance in Major League Soccer after a dismal 2017 campaign that saw them finish bottom of the Western Conference. However the scale of the task facing Ibrahimovic became apparent after only 26 minutes on Saturday, with Mexico striker Vela scoring twice to give LAFC a 2-0 lead that their dominant play deserved.

Deportivo La Coruna at home later.

Sevilla, meanwhile, are still 13 points adrift of the top four, havng played a game more than Valencia, and must recover in time for their own Champions League clash against Bayern Munich tomorrow.

They would have been deserving winners here and, in truth, could have been out of sight had Muriel and Vazquez finished any number of dangerous breaks in the second half. Sevilla were the better side for the opening half an hour and took a deserved lead in the 36th minute when Joaquin Correa shuffled into the area and chipped a cross into Vazquez. He poked a weak finish but it was just enough to beat Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

The hosts doubled their lead when Ever Banega's stinging shot was pushed out too centrally by Ter Stegen, allowing Muriel to take a touch and guide the ball into the corner. Messi came on for Ousmane Dembele just before the hour mark but Sevilla could have been three up, Jesus Navas missing the best chance as his one-on-one was cleared off the line by Gerard Pique. They were made to pay the price as Suarez turned in from close range before the ball rolled tantalisingly out to the left foot of Messi, and he drilled it into the corner.

Earlier, Gareth Bale made a strong case for a starting spot against Juventus by scoring twice in Real Madrid's 3-0 victory over Las Palmas as Cristiano Ronaldo was rested. Bale's double in Gran Canaria served as a timely reminder to coach Zinedine Zidane, with the trip to Turin for the first leg of the Champions League quarter-finals to come tomorrow.

Karim Benzema had doubled Real's lead before half-

Vela drew first blood after only five minutes, picking up the ball on the edge of the area and curling a magnificent strike beyond the dive of Galaxy goalkeeper David Bingham to make it 1-0. Los Angeles FC continued to dominate, pressing Galaxy aggressively and threatening in attack through the lively Vela, Costa Rican international Urena and Uruguayan youngster Diego Rossi.

Rossi almost doubled the LAFC lead in the 11th minute, flashing a low angled shot wide of the post. But Los Angeles did not have to wait long for the second, with Vela beating Bingham before coolly taking his time to lift his shot into the goal off the underside of the bar. On the bench, Ibrahimovic bowed his head in his hands, and it got worse when Steres turned in an own goal early in the second half to put LAFC 3-0 ahead. However Ibrahimovic had other ideas soon after coming on as a substitute with just under 20 minutes remaining. — AFP

time as Los Blancos moved just one point behind second-placed Atletico. Las Palmas stay 18th, seven points adrift of safety. The only worry for Zidane was the sight of Nacho hobbling off in the first half, with what appeared to be a hamstring problem.—AFP

## Juventus pull clear as Napoli's title dreams hit

**TURIN:** Leonardo Bonucci scored on his return to Juventus but could not stop the Italian champions' march towards a seventh straight title with a 3-1 win over AC Milan on Saturday. Paulo Dybala opened the scoring after eight minutes with Juan Cuadrado marking his comeback from injury with the second and Sami Khedira adding a third late on as Juventus moved four points clear of Napoli whose hopes were hit by a 1-1 draw at strugglers Sassuolo.

Defender Bonucci, 30, left Turin last summer for Milan after falling out with coach Massimiliano Allegri and was jeered by the hostile crowd in the Allianz Stadium.

"I'm happy for Bonucci that he got a goal, but I'm even happier that Juventus won," said Allegri. "It was important to get back to winning ways against Milan, who are in good shape. Wins like this send a signal."

Dybala's opener left a diving Gianluigi Donnarumma without a chance after the Milan keeper had earlier cleared a Gonzalo Higuain snapshot. Milan pushed forward with Andre Silva heading wide, before Bonucci rose to nod in the equaliser—the first Serie A goal conceded by Juventus in 2018. But the champions cranked up the tempo with Khedira setting up substitute Cuadrado whose diving header beat Donnarumma on 79 minutes with the German midfielder finishing off a Dybala cross for the third.

It was Gennaro Gattuso's side's first defeat of 2018 ending a ten-match unbeaten run, and giving Juventus a boost ahead of Tuesday's Champions League quarter-final first leg game against Real Madrid.

"In the end fatigue took over and they had great players and they took advantage of it," said Gattuso. Juventus have 78 points from 30 games with Napoli on 74. AC Milan stay sixth-but drop eight points off the Champions League places.

### NAPOLI, ROMA STALLED

Napoli's campaign has faltered in recent weeks with just one win in their last four games.

And they missed a golden opportunity to stay in touch with the leaders against Sassuolo who are hovering above the drop zone. Matteo Politano put Sassuolo ahead after 22 minutes with Maurizio Sarri's side saved by a Rogerio own-goal with ten minutes to go. "We created a lot of chances again today, but it's a period where we aren't converting enough of them into goals," said Sarri, whose side will meet meet Juventus in Turin next month in a clash that could be decisive for the Scudetto. "Our objective is to reach 87 points and set a new all-time record for Napoli in Serie A. That is the only reason we are disappointed to drop two points today." In the fight for Champions League places, Mauro Icardi scored a brace in a 3-0 win over Verona as Inter Milan closed to within two points of third-placed Roma who were held 1-1 by Bologna. Substitute Edin Dzeko rescued Roma who were also hit by a Radja Nainggolan muscle injury that could compromise their Champions League quarter-final against Barcelona in Spain midweek. Lazio are a further point back, just outside the Champions League places for next season in fifth after surviving a scare to thrash rock-bottom Benevento 6-2. Dzeko headed in after 76 minutes at the Stadio Dall'Ara after Erick Pulgar had given Bologna the lead on 18 minutes.— AFP



### Matches on TV (Local Timings)

SPANISH LEAGUE		
Getafe v Real Betis		22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3		
ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE		
Nasaf Qarshi v Persepolis		17:30
beIN SPORTS HD 1		
Esteghlal Tehran v Al Rayyan		18:30
beIN SPORTS HD 3		
Al Ain v Al Hilal		18:30
beIN SPORTS HD 4		
Al Sadd v Al Wasl		19:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2		

## Messi rescues unbeaten Barca as Bale double propels Real

**SEVILLE:** Lionel Messi rescued Barcelona's unbeaten season on Saturday as the La Liga leaders scored twice in the last three minutes to snatch a 2-2 draw at Sevilla. Messi came off the bench with his team two goals down at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan as Luis Suarez pulled one back in the 88th minute, before the Argentinian struck the equaliser a minute later.

Barcelona had not lost a league game this term, or in 13 months, but finishes from Franco Vazquez and Luis Muriel looked to have sealed Sevilla a stunning victory. But Messi came up trumps again and he celebrated his goal, a bending long-range strike into the bottom corner, by rushing to the jubilant coaching staff and substitutes on the touchline.

He had been left out of the starting line-up due to a hamstring complaint, with coach Ernesto Valverde perhaps keeping one eye on Wednesday's Champions League quarter-final against Roma. But he still made the decisive intervention even if Barca's draw means Atletico Madrid can cut the gap at the top to nine points by beating

**12** Joshua beats Parker on points in world heavyweight title fight



**13** Rio 'cheat' jibe justified, says Aussie swimmer Horton



**15** Mbappe shines as PSG beat Monaco for fifth straight League Cup title



LONDON: Chelsea's Belgian midfielder Eden Hazard (L) vies with Tottenham Hotspur's English defender Eric Dier and Tottenham Hotspur's English defender Kieran Trippier (R) during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur at Stamford Bridge in London yesterday. — AFP

## Dele double helps Spurs snap Chelsea jinx

### Spurs look set to seal place in Champions League for third season

LONDON: Dele Alli scored twice in four second-half minutes as Tottenham Hotspur beat Chelsea 3-1 yesterday to end a 28-year wait for a Premier League win at Stamford Bridge. Defeat for the hosts all but ends Chelsea's hopes of Champions League football next season as Spurs opened up an eight-point lead over their closest challengers for fourth place.

Ending their long wait for a win at their London rivals is just the latest sign of the progress made under Mauricio Pochettino as Spurs look set to seal a place in the Champions League for a third straight season. And it was even more impressive as they came from behind as a huge error from captain Hugo Lloris gifted Alvaro Morata the opening goal. Christian Eriksen's wonder strike levelled in first-half stoppage time, before Alli took centre stage to end a barren run by his standards with

two smart finishes just after the hour mark.

Spurs could even afford the luxury of doing the damage without Harry Kane, who made his return from a three-week layoff with ankle ligament damage 16 minutes from time. Alli was pushed into a more advanced role than his usual roving role behind Kane and had the first chance but couldn't direct Eriksen's cross goalwards. Chelsea were the side far more in desperate need of the points and that began to show as the first-half developed.

Willian and Victor Moses forced Lloris into comfortable saves, whilst Marcos Alonso also saw a goal ruled out for offside. However, the French number one was clearly at fault when the opener arrived on the half hour mark. Morata hadn't scored in the Premier League since Boxing Day, but no one has scored more headed goals in the league this season and he was left with the easiest of

tasks to nod into an empty net as Lloris flapped at Moses's cross.

#### SYMBOLIC SPURS WIN

Lloris was also far from secure when he parried Alonso's driven cross back into the danger area and relied on Jan Vertonghen to make a crucial clearance. Eriksen's shooting ability from long range had been Spurs' only real threat before the break.

Willy Caballero, deputising for the injured Thibaut Courtois, got a strong hand to the Dane's first warning shot. However, Caballero was helpless when Eriksen's fierce dipping effort clipped the bar on its way past him in first-half stoppage time. The Argentine goalkeeper was forced into a brilliant save from another long-range effort, this time from Son Heung-min, on the hour mark as

Spurs started to take control. And two minutes later they led when Alli brilliantly controlled Eric Dier's long pass before slotting inside Caballero's near post. Alli had scored just two goals in his previous 19 games in 2018 but soon had as many in four minutes as Spurs set the seal in a hugely symbolic win. Son was again denied by Caballero but Alli pounced on the pinball inside the Chelsea area before slotting into the bottom corner. Chelsea manager Antonio Conte kicked a water bottle into his dugout with the frustration of a man who knows his days in charge. Failure to make the top four is likely to seal the Italian's fate no matter what comes of Chelsea's run to the semi-finals of the FA Cup. However, Spurs too are in the last four and on this evidence are more likely to end their wait for a trophy under Pochettino, particularly with Kane back to lead the line. — AFP

## Aubameyang brace sparks Arsenal late show

LONDON: Arsenal warmed up for their crucial Europa League quarter-final with a flattering 3-0 victory against relegation-threatened Stoke yesterday. Stoke manager Paul Lambert said yesterday he was fully confident that his team will avoid relegation from the Premier League this season - with just a little help from Lady Luck.

"The one thing that's missing from our game at the minute is Lady Luck. Teams need it, players need it, everybody needs it. At the minute we've just not had it," Lambert told reporters after Stoke lost to Arsenal at the Emirates. Three goals in the final 15 minutes put a gloss on a largely soporific performance at a well-below capacity Emirates Stadium. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored the first two, including a penalty opener. Substitute Alexandre Lacazette netted the third, also from the spot, after he had been fouled.

Arsenal clinched back to back league wins for the first time since November. But the result left both clubs in the same positions in the Premier League table, with Arsenal sixth and Stoke second bottom. The Gunners will have to

play better in the first leg against CSKA Moscow on Thursday in Europe.

With little chance of finishing in the Premier League's top four, Arsenal must win the Europa League to qualify for next season's Champions League—a target that looks essential for under-fire Gunners boss Arsene Wenger as he fights to save his job.

Jack Wilshere may have missed both England's friendlies with the Netherlands and Italy but the Arsenal midfielder recovered from a knee niggle to claim the captain's armband for the day, with goalkeeper Petr Cech absent and defender Laurent Koscielny on the bench.

Stoke's preparations had seen Ibrahim Afellay jettisoned by manager Paul Lambert for not trying in training, but Eric Pieters was restored to the starting line-up after being fined for going clubbing before the previous match. The game's first chance belonged to Stoke, the team with the greater need of three points, as Mame Biram Diouf laid the ball back to Xherdan Shaqiri, who shifted the ball onto his preferred left foot and curled it inches wide of David Ospina's right-hand post. Stoke continued to take the game to the hosts, who were giving away possession cheaply. Aaron Ramsey and Wilshere were both culpable in the first 15 minutes. Arsenal almost took an undesired lead when Stoke goalkeeper Jack Butland produced a punch that will not have improved his chances of being England's number one in the World Cup. It landed at Ramsey's feet on the right of the six-yard box and the Welshman's hook cleared the goalkeeper and bounced off the top of the crossbar.— Agencies



LONDON: Arsenal's German midfielder Mesut Ozil (R) vies with Stoke City's English defender Glen Johnson during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Stoke City at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP



## Business

MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2018

**18** AUB AGM approves a cash dividend of 13 fils per share**19** Dollar rebounds as tensions over trade war diminish**21** NBK hosts dinner for automotive dealers, appreciates hard work

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait officials during a briefing on market segmentation

## Boursa Kuwait marks a milestone with new phase

## Segmentation to create a premier, a main and an auction market

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** Boursa Kuwait announced yesterday that the second phase of market development, which encompasses transformational changes such as a three-tiered, segmented market, the introduction of new market-capitalized indices and circuit breakers on securities and indices to curb volatility, as well as entirely new listing requirements has begun yesterday (April 1).

This phase will mark a milestone within Boursa Kuwait's mission to develop a liquid, reliable and sound capital market providing issuers with efficient access to capital, and investors with diverse return opportunities, which is set to see Boursa Kuwait fortify its position as a leading regional exchange.

The new market segmentation is particularly a major step, creating a Premier, a Main and an Auction market, each with unique characteristics and obligations. Boursa Kuwait will also introduce new market-capitalized indices, which represent the segmented markets. All sectorial indices will be reset to reflect the start of the new markets.

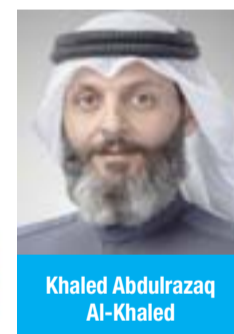
“**Market to draw more foreign investors**”

As part of the second phase, the Boursa Kuwait Rulebook, which can be found on the website, will also be modified. All members must comply with the updated rules, which include new listing requirements reflective of the market segmentation effective 1 April 2018. Moreover, a circuit-breaker system on securities and indices will be launched as a measure to prevent potential market disruptions.

