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Cabinet approves budget with deficit of KD 6.5bn

Legal panel says tax on expat remittances unconstitutional

Amir attends flag hoisting ceremony



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attends a flag hoisting ceremony celebrating 12 years since his assumption to power, the 57th National Day and the 27th anniversary of liberation at Bayan Palace yesterday. The ceremony was attended by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and other senior officials. — KUNA (See Pages 2 & 3)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The Cabinet approved its budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year, projecting a huge deficit for the fourth year in a row because of low oil prices. Next year's deficit is estimated at KD 6.5 billion (\$21.6 billion), after a mandatory transfer of allocations to the Future Generations Fund. Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf told a press conference the government will withdraw from the state reserve fund and borrow on the domestic and international debt markets to finance the shortfall.

After posting healthy surpluses for 16 successive years, Kuwait has posted a budget deficit in each of the past three years after oil prices began to slide in mid-2014. Hajraf said the new budget projects revenues at KD 15 billion (\$50 billion), up 12 percent on last year's estimates after the oil price rose from \$45 to \$50 a barrel. Oil income is estimated at KD 13.3 billion (\$44.3 billion) on a daily production of 2.8 million barrels. Spending is projected at KD 20 billion (\$66.7 billion), marginally higher than last year, the minister said.

He said government wages and subsidies account for 73 percent of the budget which takes effect on April 1. It still has to

be passed by the National Assembly. Just 18 percent of spending will go on development projects, Hajraf said. He said Kuwait will not impose value-added tax or other taxation without parliamentary approval. Only Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have implemented a pan-Gulf decision to impose VAT from this year. But Hajraf said the government may raise charges on public services to boost non-oil revenues.

Meanwhile, the National Assembly's legal and legislative committee yesterday rejected a proposal calling to impose taxes on financial transfers by expatriates to their home countries, saying such taxes are "unconstitutional". The proposal was made by a number of lawmakers, mainly MP Safa Al-Hashem, who had proposed to impose a five-percent tax on remittances made by expatriates to help boost non-oil revenues to finance the budget.

The Kuwait Central Bank had also rejected the idea, saying it is not in line with Kuwaiti laws and warned of its negative impacts on the national economy. The 3.1 million expatriates living and working in Kuwait send around \$18 billion to their families in their home countries every year.

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KUWAIT: Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf speaks during a press conference yesterday to announce the state budget for the year 2018-2019. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

News in brief

Ibrahim to keep control of MBC

KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia: Saudi Arabia's Waleed Al-Ibrahim will keep management control of regional television broadcaster MBC following his release from detention in a corruption probe, a senior MBC executive told Reuters yesterday. The executive said Ibrahim's 40 percent stake in MBC would not change and that he was found innocent of any wrongdoing in the probe. Ibrahim, who at the weekend was released along with at least half a dozen other prominent Saudi businessmen detained in the probe, reiterated his allegiance to Saudi Arabia and the ruling family, the executive said. During his 83 days of detention, Ibrahim was well treated, the executive said, adding that his boss was now free to travel but planned to stay in Riyadh for a couple of weeks to handle business.

Iran hijab protester freed

TEHRAN: A woman arrested for posing without a headscarf in public in defiance of Iran's Islamic dress code has been released after nearly one month in detention, a lawyer said yesterday. Nasrin Sotoudeh, a renowned human rights lawyer, told AFP she saw the woman's file at the prosecutor's office and was told by a judicial official that she had been "freed". The woman has not been seen in public since she stood on a pillar box at one of Tehran's busiest thoroughfares without a headscarf or long coat required under Islamic law. The woman's identity was initially not known but yesterday Sotoudeh identified her as Vida Movahedi, adding that she received confirmation of her release from other sources.

Qatar Airways agrees to disclosures

WASHINGTON: Qatar is expected to agree today to release detailed financial information about its state-owned Qatar Airways, US State Department officials said late on Sunday, a move that follows pressure from US airlines for it to disclose any potential subsidies it has received. Under an understanding to be announced today, Qatar Airways will issue audited financial reports within a year and within two years must disclose significant new transactions with state-owned enterprises, US officials said. The largest US carriers contend three Gulf carriers are being unfairly subsidized by their governments with more than \$50 billion in subsidies over the last decade. Qatar, Etihad Airways and Emirates, have denied those accusations. The Gulf airlines operate around 200 flights per week to 12 US cities.

MoI issues general amnesty guidelines

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Director General of the Residency Affairs Directorate Maj Gen Talal Maarafi issued a circular yesterday in which he mentioned the procedures of benefiting from an amnesty decision by Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah to allow residency violators to leave the country from Jan 29 until Feb 22 from any airport or border post without paying fines.

The circular includes:

- Every department should designate a certain number of employees to receive violators and complete the necessary

procedures to correspond with the criminal detectives department so that regular work is not affected.

- Grant residency to violators who want it if they meet the conditions and pay fines regardless of the violation period and nationality of the violator (except for travel document holders).

The following will be taken into consideration with regards to the violation period:

- Regular and temporary residencies as well as visit visas must have expired before Jan 24, 2018.

- People who entered the country with visit visas on Jan 23, 2018 or earlier should leave before Feb 22, 2018.

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Sisi set for new term as presidential nominations close

CAIRO: Egypt's Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi looks set to romp to victory in a March presidential election fast becoming a referendum on his first four-year term, despite a last-