During the recent Annual Capital Markets Authority Conference, Boursa Kuwait CEO Khaled Abdulrazaq Al-Khaled highlighted that the second phase of market development is targeted at resolving some issues the market is currently still facing: “We believe that the platform and infrastructure we have developed in the past two years provides a solid foundation for the next

chapter of Boursa Kuwait's success story. As we make headway in the implementation of our market development plan, we will transform our capital market structure to become more attractive for local and international investors, which will allow us to work towards a higher classification by index providers.”

“Boursa Kuwait has an unequivocal commitment to



Khaled Abdulrazaq Al-Khaled

pursuing best practices and increasing transparency for the benefit of their stakeholders. Its strategy focuses on developing the overall market status and addressing the needs of market participants through the provision of investment tools, restructuring the market to increase its competitiveness and liquidity, and attracting investments from local and international investors,” added Al-Khaled. He said Boursa Kuwait signed a contract with the Ministry of Finance for a new building at the cost of KD 140,000 annually.

Transitional phase began on April 25, 2016, when Boursa Kuwait Company officially took charge of the operations at the bourse. “The first phase kicked off on May 21, 2017 during which we focused on reconstructing the infrastructure and developing a new market upgrading it to emerging markets status in September

2017. This signified that we are using international criteria for organizing the stock exchange. Today we launched the second phase that came after considered efforts by those who were working on the project. Today, we noticed a great understanding from all dealers at the bourse including the brokers, investment companies and other traders,” said Mishaal Al-Osaimi - Vice Chairman of Capital Markets Authority (CMA), Board of Commissioners.

“The second phase is a great leap. During the first phase, we had about five month-long testing period, while the testing period for the second phase was only about three months. This reflects the kind of cooperation extended by the members of the market system and their keenness in revamping the project. We are now looking forward to the third and fourth phases of the project bringing about significant changes that are both legal and technical,” he further said.

Khalidoun Al-Tabtabaie, Deputy CEO, Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC) noted that this revamping is very ambitious intended to take the market to international standards. “Any changes in the system are considered a challenge and the next phase calls for more challenges,” he said.

The revamping plan has not only changed the systems at the bourse but it has altered the culture of the market,” he said. Three companies would be listed on the bourse by the end of this year after modifying the listing rules,” he explained.

## Saudi to tender consolidation of consultancy services

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia plans to issue tenders to consolidate consultancy services for government infrastructure projects in the coming months in a bid to improve efficiency and bring fresh momentum to stalled developments, government sources said. The kingdom plans to hire a consultancy at each ministry or state entity to supervise its pipeline of projects worth billions of dollars, according to one draft request for proposal (RFP) seen by Reuters.

Currently some entities and ministries like housing, health, power and municipalities use multiple consultants per project. Local and international consultants do project design and execution, while government entities and ministries monitor.

The new plan aims to outsource these services for five years during which the winning bidders will train Saudis so government bodies ultimately have the capability to manage such work themselves.

It also aims to trim waste in state spending, combat corruption and help revive a slump in the construction industry at a critical time for the economy as Saudi Arabia embarks on an ambitious economic transformation plan that includes development of major projects such as the \$500 billion NEOM business zone in the northwest of the country.

Recognized regional and foreign consultants with expertise in applying international project management standards are expected to win the contracts.

Saudi Arabia's construction sector has slumped in recent years as the government delayed payments to contractors and lower oil prices squeezed the state budget for new projects. The RFPs are being finalized and tendering, worth millions of dollars, is expected to start in coming months, with five-year contracts to be awarded by the end of 2018, government sources told Reuters.

The sources spoke on condition of

anonymity because the matter is not yet public. The total value of the contracts has not been finalized, but one source said the contract his ministry is planning to tender could reach 5 billion riyals (\$1.3 billion).

## Countering the slump

The kingdom has spent billions of dollars on mega-projects over the past decades, but the absence of a standard mechanism for planning, follow up, and accountability has resulted in many projects being stalled or delayed. Work on King Abdullah Financial District for example, a \$10 billion mega project in the capital Riyadh, began in 2006 but has been plagued by construction delays, cost overruns and doubts about the initial economic feasibility study.

The government is now moving to standardize infrastructure project delivery across the kingdom. The project management office at each ministry and state entity will be overseen by the National Project Management Organization (NPMO) — which was set up in 2016 as part of a broad government effort to overhaul the economy and close a gaping budget deficit. — Reuters

## Russian tycoon Magomedov held on fraud charges

**MOSCOW:** Russian authorities on Saturday arrested billionaire Ziyavudin Magomedov on charges of embezzling more than \$35 million, in one of the highest-profile prosecutions of a Russian tycoon in years. Magomedov denied the charges at a pre-trial hearing, where a judge ordered that he be held in custody until May 30.

One of Russia's richest men, the 49-year-old Magomedov holds assets in construction and logistics through his sprawling Summa Group. He also has investments in US tech ventures, including the Virgin One Hyperloop project.

He was detained along with his business partner and brother, Magomedov

Magomedov, and Artur Maksidov, the head of a company in the Summa Group that was involved in the construction of a soccer World Cup venue in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad.

Both businessmen will also be held in custody until May 30, the court ruled. At a hearing in Moscow's Tverskoy District Court to decide whether Magomedov and his associates should be detained before their trial, Judge Maria Sizintseva said they had acted as part of an organized crime group and had tried to put pressure on witnesses. She rejected an offer from Magomedov to put up a \$35 million bail bond, and ordered he be detained.

Citing the arguments against granting bail, the judge said Magomedov had access to his own aircraft, and assets abroad. The day before he was detained, he had booked a flight from Moscow to Miami, the judge said. Summa said it planned to appeal the court decision and was ready to cooperate with the investigation. — Reuters

## Business

# AUB's AGM approves a cash dividend of 13 fils per share

## AGM held with 92.851% attendance and approval of all clauses

**KUWAIT:** Chairman of Ahli United Bank, Dr Anwar Al-Mudhaf assured that "In 2017, Ahli United Bank has witnessed a 10.4 percent growth in net profits which reached KD 44.5 million (2016: KD 40.3 million) thanks to the strengthening of our core earnings, achieving a net finance income growth of 18 percent during 2017. Ahli United Bank has recorded sound results which have reinforced the Bank's financial status, strengthen its performance, and maintain its position as a leading Islamic bank, both locally and regionally.

Furthermore, the Bank achieved growth in total operating income of 8.1 percent to reach KD 120.1 million as at the end of 2017 (2016: KD 111.1 million). In parallel, the equity attributable to shareholders has increased by 5.7 percent reaching KD 406.9 million as of 31 December 2017 up from KD 385 million at the end of 2016. Similarly, net operating income increased by 5.8 percent, reaching KD 81.7 million by end of 2017 (2016: KD 77.2 million).

Dr Al-Mudhaf's speech came during the Bank's 2017 Annual General Meeting held yesterday, at the Bank's Head Office, with percent 92.851 attendance, which approved a cash dividend of 13 percent and bonus shares of 5 percent of issued and paid up capital (13 fils per share and 5 shares per 100 shares, respectively).

Dr Al-Mudhaf explained that "Ahli United Bank maintained a sound capital adequacy ratio of 18 percent on 31 December 2017 (18.2 percent on 31 December 2016), before dividend distributions, a ratio that is comfortably higher than the required regulatory level. This provides room for future expansion in both customers' credit facilities and



**KUWAIT:** Chairman of Ahli United Bank, Dr Anwar Al-Mudhaf addresses the AGM yesterday.

2017, we are positive and optimistic about the future, as we move towards further growth and development. Whilst recognizing our strong legacy over the past 76 years, we can look to the future with confidence as we strive to consolidate our reputation and deepen the trust of our customers through continued improved products and services.

### STRONG CREDIT RATINGS

Ahli United Bank has continued to receive high credit ratings from major international credit rating agencies. The Bank maintained a credit rating of "A+" and "F1" on the long term and on the short term respectively, with a stable outlook by Fitch Ratings, in addition

### THANKS & RECOGNITIONS

Finally, and on behalf of all the members of the Board of Directors, the Bank's Executive Management, all employees of the Bank and myself, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (may Allah Almighty keep him safe and sound), to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah (may Allah keep them both safe and sound), for their continuous support to Kuwait's banking sector.

I would also like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Central Bank of Kuwait, headed by the Governor Dr. Mohamad Youssef Al Hashel, as well as the Capital Markets Authority and all other supervisory bodies in Kuwait, for their positive role in supporting Ahli United Bank.

Last but not least, I would like to express my appreciation to the Bank's Shareholders and valued customers who help us maintain our strong position in this market. Also, I wish to address my sincere thanks to the members of our Sharia Supervisory Board, our Board members, Executive Management, and all our employees for their unwavering commitment and support.

I have faith - Allah willing - that the coming years will bring us more achievements and successes which will further enhance the unique standing of this prestigious banking institution.

Richard W L Groves, the Chief Executive Officer, added: "Throughout 2017, Ahli United Bank carried out its ambitious plans to achieve its vision and maintain its premier positioning as one of the leading Islamic banks in Kuwait, and in the region. Notwithstanding the continued economic challenges and geo-political uncertainties, the Bank continued to make good progress with a strong set of financial results for the year. Ahli United Bank reported a net operating income of KD 81.7 million for 2017, as compared with KD 77.2 million in 2016. The net profit attributable to shareholders was KD 44.5 million as compared with KD 40.3 million in 2016, an increase of 10.4 percent. This increase in net profit underlined the strength of the Bank's main business divisions of Corporate Banking, Retail Banking, Private Banking & Wealth Management, and Treasury, combined with an effective risk and control framework, as well as a sound cost discipline. The return on average equity (ROAE) of 11.4 percent and return on average assets (ROAA) of 1.2 percent continue to be amongst the best returns of banks in the Kuwaiti market.

Groves added, "The successful implementation of the Bank's strategic 5-year plan (2015-19) lies at the heart of our business direction bringing innovative Islamic financial solutions to the market in addition to focusing on customer satisfaction by putting our customers first".

In recognition of this direction, the international credit rating agencies, Fitch, Moody's and Capital Intelligence, have all continued to favorably report on the Bank's

credit ratings in terms of credit standing, capital quality and stable outlook for growth in the future. The Bank has again maintained a long term A+ rating with a stable outlook from Fitch, an A2 assessment of the local currency rating with a stable outlook from Moody's, and a long-term deposit rating on foreign currency with an A+ rating, and a short-term foreign currency valuation of A2 by Capital Intelligence, also with a stable outlook.

Groves pointed out that "During the year, Ahli United Bank received many prestigious awards including "Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait - 2017" from the Islamic Business & Finance magazine, and "Best Digital Bank Award 2017" in the Middle East, specifically related to the corporate banking sector, from Global Finance magazine. In addition, our Private Banking & Wealth Management Division and Customer Service Centre also won awards, as did our 2016 debut issuance of an Additional Tier 1 Sukuk, listed on NASDAQ Dubai and the Irish Stock Exchange, which was declared "Sukuk Deal of the Year 2017" by International Finance magazine".

Ahli United Bank continued the focus on Retail Banking by optimizing the branch network and providing attractive products for customers supported by a high level of service. With a development of new products and services, coupled with an improved level of communication, Retail Banking evidenced the strategic aim of putting customers first. With an enhancement of the mobile banking application during 2017, customer usage grew by more than 100 percent during the year. This is a precursor to an accelerated development of the Bank's digital banking footprint in the coming year, coupled with a widespread use of social media platforms which are readily used by customers and followers alike since the official launch in 2017. These platforms provide an additional communication channel with customers and constitute an important step towards building a stronger brand image for Ahli United Bank in the market, he added.

Amongst the notable product initiatives during the year, Ahli United Bank launched a new long-term deposit account, Wikalat Al Khair, being one of the best Shari'ah-compliant investment proposals enabling customers to benefit from high and competitive profits amongst other features.

The launch was supported by a promotional campaign, "Your Investment in Gold." The Bank also launched a "Beizat" prepaid credit card in conjunction with Master Card which is proving to be popular with a positive take-up.

Furthermore, an insurance feature was added to a number of Retail Banking products, including free Takaful life insurance and free Takaful insurance against accidents to all customers choosing to directly transfer their salaries to the Islamic Hassad Account. This product enhancement was designed in collaboration with Al Hilal Takaful.

Customer satisfaction remains a top priority for Ahli United Bank. The Service Quality Unit, as part of Customer Complaints and Protection Department, focused on enhancing customers' service through evaluating

performance. This was against the standards and strategic plans adopted to improve the quality of service, increase productivity and enhance overall performance levels. As in the previous two years, the ISO 9001:2008 German Quality Certificate "TUV Nord" was revalidated which confirms the focus on quality banking services.

Corporate Banking continued its active and historic role in the Kuwait market, concluding many new financing solutions for customers, whilst maintaining a high-quality credit portfolio coupled with diversification in the target economic sectors.

The award winning Private Banking & Wealth Management Division, continued to provide excellence in service to customers, coupled with the introduction of a diverse range of investment opportunities both in Kuwait and in international markets. Real estate projects in the United Kingdom continued to attract interest amongst private banking customers, as were the periodic seminars on tax changes, which allowed investors to make informed decisions on their wealth management.

Ahli United Bank is committed to complying with the best governance standards, being essential to all our activities in accordance with Islamic Shari'ah. Throughout 2017, the new Central Bank of Kuwait instructions related to "Sharia Supervisory Governance in Kuwaiti Islamic Banks" were implemented, taking effect on 1 January 2018. These instructions underscore the highest standards of integrity and transparency which we undertake in all our dealings as well as com-



**Dr Anwar Al-Mudhaf**

plying with all applicable regulatory standards. Internally achieving optimal employee satisfaction remained one of Ahli United Bank's top priorities throughout 2017. This was demonstrated by our commitment to be an employer of choice as we invest in our human capital.

As such, the Bank adopted a thorough training program that complied with the latest banking sector requirements and benefited more than 850 members of staff. Undoubtedly, and in line with the Bank's overall strategy, attracting and retaining Kuwaiti staff, including new graduates, was one of our key objectives during the year, and this will continue in 2018 and beyond.

Building on a fine legacy in Kuwait, Ahli United Bank continued to demonstrate its commitment to society through an active Corporate Social Responsibility program. There has been specific emphasis on youth, the environment, and those who are disadvantaged and in need of our support. We have seen an increased engagement by staff in the Bank's initiatives and sponsorships of beneficial activities which seek to improve the well-being in society. A separate Corporate Social Responsibility Report for 2017 has been published summarizing the activities throughout the year.

Ahli United Bank is determined to build on the successful achievements realized in 2017 and to continue with a similar path in future to ensure our position as a leading Islamic bank. We have only achieved this position with the trust of our many customers and stakeholders, and the dedication and support of our staff.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Board of Directors for their continued support and valuable guidance throughout the year, and similarly to our Sharia Supervisory Board. I also wish to express appreciation to the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait and his staff for the highly valued support and guidance provided to the Bank and its management. Appreciation is also extended to the Board of Commissioners of the Capital Markets Authority and staff for their continued support and advice.

Finally, I must offer my deepest thanks and appreciation to our many customers and for the trust they place in us with their continued business, and to all my colleagues in Ahli United Bank whose commitment and hard work have been essential to the Bank in achieving the sound financial results in 2017 and which will continue to be key to our future success.

### The new board of the bank

**Dr Anwar Ali Al-Mudhaf**  
Sheikh Abdullah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah  
Jamal Shaker Al-Kazemi  
Adel A El-Labban  
Sanjeev Bajjal  
Keith Henry Gale  
Abdulla Alraeesi  
Michael Gerald Essex

Mohamed Tareq Mohamed Sadeq Mohamed Akbar

**Chairman**  
**Deputy chairman**  
**Board member**  
**Board member**  
**Board member**  
**Board member**  
**Board member**  
**Board member**  
**(Independent Director)**  
**Board member**  
**(Independent Director)**

the Bank's core businesses. Furthermore, the Bank achieved a return on average equity and a return on average assets of 11.4 percent and 1.2 percent respectively as at the end of 2017, being amongst the highest key performance indicators in the local market. This has led earnings per share to increase from 24 fils in 2016 to 24.4 fils per share as at the end of 2017.

"Despite the continued challenging global operating environment, Ahli United Bank continues to pursue its role as a leading financial institution that is striving to play an active role in the economic growth within "Kuwait's New Vision 2035." In doing so, the Bank recognizes and benefits from the strengths of Kuwait's operating environment which include political stability, large sovereign assets, and the greater stability in oil prices. Such positive factors ultimately reinforce the status of Kuwaiti banks in general," he added.

### 2017: THE YEAR OF THE AWARDS

Since its establishment in 1942, Ahli United Bank's development journey has accompanied and reflected the growth that Kuwait has experienced. The progress and development witnessed in the country over many years is reflected in the Bank's own path and throughout the many changes it has undergone. However, the Bank's values have remained steadfast and at the core of all that we do.

Ahli United Bank has been recognized and honored by renowned and well-respected entities in the international financial and banking sectors, by receiving many prestigious awards to be added to a long list of accolades earned in the past. Accordingly, the Bank received the "Best Islamic Bank Award" in Kuwait for 2017 from "Islamic Business and Finance" magazine. The Bank also won the "Best Digital Bank of 2017" award in the Middle East (within the corporate banking sector) from "Global Finance" magazine which was proof of Ahli United Bank's innovative digital capabilities and ability to provide the best banking solutions for its customers. Furthermore, the Bank won the "Sukuk Deal of 2017" award in Kuwait from "International Finance" magazine for its debut issuance of the Additional Tier 1 Capital Sukuk of USD 200 million in 2016, which was oversubscribed by three times as a result of strong demand from investors in the Middle East, Asia and Europe. The Bank also received many other awards during the year that further highlighted its quality performance, particularly in Private Banking & Wealth Management and for excellence in Contact Center services.

As a recipient of many prestigious awards earned across different banking disciplines in

to receiving an "A2" with a stable outlook on its local currency rating by Moody's. Capital Intelligence reaffirmed the Bank's long term credit rating of foreign currency at "A+" and enhanced the short term foreign currency rating to "A2". These ratings reaffirm the credit standing, capital quality and stability of the Bank.

### SOUND AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

In 2017, Ahli United Bank was able to perform based on a sound and effective governance system that applies and commits to the best governance standards which define its operations according to the Islamic Shari'ah. Throughout 2017 the Bank implemented the Central Bank of Kuwait's revised requirements for Sharia Supervisory Governance in Kuwaiti Islamic Banks to further develop Kuwait's Islamic Banking sector. The Bank is fully committed to these requirements and will benefit from them as we continue to improve our future performance.

### HUMAN CAPITAL

There is no doubt that our human capital counts as one of the Bank's most valuable assets. Accordingly, we constantly strive to enhance our human resources, invest in upskilling, training, and improving the knowledge of our staff, providing them with a work environment that promotes innovation and provides for their development opportunities.

It should be emphasized that Ahli United Bank is perceived as one of the top employers in Kuwait, offering an attractive and stable work environment for employees. In fact, a number of staff members have been working for the Bank for more than 30 years, many of whom started their careers at the Bank. The Bank is equally committed to the recruitment of promising national talent, and providing an environment of development and learning as they further their careers.

### SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Bank enjoys a proven record of socially responsible initiatives over many years. In 2017, Ahli United Bank remained committed to its role towards the community by sponsoring many social, educational, humanitarian, charitable, and sporting events. This was in line with the Bank's corporate social responsibility program that was based mainly on volunteer work encouraging staff to engage in the community.

The Bank firmly believes in instilling the spirit of initiative and collaboration between employees and increasing their engagement in support of different social causes.



## Business

## NBK Money Markets Report

# Dollar rebounds as tensions over trade war diminish

## Global equities recover amid rising inflation

**KUWAIT:** Last week was relatively uneventful with no direct theme to the market. Anxiety did ease in the market over trade wars between the US and China as they are back on the table for trade negotiations. US treasury secretary Steve Mnuchin and trade representative Robert Lighthizer are reported to have sent a letter to their Chinese counterparts outlining the steps that the country needs to take in order to avoid direct tariffs that could reach up to \$60 billion of goods and services trade. In their list of demands, they asked China to open up their financial services, and cut tariffs on US cars.

The most important figure that came out last week was related to US inflation. PCE, the Fed's most favored inflation measure has picked up to its strongest level for almost a year. This supports the case that a solid economy accompanied with tight labor market is pushing price growth towards the central bank's target. The commerce department said on Thursday that the personal consumption price index rose 0.2 percent in February from the prior month. The measure excluded the often volatile categories of food and energy. Prices also increased 0.2 percent. The PCE index rose 1.6 percent over the year in its largest increase since April 2017 according to a report from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. While the number is shy of the Fed's target of 2 percent, core inflation has not exceeded 2 percent since April 2012.

In the equities market, negative sentiment persisted in the US stocks market last week. The negative contribution was mainly from the tech sector as a selloff in technology shares sent all three major benchmarks into negative territory. The current administration is considering a restriction on Chinese investments in technologies the US considers sensitive and Facebook's distresses mounted further. Moreover, escalating tensions from the US, Europe and China over tariffs stoked protectionism fears, encouraging many investors to reduce their holdings in companies exposed to global trade. On the last trading day of the month, equities recovered their losses incurred throughout the week thanks to a rebound in technology shares. Overall, equities were down for the month of March as they adjust to a new regime of elevated rates, potential higher inflation and political uncertainty.

On the foreign exchange front, the greenback opened the week on the low with the dollar index reading at 89.470. The index edged further down hitting a week's low of 88.942. The numbers and news that came later on the week including the ease of tension on trade wars and a robust GDP figure helped the

dollar gain its grounds, increasing 1.06 percent and closing at 89.974. The euro on the other hand has continued to slide lower against the greenback with the EUR/USD pair closing the week at 1.2321.

The USD/JPY pair has reversed its downward trajectory last week, as Japanese yen weakened. This was due to a North Korea and China meeting which decreased geopolitical risks in the region.

The British pound has been gaining an upward momentum since last summer. This was driven by both hawkish repricing from the BoE on rate hike expectations and a reduction in Brexit risk tensions. The cable opened the week on a strong footing but managed to close the week in the red zone. The GBP/USD started the week at a high of 1.4244 and underwent a downward movement as the dollar appreciated. The sterling closed the week 1.66 percent lower than it started it, reading at 1.4015.

### US consumer confidence

US consumer confidence fell to 127.7 in March versus the forecasted 131.2. This decline came after the number hit a 17 year high in February. The softening number reflects smaller number of individuals who expect better business conditions. The stock market was also volatile and consumers do not favor volatility.

Despite the slight dip in confidence, the latest figure is historically high and still suggests strong growth.

### US GDP

As for US GDP, economic growth in the US has slowed at a lesser pace than estimated in the fourth quarter of 2017. The US GDP expanded at a 2.9 percent q/q instead of the previously reported 2.5 percent, and higher than the estimate of 2.7 percent. There are signs that economic activity slowed in 2018 given the fall in retail sales in February and housing data being weak. The majority of analysts still believe that the economy will hit the Trump's administration 3 percent annual target this year.

The number of pending home sales in the US rose this February. The reading came at 5.54M, a respectable increase over the previous 5.38M. The homebuyer demand is showing the effects of an expanding economy and a healthy job market.

### Rising Canadian inflation

Looking at Canadian inflation number, the figure climbed at the fastest pace in three years. Consumer prices reached an annual pace of 2.2 percent this February, the highest since 2014 and representing a significant boost from the month before when it was 1.7 percent. The Bank of Canada had already hiked



rates three times since last summer. Governor Stephen Poloz has repeated that more interest rate hikes would likely be necessary.

### UK CA deficit

In the UK, the current account deficit has narrowed to 18.4 billion pounds in the fourth quarter of 2017 from a downwardly revised 19.2 billion in the previous quarter. This left the 2017 deficit at 4.1 percent of GDP, the smallest since 2016 and much lower than a record 5.8 percent in 2016.

Disposable income only rose 0.1 percent in Q4 with households saving no more of their incomes than they did in the previous three months. Consumer spending climbed 0.3 percent, matching the weakest reading in three years. As for GDP, the ONS has confirmed gross domestic product grew 0.4 percent q/q. A slowdown from 0.5 percent in the third quarter and 1.4 percent compared to the fourth quarter of 2016. The economy in the UK was held back by relatively sluggish business investment as the Brexit uncertainty has led firms to put their projects on hold.

### UK consumer confidence

Consumers in the UK on the other hand, were showing slightly higher confidence this month than they showed in February. Their confidence is supported by the prospect of wages inching upwards, inflation slightly easing, and progress being made on Brexit negotiations. The consumer confidence index rose three points reaching minus seven in March.

### German inflation

In the EU, German consumer price growth accelerated to an annual rate of 1.5 percent in March, up from 1.2 percent recorded in the previous month. On a month to month basis, the rate was unchanged at 0.4 percent. Both figures were below estimates. The above inflation figures are below the desired rate of the ECB, although it represents a significant improvement from February. Surveys of business executives taken in March have been patchy, suggesting that optimism in the country's private sector has waned after a strong end to 2017. However, consumers have largely remained upbeat with unemployment in Germany reaching fresh historic lows.

### Japanese inflation

Japanese inflation remained at low levels last month. Tokyo overall CPI came at 1 percent below the previous reading of 1.4 percent and well under the Bank of Japan target of 2 percent. The BoJ has been sending consistent messages to the markets, saying that it has no plans to tighten its ultra-accommodative monetary policy until inflation moves closer to target. Growing inflation is proving an elusive goal for the BoJ looking forward.

### Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar  
The USDKWD opened at 0.29975 yesterday morning.



## China, US talk on averting trade war

## London firm revamps pay by letting staff set salaries

**LONDON:** Against a backdrop in Britain of gender pay gaps and ongoing disputes over executives' earnings, employees at one London company are helping each other set salaries.

Betting firm Smarkets has adopted a radical pay transparency policy, through which staff can see colleagues' salaries and have pay rise requests endorsed by peers. "Most people get what they ask for," said Angeline Mulet-Marquis, a software engineer at Smarkets.

In a company where increases of 10 to 30 percent are common, Mulet-Marquis received the 12 percent more she asked for-as all of her colleagues could see on the internal website.

Recently graduated engineers are paid a salary of around £45,000 (\$63,080, 51,330 euros) at Smarkets, which rises to six-figure salaries for highly qualified senior engineers.

Despite London's reputation as a hub for start-ups and a global business center, such openness about salaries is rare in the British capital. Within view of the city's famous Tower Bridge, the Smarkets office boasts added perks such as a team of chefs to make lunch each day, a foosball table and video games to keep staff happy.

### Gender pay gap

Susana Pinto oversees Smarkets' biannual pay reviews, through which an employee asks around five peers for feedback and a suggested pay increase that they can take forward. "It's not just a matter of saying, 'Hey, I think you're great!' It's actually going to be probed," Pinto said of the feedback provided.

Further talks and comparisons to industry data determine the final pay increase, although if the employee is not happy they can set their own salary. Such a move is said to be rare, however, as employees are well aware they will have to face their colleagues who will know they have gone against their advice. "The good thing about the fact that our salaries are transparent is that they, by default, keep the company fair," said Pinto.

This extends to stamping out alleged gender inequality which has marred some British companies including the BBC. The broadcaster was forced last



LONDON: Employees of Smarkets have lunch at their office in central London. —AFP

year to disclose the salaries of some of its top staff, showing men made up 12 of the 14 highest-paid posts and leading to complaints of unequal pay for the same work. Software engineer Caglar Senel said allowing employees to see each other's salaries is a way through which companies can ensure equal pay.

"It would be super obvious that the women in the company is getting this much amount of money, and the guys are getting this much amount of money, so I think that would be helpful," he said.

### Barriers to transparency

Despite the success of pay transparency at Smarkets, which has around 100 employees, a number of staff said they were unsure the same approach would work for large companies or different industries.

Jordi Blanes i Vidal, a professor at the London School of Economics, said such a system would work best in areas such as sales where there are clear markers of performance. "But in settings in which it is not as easy to justify differences in pay that is, pay inequality-with differences in productivity, pay transparency can be very demotivating," he said.

Despite his warning, pay transparency is more widely accepted in other countries. In Norway the tax agency publishes key information online about taxpayers each year, including their earnings and wealth, allowing Norwegians to see how much their colleagues are earning. There are similar approaches in Sweden and Finland, where people can request tax information by phone or in person, while in Ireland employees have a right to request pay information broken down by gender for the same level of work.

A study by the European Commission found "cultural sensitivity" was the most common barrier to rolling out similar pay information rules across the continent, while in Britain the associated costs were the main obstacle.

Despite the challenges in different countries and for big companies, Mulet-Marquis urged other firms try a transparency drive. "The advice would be to have healthy communication even outside of the salary review," she said. "If your teams don't communicate well, that process is probably not going to work anyway, you have to build it on something that's already healthy." —AFP

## Botswana's new president vows to tackle unemployment

**GABORONE:** Botswana's new president, Mokgweetsi Masisi, used his inauguration speech yesterday to vow to tackle youth unemployment in one of Africa's most stable countries. The swearing-in ceremony in parliament came after Ian Khama stepped down having completed the constitutional maximum of 10 years in office.

As the vice president, Masisi took over automatically, and he is likely to secure a further five-year term in elections in October 2019 when the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) is expected to hold on to power. Botswana prides itself on good governance and rule of law, and the carefully managed handover of power comes a full 18 months ahead of parliamentary elections in 2019.

Masisi, the former vice president, takes over a country widely seen as an African success story that has made good use of its lucrative income from diamond, beef and tourism.

It is rated as the least corrupt country in Africa by Transparency International. But it has also struggled with rising unemployment rate of about 18 percent and an HIV epidemic. "It is because of the peace and tranquillity that our leaders have sustained for so long that Batswana (people) have continued to enjoy relative prosperity," Masisi said after taking his oath.

"One of my top priorities as the president of this country will be to address the problem of unemployment especially amongst the young people." He also pledged to improve treatment and prevention of HIV in a country with a 22 percent infection rate among adults.

President Masisi, 55, is a close ally of Khama and a BDP veteran. He is a US-educated former teacher, UNICEF official and education minister, whose father was also a cabinet minister. —AFP



Business

# NBK hosts dinner for automotive dealers, appreciates hard work

We work with car dealers to provide best customer experience: Al-Othman



**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait thanked the leadership and senior salesmen of major automotive dealers in Kuwait for their hard work, continued efforts and excellent customer service during a recent event. NBK invited executive leadership, general managers, showroom managers, and top salesmen to an exclusive dinner organized for them at Kuwaiti restaurant, Dar Hamad in Salmiya on March 27, 2018.

"NBK greatly appreciates and values our partnerships with local car agencies and the leadership, salesmen and staff that make working together seamless and a winning combination for customers," said Mohammed Al-Othman, Acting General Manager of Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait. "With their aid and support, NBK is able to offer car buyers the best customer service and support on the spot, with maximum efficiency and responsiveness."

Al-Othman thanked the attendees, highlighting the positive and unique relationship between NBK and local car agencies. "We work on special promotions and joint campaigns with the agencies to provide the best customer experi-



ence," Al-Othman continued. "This creates added value and benefit for the customer at the agency and with NBK. We look forward to maintaining a good relationship with all agencies for many years to come."

NBK management attended the event and trophies were presented to dealership management teams in recognition of and appreciation for their continuous support.

Abdullah Al-Faraj, Head of Direct Sales, Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait, who also presented the awards to automotive dealers, expressed his gratitude for the strong and prosperous cooperation between automotive dealers and NBK. He thanked the awardees for their support, trust and success in offering the best to customers.

NBK provides on-site representatives in many local car dealerships, offering salesmen and customers help and support. Car agencies partnered with NBK provide distinctive customer-centric approaches and special offers, making the car buying experience pleasant, affordable and easy.

## Bayt.com weekly report

### Making the best first impression in your job interview

Because most often than not there's no second chance to make a positive first impression, sometimes it takes no more than 30 seconds for an interviewer to form an opinion of you. First impressions are vital to the success of your job interview. When you've only got a short time to sell yourself, you need to effectively communicate your professionalism both verbally and nonverbally.

A Bayt.com poll entitled 'Influence of Personal Appearance on Hiring Decisions' that 76.4 percent of people in the MENA region believe that an employer's decision to hire is highly influenced by a candidate's physical appearance. The same poll also found that good grooming shows good character and the candidate's interest in the position. To make sure you don't end your job interview before it has really begun, here are some do's and don'ts from Bayt.com's career experts to help you make a good first impression during a job interview:

#### The do's

Arrive on time, alone, and with a professional smile and firm handshake that indicates you are happy to be there. Generally, the image you want is one that is professional and positive.

Dress conservatively and sensibly in clothes that are not too tight or revealing (we recommend a business suit for the first interview). Too many accessories or jewelry, revealing attire, attire that is too casual or unclean, sloppy carefree outfits, and excessive or inappropriate make-up will all send out the wrong message.

Watch your body language by sitting upright in your chair, maintaining comfortable eye contact, smiling and nodding politely. Show enthusiasm. Your attitude can make or break the interview. Employers are looking for energetic professionals. Looking bored or tired or displaying a lack of interest during the interview will work against you. Bayt.com's 'Hiring Practices in the MENA Region' poll shows that recruiters in the MENA region look for hunger, drive and ambition as the most important thing when making a hiring decision.

Be courteous. Listen to the interviewer attentively, smile politely and do not interrupt. Tailor your answers to the precise questions to show you are in fact listening and understanding all that is being said.

Answer questions attentively, respectfully and in a manner that engages the employer and demonstrates your interest in the company and the job.

Be honest. Exaggerations and outright lies at the interview stage are more often than not glaringly obvious. Dishonesty and clear exaggerations are among the most common mistakes jobseekers make during an interview.

Leave happy and make sure your goodbye handshake is just as confident as it was while you were going in. Even if the interview didn't go as good as you were hoping, do not show anger or any negative feelings.

#### The don'ts

Don't wear strong perfume. While you do want to make sure you are dressed in the best way possible, you don't want to cause any respiratory allergies to the interviewer. Don't chew gum, smoke, eat or drink at the interview, as this might suggest disrespect.

Don't be distracted. Look the interviewer straight in the eye and give them your full and undivided attention. Silence your phone before walking into the interview and let go of any thoughts or distractions you are thinking of.

Don't let your body language send the wrong messages: Avoid crossing your arms or legs in front of you, slouching in the chair, leaning too far back, talking to the floor, or flirting.

Avoid over-confidence, superiority, bragging, or excessive familiarity. Always maintain a humble, respectable, and friendly demeanor. Avoid making negative comments about previous employers, bosses or peers. Even when asked why you left a previous company, be diplomatic with your answer, do not badmouth anyone, and do not show negative emotions.

Don't bring up your personal life or comment on politics, religion or any other controversial topics that may be off the track. Don't stray from the interview questions or pretend you heard something different. If you are unable to answer a question you should either ask for clarification, time to think, or honestly say that you are unable to answer. Keep your answers factual, honest and professional.

Making the right impression during a job interview isn't hard if you keep in mind three basic rules: First, personal appearance does count. Second, your body language says a lot about you so make sure you don't send the wrong cues. Finally, dress as you want to be seen: a person who takes their job seriously and is professional.

Bayt.com is the #1 job site in the Middle East with more than 40,000 employers and over 31,100,000 registered job seekers from across the Middle East, North Africa and the globe, representing all industries, nationalities and career levels. Post a job or find jobs on [www.bayt.com](http://www.bayt.com) today and access the leading resource for job seekers and employers in the region

## Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi account draw

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank, the second largest in terms of assets, announced yesterday the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

#### The lucky winners are:

1. Mohammad Abdullah Ali
2. Fatemah Joudah Mubarak Alfadhli
3. Abdulaziz Hussain Mohsen Abu Shalfah
4. Ali Ashour Gholoum Aljafar
5. Saad Abdulah Shalal Aqeel

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a quarterly draw with more chances to win higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers daily and quarterly draws, wherein the quarterly draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will

entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win.

For more information on opening a Yawmi account, the new quarterly draw or on any of the bank's products and services, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch, or simply call the bank's Call Center. Customers can also log on to Burgan Bank's [www.burgan.com](http://www.burgan.com) for further information. Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has

majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

The bank was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2008, making it the first bank in the GCC, and the only bank in Kuwait to receive such accreditation for the third consecutive year. The Bank also has its credit distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twelve consecutive years. Burgan Bank, a subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), is a strongly positioned regional Bank in the MENA region.

## Macron reform drive is make-or-break for French unions

**PARIS:** Facing a push for deep reforms by President Emmanuel Macron targeting the public sector and businesses, French unions kick off a wave of strikes tomorrow that analysts say will test how much weight they still carry. Workers at the state rail operator SNCF will start downing tools two days out of every five-a strategy aimed at limiting lost wages-but the disruptions are likely to spill over into non-strike days as well.

Unions are reacting to government plans to revamp the debt-laden and loss-making SNCF which they believe-despite consistent denials from the government-is a first step toward privatization. Under the reform plans, new employees would not benefit from a special status historically given to railway workers, which guarantees them a job for life and early retirement. SNCF chief Guillaume Pepy warned yesterday that some train lines might be closed due to the walk-outs, which are projected to last until June and could lead to disruption increasing over time.

"Three days after normal services resume, another strike sequence will start. It'll completely disorganise our work," he told the *Journal du Dimanche* newspaper.

Pepy, who has warned that just "one train in five or one in eight" trains will be running, urged passengers to stay away from stations unless their train was confirmed, starting from Monday night.

Transport minister Elisabeth Borne, interviewed in the Sunday version of the *Parisien* newspaper, didn't mince her words, calling the industrial action "incomprehensible".

A new poll by the Ifof survey group published yesterday showed that 46 percent of respondents found the strike "justified", an



PARIS: In this file photo, a garbage collector is at work in Paris. Garbage collectors will go on strike tomorrow. — AFP

increase of four points from two weeks ago. Only a slim majority, 51 percent, thought the government "should complete the reform as it has been announced".

#### Comparisons with Thatcher

Rail workers will be joined by striking rubbish collectors in Paris and other major cities who demand the creation of a national waste service as well as the right to early retirement.

Electricity and gas employees will also launch strike action, though it was unclear what the consequences might be for their customers. The protests follow a series of demonstrations or strikes by civil servants, teachers, pensioners and students who have been stirred up by Macron's multi-front reform drive. Unions have so far failed to block any of the changes proposed by the centrist leader

since his election last year, a victory that virtually swept away the Socialist Party, long the political champion of the labor movement.

But by taking on the SNCF, a totem of French unionism, Macron has inevitably drawn comparisons to a previous turning point in Europe's industrial relations: Margaret Thatcher's showdown with British coal mine unions in 1984. Macron appears to be seizing the opportunity provided by his surprise victory in presidential and parliamentary elections last May and June when he stood as a reformist candidate promising to transform France.

Like controversial labor market reforms last October, he has promised to push through the SNCF overhaul by executive order to avoid a lengthy debate in parliament, while also pressing ahead in other areas. — AFP

# The All-New 2018 Ford Expedition is the Most Adaptable Expedition Ever



Now available at Ford Alghanim

The All-New 2018 Expedition redefines the full-size SUV segment with more adaptability than ever. The vehicle you have all been waiting for will provide you with comfort like never before.

Management System keeps your belongings of all shapes and sizes organized at all times.



The hands-free, foot-activated lift-gate allows owners to conveniently open or close the lift-gate with a simple, straight kicking motion under the rear bumper when the key is detected. This is especially helpful when you have both your hands filled with shopping bags or boxes! For additional safety, the lift-gate will reverse the opening or closing motion if an obstacle is detected. As for convenience, the opening height of the lift-gate can be programmed to avoid contact with overhead obstacles. To program the opening height, manually move the lift-gate to the desired position and press and hold the control button until a chime is heard.

## Most adaptable Expedition ever

The new generation 2018 Expedition has a roomy, flexible interior. With seating for up to eight people and room for their gear, this full-size SUV makes modern family adventures more comfortable during short and long trips.

The All-New 2018 Expedition is the first full-size utility to feature a sliding second-row seat with tip-and-slide functionality, providing easy access to the third row without the need to first remove a child safety seat – finally eliminating the burden of constantly installing and uninstalling child safety seats.



The All-New 2018 Expedition offers best-in-class second-row and third-row leg room and hip room. The spacious third row isn't just for the kids anymore, adults can also ride comfortably thanks to the power-reclining seats. For large families traveling long distances in the Middle East, this is a feature that customers want and appreciate.

The All-New Expedition 2018 also includes an expansive panoramic sunroof, which is the closest you can get to a convertible that seats eight! The spacious vehicle carries 15 beverage holders that provide the perfect spot for your drink in any seat, meaning you never have to worry about stopping on the road to grab a drink.



Expedition's second- and third-row seats can be quickly folded flat with the push of a button to open up a cargo area wide enough to handle 4x8-foot sheets of plywood and other gear, depending on cargo weight and load distribution, even with the lift-gate closed. The new class-exclusive Cargo Protector feature uses a raised lip at the back of the load floor to prevent cargo from rolling out. Not to mention, the Advanced Cargo

All interested customers in Ford vehicles are welcome to visit the Ford Alghanim New Vehicle Showroom, Service and Spare Parts Center in Shuwaikh's Industrial Area, opposite Sirbb Circuit and the Classical Car Museum, and Ford Alghanim's new showroom in Fahaheel or call 1898900.

Health

# Mama bear keeps cubs longer as shield against hunters

## Single female more likely to be shot as one with a cub

PARIS: Female brown bears have learned to protect themselves from being shot by spending more time caring for their young as they adapt to legislation banning the hunting of mothers with cubs. The finding, published on Tuesday in the journal Nature Communications, was made by a team of international researchers who spent 22 years studying data on the reproductive strategy and survival of Scandinavian brown bears.

"Man is now an evolutionary force in the lives of the bears," said Professor Jon Swenson from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU). In Sweden, Scandinavian brown bears-Ursus arctos-are heavily hunted and anyone can hunt without having a specific license, but bears in family groups are protected by law. "A single female in Sweden is four times more likely to be shot as one with a cub," said Swenson, one of the authors of the study who has spent more than 30 years working with one of the world's longest-running research projects on bears.

Over the scope of the study, the researchers found that some female bears began to adapt their mothering tactics in order to increase their survival chances-the ursine equivalent of a human shield. In that time, some mother bears extended the period of care from 18 months to 2.5 years. "Generally, the cubs have followed their mother for a year and a half," said Swenson, with the researchers finding no evidence of the longer care period before 1995.

### A hunter-induced change

But over the past two decades that has changed with more cubs now



HAMBURG: Kamchatka brown bears Leonid (front) and Mascha stroll through their enclosure at the Hagenbeck zoological garden in Hamburg, northern Germany. — AFP

staying with their mothers for an additional year, thereby increasing the survival chances for both the mother and her offspring. "As long as a female has cubs, she is safe. This hunting pressure has resulted in a change in the propor-

tion of females that keep their cubs for 1.5 years in relation to those that keep them for 2.5 years," the study found.

Between 2005 and 2015, the number of females keeping their cubs with them for an extra year rose from seven

percent to 36 percent. Speaking to AFP, Swenson said that although hunting had also impacted on other species, few showed such a marked change as the bears. "This seems to be the first study that strongly suggests a hunter-induced change in the frequency of maternal-care strategies," he said. "There are examples of hunting systems where females with young are protected, either by legislation or hunter preference, but few species show such a variation in the length of the maternal bond as bears," he said.

### Impact on breeding

Bears are not the only species for which human practices have forced a change in evolution, the study's lead author Joanie van de Walle said. "In our lab, we have documented a decrease in horn length of bighorn sheep at Ram Mountain, Alberta, over time due to trophy hunting that targets individuals with the largest horns," she said, referring to a species of sheep known as Ovis canadensis. "Rams with smaller horns are not targeted and thus survive and reproduce better."

Among the bears, the extended caring period acted to slow down their life cycle, reducing their breeding possibilities as the females do not breed until their offspring are weaned. Although shorter periods of maternal care provide more reproductive opportunities, the research found that this cost was offset by the higher survival rate among both the mothers and their cubs. "This is especially true in areas of high hunting pressure. There, the females that keep their cubs the extra year have the greatest advantage," Swenson said. —AFP

## Indian scientists lose contact with satellite

NEW DELHI: India's national space agency has lost contact with a satellite days after it was launched into orbit with much fanfare, authorities said yesterday. The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) lost communication with the GSAT-6A satellite as it prepared to undertake its third and final orbiting maneuver on Saturday. "Efforts are underway to establish the link with the satellite," ISRO said in a statement.

The satellite-an indigenous model weighing more than 2,000 tons-was designed to improve communications for the armed forces. It was launched from the southern state of Andhra Pradesh on Thursday. The space program is a source of much pride in India and an achievement that highlights its emergence as a rising power and major world economy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the launch Thursday, saying he was "proud of @isro for taking the nation towards new heights and a brighter future".

The launch was seen as another feather in the cap for ISRO scientists, who won Asia's race to Mars in 2014 when an Indian spacecraft reached the Red Planet on a shoestring budget. That feat burnished India's reputation as a reliable low-cost option for space exploration, with its \$73 million price tag drastically undercutting NASA's Maven Mars \$671-million mission. In February last year India put a record 104 satellites into orbit from a single rocket, surpassing Russia which launched 39 satellites in one mission in June 2014. But the Indian space program has also been blighted by failures, most recently in August last year when a mission to launch a backup navigation satellite suffered a major technical glitch. —AFP



SRIHARIKOTA: In this file photo, Indian onlookers watch as the Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) GSAT-6A communications satellite launches on the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F08) from Sriharikota in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. —AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
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## Global Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader

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## What's On

## Ibtikar Al-Kuwait contest winners to be announced

**A**l-Saad Foundation for Knowledge and Scientific Research (SFKSR) said judging on participating works in the Ibtikar Al-Kuwait contest for research and projects of female students at the domestic level are complete, adding that results will be announced April 3. SFKSR Chairwoman Sheikh Fadia Al-Saad said the number of participants is 37 and that the top three winners

will qualify to participate in the same contest at the gulf level.

She said judging began by opening an exhibition that included girls works followed by sessions to judge the projects, adding that this stage of the contest are final qualifications for local participation. Sheikh Fadia added that announcement of successful projects at the Gulf level will be during the honoring ceremony that

will be held at the end of the contest in the presence of GCC countries that participated. She said the officiating committee saw projects concerned with science, applied physics, technology, engineering sciences and social science.

She said the number of accepted participations in the intermediate stage (recycling electronic leftovers) were 9 by 18 students supervised by 9 teachers along with serious and fruit-

ful cooperation by Kuwait Education Ministry. The number of participations that met the contest conditions in the elementary stage (science fiction stories) was 14, submitted by 19 participants under the supervision 14 teachers. She said there are 14 participations in the secondary stage, presented by 35 students and supervised by 14 teachers adding that judges selected the top three projects of each contest.



Sheikh Fadia Al-Saad Al-Sabah

## NBK celebrates World Autism Awareness Day

**N**ational Bank of Kuwait (NBK) celebrated World Autism Day at Center 21 for young adults with special needs. NBK is the strategic partner of the center and this initiative comes in line with NBK's commitment towards corporate social responsibility. World Autism Awareness Day is an internationally recognized day on 2nd April, every year. Autism is a highly variable neurodevelopmental disorder that appears during infancy or childhood. It is distinguished by a characteristic triad of symptoms like impairments in social interaction; impairments in communication; and restricted interests and repetitive behavior.

"NBK's partnership is part of its ongoing drive to fulfill its corporate social responsibilities", said Joanne Al Abdul Jaleel, NBK Public Relations

Officer. "NBK endeavors to shoulder its social responsibilities and share with the various private and public sector institutions the burdens and responsibilities of broader national efforts towards social advancement". Al Abdul Jaleel added "NBK's support to Center 21 comes in line with the bank's customary and ongoing spirit of corporate citizenship as well as the vital role it plays in supporting all social and educational developmental issues."

Center 21 is the first of a kind in Kuwait dedicated to serve and support young adults with special needs over the age of 21. It provides complete and sophisticated services for young adults. The center's activities varies from entertainment, field trips, development courses, rehabilitation sessions in addition to development services as physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy focus skills, nutritional counseling and encouraging self-reliance and independence. NBK has a long tradition supporting social and community oriented activities. NBK's corporate social responsibility programs cover a range of education, environment, health, philanthropic, social and sports-related initiatives.



## Salt Restaurant launches new lunch menu at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel &amp; Spa

**S**alt Restaurant for seafood and international cuisine at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa celebrated the launch of its new menu. The signature restaurant also announced that opening its doors for lunch in addition to dinner. The announcement was made in a glamorous style with the presence of distinguished members of the media.

General Manager, Savino Leone and Director of PR & Communications, Carol Roncoletta welcomed the special guests in an event that epitomized Jumeirah's luxury and renowned hospitality of Stay Different. Delighted members of the media were given the privilege of sampling dishes from the crafted menu before it was implemented in Salt.

Upon arrival, media invitees were enthralled with a

live sushi demonstration where they had the opportunity to dive deep into the succulent creations of the restaurant's sushi chef. Guests were then treated to an exquisite 3-course menu as they unwind on the rhythms of live piano music in the background to add up to the sophisticated ambiance.

The menu featured Charcoal Sweet Corn soup, served in Salt's renowned signature style, followed by the main course 'Salt Discovery' Surf & Turf, with Wagyu tenderloin, Lobster Thermidor and Jumbo Prawns. The meal was rounded off with a delectable, sweet desert of Valrhona Albino Chocolate; a special finale to an engaging afternoon.

General Manager, Savino Leone, said: "As hospitality leaders, we are committed to consistently offer our guests' unique dining experiences and that is what we strive to do with our revamped Salt menu". He added, "We are confident our new culinary creations will be popular with our loyal Salt diners and those experiencing our luxury dining hospitality for the first time." The updated menu features some traditional local and international favourites and some distinctive additions, including flavoured sushi and sashimi.

Take your seat in a luxurious setting and savour the delights and flavours of Salt's new menu. Salt welcomes you for lunch from 1 pm-3.30 pm and for dinner from 7 pm-12 am, from Monday to Saturday.

## GUST to host SEEN conference

**T**he Mass Communication and Media (MCM) Department at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) will launch a three day cultural industry conference under the name "THE SEEN" from April 9 to 11, 2018 at their Mishref campus. The event will showcase creative talents in the field of visual communication in Kuwait covering areas such as photography, fine art, advertising and illustration. Over 30 leading professionals from creative industries will conduct a series of lectures, activities and workshops which are free and open to the public.



The conference is jointly organized by students and faculty, with a number of classes as well as the student-led Media Club working for a full year to make all of the preparations. The event is spread across three days, each with a corresponding theme. Day 1, engaging, focuses on individuals and organizations who use visual communication to engage with new communities or the broader society. Speakers that day, in chronological order, include Dalal Al-Nafisi of Manifesto 13, Lubna Saif Abbas of Yadawi, Jowaher AlBader of Kuwait University, the independent photographers Zainab Abdal and Nasser AlQattan, designer Dr. Fahad Dhawi, Said Zeineddine of Horizon FCB, and Iqbal Haddad of the International Advertising Association's Kuwait chapter.

Day 2, Embracing, highlights the efforts of individuals and organizations who represent and support a core group of visual communicators across Kuwait. Speakers include Yasmine ElCharif from Bazaar Magazine, photographers Mohammed Sultan and Abdulaziz AlSorayia, illustrator Yousef AlBaqshi, ElieAtik and Laila Al-Gharabally from Impact BBDO, Sami Hanna for Mullenlowe Blu, artists Thuraya Al-Baqsam and Shurouq Amin, and Tania Shammam from the Contemporary Art Platform. Day 3, Emerging, recognizes new talents, techniques and technologies in the local visual communication field. Speakers include Sara Chouari from Art Space, Barry Rodrigues of Future Communications, illustrator Farah Alsaad, photographers Sager Al-Suwaiel and Badriyah Al-Hajiri, Fasiel Al-Saei of KWT Magazine, and illustrator Nouriya Al-Mass.

In addition to the seminars and panels, visitors can also sign up for workshops on a range of subjects from art and illustration, to iphono-graphy and calligraphy. Students and public will also have the opportunity to experience first-hand the various dimensions of visual communications with activity "zones" spread across campus, including equipment.

MCM Department Chair, Dr. Fahed Al-Sumait, said, "We are really looking forward to THE SEEN. Each of our conferences help our students learn more about the industries and people related to their degree, while also giving them an opportunity to apply the skills we teach them in the classroom, to a real-work event. It's a lot of work and planning, but the conferences are always tremendous fun for everyone involved."

THE SEEN conference is the fourth organized by the MCM Department. Each conference is dedicated to an area of emphasis within the department's Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Mass Communication: Visual Communication, Digital Media Production, and Public Relations and Advertising. Previous events include the first "SEEN" in 2014 as well as "THE SCRIPT" and "THE CAUSE", which dealt respectfully with the fields of media production and public relations in Kuwait. The newly-launched 2018 SEEN conference is open to the public.

The Gulf University for Science and Technology, which hosts the event, was founded in 2002 as the first private university in Kuwait. GUST is based on an American-style model of higher education and currently hosts approximately 3,900 full-time students.

## CBK visits North-West Bilingual School students

**C**ommercial Bank of Kuwait visited students in North-West Bilingual School, within the framework of "Ya Zain Turathna" campaign, according to the visits program prepared by the bank for the seventh year. "This visit strengthened means of communications with students and enriched their heritage knowledge about Kuwaiti customs and traditions, and the lifestyles of our forefathers in the past," Assistant General Manager for the Advertisement and Public Relations



Department Amani Al-Wara said. North-West school administration thanked the bank administration for the visit which contributed in presenting important information for students about Kuwait's old heritage.



## Al Jahra Copthorne Hotel goes dark during Earth Hour

**A**l Jahra Copthorne Hotel & Resort staff and guests joined millions of people across the world in switching lights off for an hour on 25 March at 8:30 pm - to raise awareness for the planet. The hotel invited all its guests and staff for a candlelit cocktail reception around the hotel swimming pool to encourage them to switch off their room lights and take part of this world movement to

spread awareness protecting the planet and stand against climate change. Related documentaries were played on giant screens before the lights go off as they stood in darkness enjoying the prepared food and drinks.

Al Jahra Copthorne Hotel Manager Alaa Selim expressed his happiness in participating in this world wide movement and said "we are happy to take part of this symbolic act to spread awareness about the earth and climate change as part of our responsibility to encourage positive environmental impacts. We are happy to see so much participation, most of our hotel guest and staff gathered around the pool along with kids spreading awareness about climate change" He proudly added "We have saved around 246 KW of electricity during this hour."

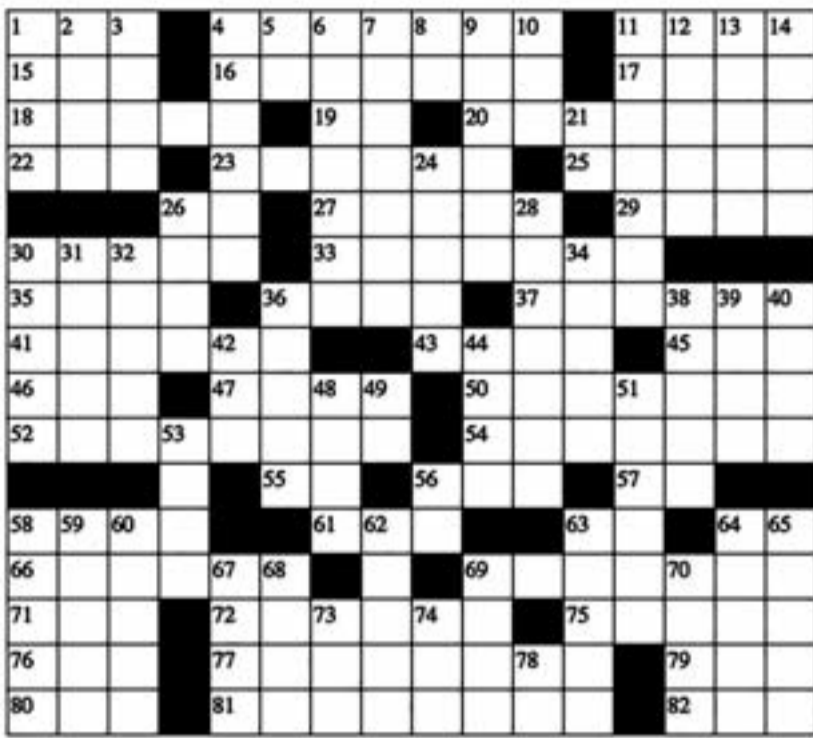






Stars

CROSSWORD 1873



ACROSS

- The cry made by sheep.
- With anger.
- A form of magnetic resonance imaging of the brain that registers blood flow to functioning areas of the brain.
- The month following July and preceding September.
- A rise in the temperature of the body.
- Water falling in drops from vapor condensed in the atmosphere.
- A short high tone produced as a signal or warning.
- Not out.
- One of two official languages of Norway.
- A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
- First in order of birth.
- Asian pepper plant whose dried leaves are chewed with betel nut (seed of the betel palm) by southeast Asians.
- A person of unquestioning obedience.
- European twining plant whose flowers are used chiefly to flavor malt liquors.
- (Irish) One of a group of sea demons sometimes associated with the hostile power of nature.
- French mathematician and astronomer who formulated the nebular hypothesis concerning the origins of the solar system and who developed the theory of probability (1749-1827).
- Lie adjacent to another.
- Small genus of erect balsam-scented herbs.
- The lowermost portion of a structure partly or wholly below ground level.
- An association of people to promote the welfare of senior citizens.
- A theory of strong interactions between elementary particles (including the interaction that binds protons and neutrons in the nucleus).
- Take in solid food.
- (computer science) A kind of computer architecture that has a large number of instructions hard coded into the cpu chip.
- A pause or interruption (as in a conversation).
- An antineoplastic drug used to treat certain malignancies.
- French composer (1892-1974).
- A Mid-Atlantic state.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- The front of the head from the forehead to the chin and ear to ear.
- A sudden loss of consciousness resulting when the rupture or occlusion of a blood vessel leads to oxygen lack in the brain.
- An agency of the United Nations responsible for programs to aid education and the health of children and mothers in developing countries.
- Long and light rowing boat.
- Of texture.
- Jordan's port.
- A benevolent aspect of Devi.
- Russian writer of stories and novels and plays (1818-1883).
- A member of a Mayan people of southwestern Guatemala.
- The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- Or family Polypodiaceae.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- A small cake leavened with yeast.
- A Scottish word.
- Advanced in years.
- Give a certain impression or have a certain outward aspect.
- A Mid-Atlantic state.
- Cooking utensil consisting of a flat heated surface (as on top of a stove) on which food is cooked.
- The conversion of waste land into land suitable for use of habitation or cultivation.
- Denoting a quantity consisting of one more than eight and one less than ten.
- Horizontal beam used as a finishing piece over a door or window.
- A branch of the Tai languages.
- German educator who founded the kindergarten system (1782-1852).
- Cuban poet and revolutionary who fought for Cuban independence from Spain (1853-1895).
- (of e.g. celestial bodies) Above the horizon.
- A linen tape used for trimming as a decoration.
- A soft gray ductile metallic element used in alloys.
- A shade of brown with a tinge of red.
- A unit of weight used in some Moslem countries near the Mediterranean.
- An island in the Persian Gulf.
- A religious belief of African origin involving witchcraft and sorcery.
- (prefix) Consisting of more than one.
- Small porous bowl made of bone ash used in assaying to separate precious metals from e.g. lead.
- Not still wet.
- Short and fat.
- A very light brown.
- (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- A legal document codifying the result of deliberations of a committee or society or legislative body.
- The highest level or degree attainable.
- A detailed description of design criteria for a piece of work.
- A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
- Sharp piercing cry.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
- A roll of tobacco for smoking.
- Light wispy precipitation that evaporates before it reaches the ground (especially when the lower air is low in humidity).
- An anti-TNF compound (trade name Arava) that is given orally.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
- (prefix) Outside or outer.
- Highly offensive.
- Try to manage without help.
- A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
- A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
- A fractional monetary unit of Japan and Indonesia and Cambodia.
- A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You have found yourself in the best work day you have had in a long time. Ambitions run high right now and you could come across an opportunity to further your position or get a new one! Communicating with the boss or superiors comes easily when you discuss something sensitive; this clears the air for everyone to move forward with something important. Strong work related energy is likely. You might say or do the wrong thing and make things worse; your intentions are pure, no harm intended! You could want to keep to yourself, but you just can't today. Tending to work brings pretty good outcomes. Intuition tells you to stay out of something, and you listen. Having something your way seems most important right now; hold on and don't panic if it doesn't go your way! You enjoy your own company a bit later.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You could find yourself in an unfortunate position to spend, spend, spend when you shouldn't! You could test your boundaries to see just how far you can go without getting into trouble. You seem more than capable of doing whatever it takes to succeed. You could get your temper up over nothing and later regret it; this is likely a result of a misunderstanding. You seem to actually soak up the beauty in a certain environment you find yourself in later today. Being with someone you love makes this a perfect day. You hold special affection for those you share time with just now; you're extremely grateful for all that you have been blessed with. Your pure loyalty is apparent when you come to a friend's rescue. You're seen as charming and attractive to be with. Something new pops up in the business environment.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your security could be challenged by someone in authority; this causes extreme upset as your home and family are at the very top of your priority list. You feel secure and fortunate in the life you have created for yourself. There just may be a change in your work place arrangements that could be troubling; keep in mind that this will likely turn out to be the very best thing that could ever happen! Someone admires your strong work ethic and productivity. You may find yourself in a position to refuse something offered; self-reliance is strongly forecast for some time to come. Teamwork is called for later and you find yourself in a position to follow; not lead; you like having the opportunity to work without added pressure. You're able to make some arrangements you thought might be a lot more difficult.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are facing a choice regarding an important move in your life; emotional ties could strongly influence this! You feel a strong energy of change and encouragement in your decisions at this time. A demanding person causes and uncomfortable environment by insisting you do something their way; you may show them a side of you they don't like. You readily accept a challenge you know you can surmount. Someone has a close eye on the example you set. Your positive influence is felt by those you work with; a major project benefits from your insight and open mind. You prove yourself when you help someone avert a bad situation. Taking on a new project isn't something you want to do, but this could push you in the right direction. You lie equal and balance for the positive outcomes it creates and allows.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You value your belongings, your family, your life in general; material gain is strongly indicated during the new phase you have entered. A spirit of acquisition is prominent according to the stars as you plan for your future. You get a bad vibe regarding someone you're around; pay attention to what intuition says regarding this person. It takes a bit of true effort, but you can avoid an ugly confrontation if you choose to. Taboos and secrets appeal to you and some type of involvement is forecast; we all enjoy our private pleasures, don't put yourself down for enjoying yours. Starting over with someone you have offended, or someone who's offended you, goes smoothly. You love being the center of attention and absorb words of praise like a sponge. You enjoy the perfect end to a very good, productive day.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Welcome to a new day that finds you invigorated and motivated! New career directions are strongly possible; it's the decisions that might give you difficulty. A project requiring practical approaches have your name on them! You know what you want to do, now you just have to figure out how to do it, and you will. You appear to be in control of any situation you may find yourself in. You're not in the mood for chasing solutions for an issue that doesn't have much to offer; you're more interested in working with things that make a positive difference. Temptation strikes when you happen upon someone you have not seen in a while! Do your best! You well know that you can do anything you truly want to do. You're moving farther away from your old way of life and into a much brighter place.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You're in for being appreciated at work or home, either way, your ego's in for a lift today! A break in routine is strongly indicated when you receive a welcome invitation from a friend. You return the affection of someone you used to know. Your sense of equality and fairness could get in your way. You could be sexually active during this phase, especially now. You take a wrong turn and become lost when you're unexpected at a certain gathering; you're late, but you do manage to get there! Someone surprises you with some surprising news that could rattle you; this isn't necessarily a negative thing but it does cause drastic change. You start from the very beginning when a new project unfolds no obstructions or slowdowns are forecast. Reading or watching a movie takes you away from the grindstone.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

Looking inside you try to figure out why you feel a certain way about a certain person; you could seriously consider marriage or another important partnership. Some interesting gossip comes to you regarding someone from your past; you wish this person the very best now. Keeping your thoughts to yourself seems likely today and this is for the very best. You want nothing to do with someone who insists on being unrealistic when dealing with an important project. You encounter a person that always brings your spirits up and encourages your efforts. You enjoy taking a walk on what some may consider the dark side; something uncommon is strongly indicated here; hold your head up as you follow your intentions to the end. Beginning at the beginning is something you look forward to at this time.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

Luck is with you when someone else handles a sticky business situation as your thoughts aren't clear. You get to the bottom of a certain situation that's keeping you up at night! You manage to land on your feet when you make an unfortunate decision; you have a protective energy surrounds you now according to the heavens. Money means power when a wealthy person offers to pay high-dollar for an item or piece of property you possess. You have a grateful heart. Your love for, and understanding of, others are endearing qualities; you're well admired! You reach a conclusion regarding sharing some good news with someone special. Your secrets are happy ones you don't mind sharing right now! You influence several when you reveal how some things works for a group of interested people.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Joining with others to make a difference is strongly indicated in the heavens. Your relationships for deeper bonds and grown stronger in meaning. Friends are family, family are friends! You pay attention to a compulsion driving you to discover more about a recent new acquaintance. Your mental state's sharp; problem solving comes easily; you could join a group that promotes beliefs you feel very strongly about and follow; working with others works! You're challenged in one area of life you strive to improve on with considerable success. If you're frustrated and you're very well could be! You should take into consideration that this is very temporary. Spending time outside creates the atmosphere you need to freshen your body, mind and spirit.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Your day's spent doing chores you have put off. Tasks are done with ease and with little effort. The parts of your life you truly love are never far from your thoughts and this is very timely just now; home needs you as much as you need home! You have a distinct wish to be highly regarded by a particular person; this is a definite bone of contention you're beginning to let go of. You can't seem to get your words out correctly; take a moment! You have entered a phase that ushers in a strong desire to broaden your goals and shoot for the stars come to the fore. You just happen to be at your most effective when negotiating and collaborating with others. You're very clear on which path to take and plan to take things one step at a time; no acting needy or collapsing into courses of action that might fail you.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your independence is dominant as you lack a project on your own. Your desire to fit in and be accepted is highlighted. You adore animals, and may find yourself helping with one in some way that doesn't belong to you. You could be misty eyed today as you reflect on your life and loves. This is a day filled with loved ones that share information that's been passed down. Learning more about your ancestors could interest you now. Your head could be in the clouds for much of the day and as a result you could realize something very helpful. Positive energy is a strong component of your month with the exception of some slices of negative influence. You relate to someone who's your senior and shares the same opinions and attitudes; working together you find new ways to invest in a new field.

Wordsearch Puzzle

**Sports**

Find and circle all of the Sports that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Vince Lombardi quotation.

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

ARCHERY CROQUET JAI ALAI SOCCER  
BADMINTON CYCLING LACROSSE SOFTBALL  
BASEBALL DARTS POLO SQUASH  
BASKETBALL FENCING RACQUETBALL SWIMMING  
BILLIARDS FISHING RUGBY SURFING  
BOUCE FOOTBALL RUNNING TENNIS  
BOWLING GOLF SKATEBOARDING VOLLEYBALL  
BOXING HANDBALL SKATING WRESTLING  
CRICKET HOCKEY SKIING

Yesterday's Solution

**Songs From the Year 2003**

ALL I HAVE  
ANGEL  
BABY BOY  
BEAUTIFUL  
CLOCKS  
COME OVER  
DRIFT AWAY  
FIGHTER  
FRONTIN'  
GET BUSY

GET LOW  
GOSSIP FOLKS  
HEADSTRONG  
I CAN  
I WANT YOU  
I'M WITH YOU  
IGNITION  
IN DA CLUB  
INTO YOU  
INTUITION

LANDSLIDE  
LIKE A STONE  
LIKE GLUE  
MESMERIZE  
MISS YOU  
PICTURE  
RAIN ON ME  
RIGHT THURR  
SAY YES  
SENORITA

SO GONE  
SOMEDAY  
STAND UP  
STUCK  
SUGA SUGA  
SUNRISE  
SUPERMAN  
TROUBLE  
UNWELL

The hidden song title is: HOW YOU GONNA ACT LIKE THAT

Daily SuDoku

5	4		8	6	2		
9	8		2			5	7
	7	1		5			
7	9		1	6		5	
3	2		5		8		9
		5		2	3		7
				9		4	3
4	5				7		6
		9	4	1			8

Yesterday's Solution

4	9	1	5	3	8	2	7
8	3	6	1	7	2	5	9
7	2	5	9	6	4	8	3
6	5	2	4	8	3	7	1
9	4	3	7	2	1	6	5
1	8	7	6	5	9	3	4
2	1	8	3	4	5	9	6
3	6	4	8	9	7	1	2
5	7	9	2	1	6	4	8

# Classifieds

Monday, April 2, 2018

**Kuwait Times**  
 Now you can browse  
[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)  
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817  
 Fax: (+965) 24348714  
[www.met.gov.kw](http://www.met.gov.kw)



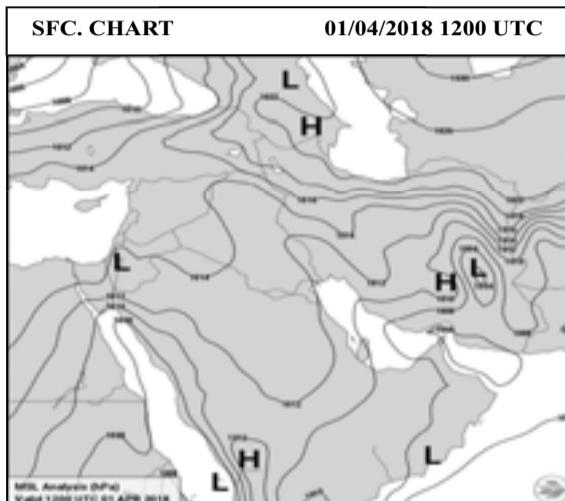
### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY NIGHT:** Partly cloudy with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h .

**BY DAY:** Cloudy to partly cloudy with light to moderate north westerly wind to variable wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h .

**WEATHER WARNING** No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.
KUWAIT CITY	29 °C	21 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	29 °C	18 °C
ABDALY	29 °C	15 °C
BUBYAN	--- °C	--- °C
JAHRA	30 °C	19 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	30 °C	19 °C
SALMIYAH	27 °C	21 °C
AHMADI	--- °C	--- °C
NUWAISIB	31 °C	16 °C
WAFRA	29 °C	18 °C
SALMY	27 °C	14 °C



DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	04/02	Cloudy to partly cloudy	31 °C	18 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 28 km/h
Tuesday	04/03	Partly cloudy	33 °C	19 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 26 km/h
Wednesday	04/04	Cloudy + dust + thunder rain	30 °C	23 °C	SW-SE	20 - 45 km/h
Thursday	04/05	Partly cloudy + thunder rain	29 °C	24 °C	SE-E	15 - 40 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:18
Sunrise	05:38
Zuhr	11:52
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:06
Isha	19:24

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	29 °C
MIN. Temp.	19 °C
MAX. RH	44 %
MIN. RH	16 %
MAX. Wind	N 50 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

### Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

### Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

## FOR RENT

### STORAGE BASEMENT AVAILABLE FOR RENT

**SHUWAIKH INDUSTRIAL, AREA 3, OLD POLICE STATION STREET**

**CONTACT:**

# 96600010

**REQUIRED**  
 For 4 star Hotel  
 • Maintenance Technicians  
 • Light Drivers  
 (Indians only- Locals in Kuwait)  
 Salary upon interview  
 \*Free Accommodation (walking distance beside the hotel) + Duty Meal  
 Email: sh\_huss@hotmail.com

**Looking for Job**  
**HR-Admin Executive**  
 14 years experience in GCC with accounting background, looking for a suitable job.  
 Email: mazen\_bh@yahoo.com  
 Mob: 00965-56625385

### SITUATION WANTED

MEP Engineer (HVAC, plumbing, FF), 14 years experience, Indian (M) searching job. Ph - 99054703, email: shibin@live.in (C 5390) 1-4-2018

Billing Executive Indian (M), 18 years experience in Middle East MNCS searching suitable position. Mob: 66539779 / 96046944. Email: john\_chetty@yahoo.com (C 5389) 27-3-2018

### EMERGENCY

**112**

Oilfield Operations Support Admin Coordinator and



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

### DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Monday 2/4/2018				Departure Flights on Monday 2/4/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	SVA	514	Riyadh	22:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	WAN	136	Doha	22:30
KAC	504	Beirut	00:50	WAN	118	Bahrain	22:40
DLH	625	Bahrain	00:50	SVA	502	Jeddah	22:45
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZR	185	Dubai	22:50
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00
JZR	267	Beirut	01:25	THY	764	Istanbul	23:15
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	FDB	072	Dubai	23:35
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	JZR	241	Amman	23:40
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15				
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15				
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30				
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55				
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05				
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05				
KAC	418	Manila	03:05				
MSC	415	Sohag	03:10				
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10				
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15				
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25				
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30				
WAN	418	Beirut	03:40				
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00				
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15				
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25				
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30				
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30				
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50				
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05				
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10				
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15				
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30				
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40				
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55				
BAW	157	London	06:10				
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25				
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30				
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45				
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00				
JZR	143	Doha	07:20				
JZR	529	Asyut	07:30				
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45				
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50				
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50				
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05				
KAC	358	Kochi	08:05				
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25				
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55				
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00				
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:15				
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30				
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40				
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:00				
ATG	6624	Sharjah	10:00				
MSC	405	Sohag	10:15				
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20				
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30				
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40				
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55				
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00				
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:10				
MSC	401	Alexandria	11:30				
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45				
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30				
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30				
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45				
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45				
WAN	542	KTM	12:50				
JZR	125	Bahrain	12:55				

Lifestyle | Fashion

## Rosie Huntington Whiteley felt 'unprotected' on modeling jobs

Rosie Huntington-Whiteley wants the Time's Up movement to make the modeling industry safer. The 30-year-old model has been in the industry for 15 years and hopes the recent shift in attitudes towards sexual harassment in the work place in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein abuse claims means models will feel safer on the job after admitting to feeling "unprotected" on set. She said: "There's definitely been instances where I've felt unprotected and moments where I found myself in situations that were uncomfortable. The fashion industry is so relaxed and casual, there's this expectation on models that the more up for it you are, the better, the further you'll go along in your career." However, Rosie is glad that actions have been put in place to respect the model's dignity at shows but she is still shocked it took this long to bring about change.



Rosie Huntington-Whiteley

Speaking to Harper's Bazaar Arabia she continued: "For the first time some designers put private changing areas backstage at New York Fashion Week, I've done countless fashion shows where you're in a room, undressing, photographers flying around, people with iPhones, all the crowd and audience coming after the show and you're still half dressed, people are taking photographs of you whilst you're getting changed. It blows my mind that that's acceptable." Although Rosie is grateful she didn't grow up with social media, she is excited by the power it can give to model's whose "voices aren't heard". She explained: "I was doing my thing and there was no social media, there was no paparazzi. I had those years to be free. Everyone is taking pictures now and it's so funny for me to see a 10-year-old girl who knows how to pose...I think it can be cringe-worthy."

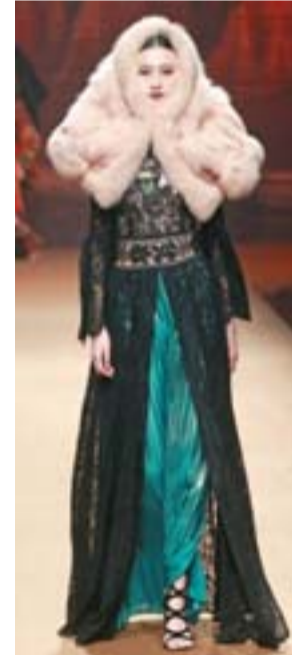
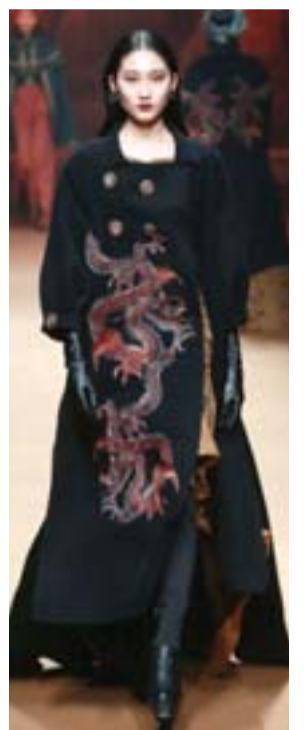
"If you like taking pictures and cultivating your image for work, it's an amazing marketing tool and way of reaching your audience. A lot of times with models, you're a face for hire. Everyone else gets to do their thing on you; your stylist gets to do her interpretation, hair and make-up get to do their interpretation, the magazine, the photographer and you're left with your voice not really heard." — Bang Showbiz



Photos show models presenting creations from the 'J. Queen' collection by designer Xie Jiaqi during China Fashion Week in Beijing. — AFP photos



CHINA FASHION WEEK



Selena Gomez

## Selena Gomez launches life-changing Puma collaboration

Selena Gomez's new Puma collaboration will raise money for charity. The 25-year-old beauty - who has worked with the likes of Louis Vuitton and Coach during her career - has designed a pair of trainers, called the Phenom Lux, which will help fund important research into Lupus, an autoimmune disease the star has battled for years. Puma will be donating \$100,000 of the sales from the trainers, which will go to the Lupus Research Alliance charity. The cause is close to Selena's heart after the condition left her needing a kidney transplant last year.

The brunette beauty has strayed away from the romantic floral looks she previewed in her upcoming clothes collection with Coach. Instead, the all-white Puma design has a detachable gold ankle-bracelet, which adds a touch of femininity to the look. She said: "It gives you a little bit of sparkle, and it can make you feel like you're dressed up even when you're in sweats." Selena has even designed a pair of sheer socks to be paired with the trainers, admitting that mixing contrasting wardrobe looks makes her "feel pretty".

She explained: "I've been wearing some fun socks with my sneakers and it just makes me feel a little bit more feminine. I spent a lot of time creating a sock that felt comfortable, chic, and fun. I've become super into my way of wearing sneakers, I also wear my sneakers with dresses, things that feel pretty."

Meanwhile, Selena first announced the news of her surgery via her Instagram account. Alongside a picture of herself in a hospital bed, Selena wrote: "I'm very aware some of my fans had noticed I was laying low for part of the summer and questioning why I wasn't promoting my new music, which I was extremely proud of. So I found out I needed to get a kidney transplant due to my Lupus and was recovering. It was what I needed to do for my overall health." — Bang Showbiz

## Winona Ryder's trendsetting style

Winona Ryder doesn't think she's a style icon. The 46-year-old actress is known for her effortlessly cool 90s style but the 'Stranger Things' star is adamant she isn't a trendsetter with her casual off-duty look and says fashion trends will always repeat themselves. Speaking to Elle.com, she said: "It's not my 90s style that's been revived! I certainly don't feel any ownership over it - that's just way too much responsibility. I guess it's just sort of inevitable in terms of fashion. Everything always comes back into style about 20-25 years later, right?"

The 'Beetlejuice' star admits she has a

hard time letting go of her favorite items of clothing and framed one of her T-shirts because she didn't have the heart to throw it away. She said: "I just had to retire an old Clash T-shirt from the first time I saw them in 1980 because it was so incredibly thin and just disintegrating. But I ended up framing it. I inherited my father's 'archivist' gene, so it's really hard for me to let go of things." Despite being one of the most famous actresses in Hollywood, Winona believes everyone should have a few essential clothing items in their wardrobe, and hers would be made up of just five things.

She explained: "Everyone's different, but



Winona Ryder

socks and underwear, a comfortable pair of jeans, a favorite T-shirt, and a soft sweater. But that's just me. I don't think I'm qualified to tell others what theirs are."

And Winona admitted to being a "fan" of Elizabeth Olsen and was excited to work alongside her on the new H&M campaign video where she dances through the streets in bright, feminine clothes from the collection to show female power in fashion. She said: "I liked the concept, it was refreshing to see women celebrating women, not just dancing for the male gaze - and ended up being quite timely. I'm a big fan of Lizzie Olsen." — Bang Showbiz

Lifestyle | Features



Nepali mountaineer Kami Rita Sherpa posing for a picture at Boudhanath Stupa, where he has a rented room, on the outskirts of Kathmandu.



Nepali mountaineer Kami Rita Sherpa praying at Boudhanath Stupa, where he has a rented room, on the outskirts of Kathmandu.

# Nepali Sherpa aims for record 22nd Everest summit

A Nepali Sherpa is hoping to summit Mount Everest for a record-breaking 22nd time next month, during the busy climbing season that each year sees hundreds of climbers reach the top of the world. But to Kami Rita Sherpa, who has worked as a guide on Everest for over two decades, climbing to

8,848 meters (29,029 feet) is a job not a record-shattering feat. "I did not start climbing to set a world record. But in the course of my work in the guiding industry this is going to be my 22nd ascent. It wasn't for any competition," Kami Rita told AFP in Kathmandu before setting out for the mountain. When 48-year-old Kami Rita first summited Everest in 1994, he was one of just 49 climbers to reach the peak.

Last year, 634 people made it to the top. Over the last two decades the booming number of climbers on Everest has created a lucrative mountaineering industry in both China and Nepal, which share the peak. In Nepal-home to eight of the world's highest peaks-the climbers provide vital income: last year the impoverished country netted over \$4 million in permit fees on Everest alone. Each year hundreds of climbers begin gathering at the foot of the world's highest peak from early April, turning the base camp into a bustling nylon tent city.

They spend nearly two months on the mountain to acclimatize to the harsh high altitude environment before attempting to reach the summit in May. Spring is the busiest time of year on the mountain as the winds and temperatures are more forgiving than at other times of the year. But nonetheless each spring Everest claims a few lives: last year seven

This photograph shows Nepali mountaineer Kami Rita Sherpa sitting in his rented room at Boudhanath Stupa, on the outskirts of Kathmandu. — AFP photos



climbers died on the mountain. The rapid growth in the climbing industry has also led to fears of deadly overcrowding on Everest, with the mountain opening up to more people as competition between expedition organizers has seen the costs plummet.

The cheapest operators charge clients around \$20,000 to take them to the top of the world, a quarter of the amount demanded by the most expensive. That discrepancy has caused tension on the mountain, with the mostly foreign-run companies accusing the

largely Nepali-run cheaper ones of skimping on basic safety to keep costs low while also accepting clients who lack high-altitude climbing experience.

### Cost of inexperience

Kami Rita, who has worked for US-based Alpine Ascents for much of his career, said the key differences between the operators is how well they train and pay-their Sherpa guides. "Some foreigners (climbers) seek only cheap options which means they will get low

quality, cheap Sherpa. If they pay high price they will get a high price (quality) Sherpa," he said. Most paying climbers try to reach the summit with the help of a dedicated Sherpa guide, but the number of experienced Sherpa has not been able to keep pace with demand, warned Kami Rita.

"Earlier, we had to knock on the companies' doors for jobs. Now the tables have turned, the companies have to please the Sherpas to work with them. Why? Because there is shortage," he said. Last year a record number of rescues were made from the mountain, which observers point as a sign of the growing cost of inexperience-amongst both paying climbers and Sherpa guides-on the mountain. The Nepali and Chinese authorities, who monitor all climbs on the southern and northern faces of the mountain respectively, are yet to release the number of climbing permits issued for this year. But the season-which marks the 65th anniversary of the first summit of Everest by Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay-is expected to be as busy as last. Meanwhile, for Kami Rita it is just another year of work. "I am not extremely happy, excited or very sad no matter how many times I climb. There are many Sherpas who have held world records. I am just starting." "My life is just normal," he added as he headed off for the top of the world. — AFP



Nepali mountaineer Kami Rita Sherpa spinning prayer wheels at Boudhanath Stupa, where he has a rented room, on the outskirts of Kathmandu.

# N Korea's Kim attends S Korea concert in latest reconciliatory move

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un yesterday attended the first concert in Pyongyang for over a decade by South Korean entertainers, including a K-pop girlband, the latest gesture of reconciliation before a rare inter-Korean summit. The visit, described by many as a cultural charm-offensive by the South, came as a diplomatic thaw quickens on the peninsula after months of military tensions.



This picture captured from a video footage by Korea Pool reporters shows North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, left, and South Korea's Culture, Sports and Tourism Minister Do Jong-whan, right, during a rare concert.

Jong, and ceremonial head of state Kim Yong Nam. "He (Kim Jong Un) showed great interest in the songs and lyrics (of South Korean singers) during the concert," Do Jong-hwan, Seoul's culture chief and the head of the delegation, told reporters. The South's taekwondo athletes also staged a performance before an audience of 2,300 in Pyongyang yesterday ahead of a joint display of the Korean martial art with the North's practitioners on Monday.

The rapprochement was triggered by the South's Winter Olympics, to which the North's leader Kim Jong Un sent athletes, cheerleaders and his powerful sister as an envoy. A North Korean art troupe, the 140-strong Samjiyon Orchestra, staged two performances in South Korea in February to celebrate the Games. Kim followed up by agreeing to a summit with the South's President Moon Jae-in, and offering a face-to-face meet with US President Donald Trump. Kim also met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing last week during his first overseas trip. The inter-Korean summit, the third after meetings in 2000 and 2007, will be held on April 27. No date has been set for the US-North Korean summit although it is expected before the end of May.

In another sign of eased tensions, an annual US-South Korean military exercise which got under way in the South yesterday will last for just one month compared to some two months normally. This year's drills feature fewer strategic weapons such as a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, Seoul's military has said. The deployment of such powerful weaponry during past drills has frequently drawn an angry response from the North.

### Maze of love

Yesterday's concert to a packed audience at the elaborately decorated 1,500-seat East Pyongyang Grand Theatre ended with a



South Korean musicians rehearse for a rare concert at the 1,500-seat East Pyongyang Grand Theatre in Pyongyang. — AFP photos

standing ovation after a finale in which all the stars appeared on stage to sing a song about unification. One of the most closely watched acts was Red Velvet, part of the South's hugely popular K-pop phenomenon that has taken audiences in Asia and beyond by storm in recent decades.

The five-member girlband-known for its signature K-pop mix of upbeat electronic music, stylish fashion and high-voltage choreography-performed two of their hits, "Bad Boy" and "Red Flavor".

Joy, one of the five members, missed the trip to Pyongyang due to her TV drama shooting schedule. "The North's audience applauded to our performance much louder than we expected and even sang along to our songs... it was a big relief," band member Yeri told reporters.

"I told myself, 'let's do our best even if there's no response (from the audience)... but

they showed so much reaction," added a member called Wendy. Another member, Seulgi, appeared red-eyed as she bid farewell to the audience at the end of the concert, apparently overcome with emotion. Despite the North's isolation and strict curbs on unauthorised foreign culture, enforced with prison terms, K-pop and Seoul's TV shows have become increasingly popular there thanks to flash drives smuggled across the border with China.

The emcee of yesterday's concert was a popular member of K-pop girlband Girls' Generation, Seohyun, who had performed with the visiting Pyongyang singers during their Seoul concert in February. Legendary South Korean singer Cho Yong-pil, who held a solo sell-out concert in Pyongyang in 2005, was another star of the show. Kim's late father and longtime ruler, Kim Jong Il, was known to be a fan of the 68-year-old

Cho. Another famous singer, Choi Jin-hee, also performed for the fourth time in the North and sang "Maze of Love"-a peninsula hit and another of the late Kim's favorites. — AFP



Members of K-pop girlband "Red Velvet" pose for a photo after a rehearsal.

The 120-member group — 11 musical acts as well as dancers, technicians and martial artists-gave one concert yesterday with another set for Tuesday. Kim and his wife, a former singer herself, came to watch Sunday's show, making him the first leader of the North to attend a concert by South Korean performers. Kim shook hands and took photos with the Seoul stars backstage, saying inter-Korean cultural events should be held more often and suggesting another event in the South Korean capital this autumn, pool reports said.

The young couple were seen clapping their hands during the two-hour event also attended by Kim's powerful sister, Kim Yo

Lifestyle | Feature



The Mirror Car, a Volkswagen Bug covered in mirrors that “resembles a disco ball and makes you reflect on how many people take selfies while driving” according to the museum’s literature, is displayed at the Museum of Selfies, in Glendale, California.



Visitors look at the Giant Food Selfie display at the Museum of Selfies, in Glendale. — AFP photos



Museum co-creator Tommy Honton poses for a portrait while seated in the “Selfie Stick Throne” at the Museum of Selfies.



Visitors explore artist Matt Elson’s infinity box entitled “You And Me Together,” at the Museum of Selfies.



The hand of a visitor taking a photo with a cell phone is reflected in mirrors at the Museum of Selfies, in Glendale.



Visitors Kasia Widera (left) and Christopher Flores photograph each other in the Bathroom Illusion Selfie room at the Museum of Selfies.



Copies of Michelangelo’s statue of David hold cell phones at the Museum of Selfies.



Museum co-creator Tair Mamedov hangs a display of various “No Selfie” warnings found across Russia, at the Museum of Selfies.



Visitors take a selfie at the Museum of Selfies, in Glendale.

# LOS ANGELES MUSEUM CELEBRATES THE ART OF THE SELFIE

There’s an art to taking the perfect selfie—from the angle, to the focus, cropping out that pesky outstretched arm and above all, the smile. In a celebration of self-portraits in the social media age Tommy Honton and Tair Mamedov are set to open the Museum of Selfies in Los Angeles this Sunday—an interactive exhibition exploring the history and cultural phenomenon of snapping a photo of yourself. And for those who think if a moment wasn’t photographed, it might as well have not happened—the good news is that at the Museum of Selfies, selfies are compulsory.

Event planner Lori Nguyen, 45, said she doesn’t take selfies very often because “I’m not, like, super young.” But another visitor, Nina Crowe, said she takes “one a day.” Neither missed the chance to snap several at the Museum of Selfies, including at an exhibit mimicking the rooftop of Los Angeles’ tallest building. In reality there’s a backdrop photograph of the “ground below” printed on a small platform, from which sprouts a tube that looks

like the building’s antenna complete with a red signaling beacon. Add a selfie stick, an “I’m afraid of heights” grimace and a click—and the result is very realistic.

The exhibition begins with mirrors, perhaps the most basic kind of selfie. But Honton and Mamedov view the concept as something more than just a simple photo. “The selfies have a surprisingly rich history, and go back as far as people have been making art,” Honton explains. “Rembrandt did hundreds of self-portraits, Albrecht Durer five, Van Gogh dozens. I mean they did their portraits too, what’s the difference?” he said. “Yes, artistic technique and scale is one thing, but in reality, if cell phones and cameras had existed, everyone would have taken them.” Another selfie museum opened in the Philippines in 2015, but there’s no sign it stayed open. Meanwhile in Glendale, a Los Angeles suburb, the exhibition is just the latest in the city’s stream of quirky museums focusing on everything from rabbits and death to neon and velvet.



A visitor takes a selfie at the Museum of Selfies, in Glendale, California.



‘Selfie magnet’

The show is full of fun facts about the trend: women take pictures of themselves more than men, for example. In Sao Paulo, 65.4 percent of selfies are taken by women—in New York, 61.6 percent. In Moscow, the divide is even more extreme, at 82 percent. There aren’t statistics for Los Angeles, but Ally Bertik admits she is a frequent selfie-snapper. “It shows off my good side. And I get to show people like ‘hey, this is where I am, maybe you guys should check it out too, this is what I’m doing.’ It’s just a fun way to like spread you know what I’m doing, show people where I’m at,” she explained.

Wandering through the museum, guests will be able to pose with Colette Miller’s “Angel Wings” and a work by Darel Carey, who creates multi-dimensional rooms using plastic tape—a concept the museum describes as a “selfie magnet.” There are pieces by Brazil’s Rob Vital, German-Canadian Joseph Nowak, Italy’s Michele Durazzi—and a copy of the Russian government’s recommendations for taking a selfie safely, created following several accidents and as many as 12 selfie-related deaths in the country. Also featured is David Slater’s controversial monkey selfie—which became embroiled in a legal battle over who has the copyright to photos taken by monkeys using his camera.

In a corner, meanwhile, are three statues resembling Michelangelo’s “David” painted blue with a pink cell phone—and a Game of Thrones-esque throne created using selfie sticks. You just “can’t avoid” taking a selfie there, says Mamedov, a Russian actor who arrived in the US four years ago. The Museum of Selfies will be open in Glendale initially for two months. Its founders are open to extending its LA run and taking the exhibition to other places around the US, if not the world. — AFP

The viral selfie taken by a maque monkey using the smart phone of nature photographer David J. Slater and which became the subject of a complicated copyright lawsuit is displayed at the Museum of Selfies.



Ahmad Taher, a 24-year-old senior veterinary student, plays with cats staying for short periods at a cat hotel which he manages in the southern Iraqi city of Basra. — AFP photos



A picture shows one of the resident cats at a cat hotel in the southern Iraqi city of Basra.



Ahmad Taher checks feeds cats staying for short periods at a cat hotel.



Ahmad Taher clips the claws of a cat staying for short periods at a cat hotel which he manages in the southern Iraqi city of Basra.

# FELINE PAMPERED: BASRA MOGGIES SET PAW IN IRAQ'S FIRST CAT HOTEL

Cats in Iraq's southern city of Basra are purring with delight as the country's first feline hotel opens for guests. In a part of the country where many struggle to make ends meet, a prime venue for cat naps may seem like a luxury. But Mehdi Fadel, owner of Bella, a longhaired Angora, was enthusiastic when he heard about the "4Cats Pet Hotel" on social media. "I really liked the idea because my family and I travel a lot and it's always hard to find a place where we can leave our cat," he said as he came to take Bella home.

The hotel was the brainchild of Ahmad Taher, a 24-year-old veterinary student and feline fan. Located above a vet's clinic, it provides a comfortable place for cats to play when the owners are away. A night's stay, including meals of pate, grooming and various other treatments, costs between 5,000 and 7,000 Iraqi dinars (\$4-6). But it's not just for fat cats-cash-strapped clients receive a

discount. Cats are king in the hotel's two rooms. Its three current guests are free to play with toys, relax in beds, or take a snooze on a carpet of fake grass.

There are even scratching posts for those who feel the urge to climb or sharpen their claws. Fadel, 23, said the hotel regularly sent him messages and pictures via the WhatsApp messaging app while he was away, keeping him up-to-date on Bella's stay. Mohammed Jassem, the vet who runs the clinic on the ground floor, said the idea of setting up a hotel for cats initially shocked residents of Basra, rich in oil but poor in infrastructure. But cat lovers quickly embraced the idea, he said. "They like it and people began leaving their animals with us when they took off on holiday," he said. Taher said he plans to expand the hotel to host dogs and even birds. — AFP



Ahmad Taher, a 24-year-old senior veterinary student, attends to cats staying for short periods at a cat hotel which he manages in the southern Iraqi city of Basra.



A picture shows one of the resident cats at a cat hotel in the southern Iraqi city of Basra.



A picture shows one of the resident cats at a cat hotel in the southern Iraqi city of Basra.



Ahmad Taher attends to cats staying for short periods at a cat hotel.



A picture shows one of the resident cats at a cat hotel.



Ahmad Taher places food for cats staying for short periods at a cat hotel.



A picture shows one of the resident cats at a cat hotel.



Ahmad Taher feeds a cat staying for short periods at a cat hotel.



Ahmad Taher attends to cats staying for short periods at a cat hotel.

# Lifestyle

MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2018



Activists of the 269 Animal freedom, an anti-specialism association, parody the Christian's Last Supper on March 31, 2018 in Lausanne, western Switzerland, during a demonstration of the organization. —AFP

## 'Fun' floral selection for Britain's royal wedding



Meaghan Markle will walk down the aisle surrounded by peonies, foxgloves and white garden roses when the US actress marries Britain's Prince Harry, Kensington Palace said yesterday. Their May 19 wedding at Windsor Castle, west of London, will be filled with flowers that are naturally in bloom at that time of the year, Harry's official residence said. Floral designer Philippa Craddock said the happy couple worked closely with her on the planning. "The process has been highly collaborative, free-flowing, creative and fun," she said. "Working with them has been an absolute pleasure."

The displays in St George's Chapel will be created using locally sourced foliage, much of which will be taken from the gardens and parkland of Windsor Great Park and the Crown Estate lands held by the

monarch-Harry's grandmother Queen Elizabeth II. The sprays will include branches of beech, birch and hornbeam and reflect the wild and natural landscapes from which many of the plants will be drawn. "The final designs will represent them as a couple, which I always aim to achieve in my work, with local sourcing, seasonality and sustainability being at the forefront," Craddock said.

Former army officer Harry, 33, is fifth in line to the throne. He announced his engagement to 36-year-old Markle in November. They have since made several public appearances together. Some 600 people have been invited to the wedding, with 200 going on to a private evening party thrown by Harry's father Prince Charles, the heir to the throne. —AFP



Florist Philippa Craddock poses for a photograph in her studio in London. —AFP photos

## Rare Kabul exhibition brings taste of Mughal art back home

An exhibition that reproduces the precious treasures of Mughal art in their original setting in Kabul's Babur Garden opened this weekend, bringing a rare moment of cultural relief to a city pounded by war for decades. "King Babur's Kabul: Cradle of the Mughal Empire" displays a selection of high quality reproductions of some of the masterpieces of the Timurid and Mughal periods from the mid-16th century, one of Central Asia's richest cultural eras. It follows a similar exhibition in December held in the historic citadel of the western Afghan city of Herat, at one time the seat of the powerful Timurid dynasty and one of the great centers of the Persian world.

At the Kabul exhibition's launch on Saturday, Michael Barry, a world authority on Afghan art and culture who curated the exhibition reminisced about a visit he made to the city at the height of the brutal 1990s civil war. "Here in the Bagh-e Babur, what we saw in 1994 was wreckage, broken trees, shells fired. The beautiful 17th century marble mosque here was full of bullet holes. All we saw was despair and ugliness." The Bagh-e Babur or Babur's Garden, one of the oldest surviving Mughal gardens, was named after the first emperor of the Mughal dynasty, which came to rule over much of India in the following three centuries. Babur loved Kabul and was buried in the garden which he ordered to be created after he conquered the city in 1504. It was largely destroyed in the 1990s but was restored with the help of the Agha Khan Foundation in 2008.

The garden remains a popular picnic spot with Kabul families but the

artistic riches of the Mughal court have disappeared from the city, with not a single original painting from the period known to be left in Afghanistan. Barry said he had formed the determination to bring not just humanitarian aid to Afghanistan but to help restore some of the cultural heritage lost to the country through years of war. "In this garden, we will bring back the magnificent paintings which so influenced world civilization, back to the Afghans, right here in this historical environment," he said.

Over the centuries, all of the originals have been dispersed outside Afghanistan and while their removal undoubtedly saved many precious art works from destruction, their loss has deprived Afghans of a central pillar of their cultural heritage. Using state-of-the-art printing techniques, dozens of miniatures have been reproduced on metal and put on display, showing a fabled world of poets, rulers, hunters and scenes of court life and making clear the considerable interplay that existed between European and Mughal art.

"Many of these disappeared from Afghanistan over 500 years ago, and even then only Shahs (kings) and Wazirs (ministers) and maybe senior scholars had an opportunity to see them," said Thomas Barfield, President of the American Institute of Afghan Studies, which oversaw the organization of the exhibition. "People may remember poetry but they cannot see the art." —Reuters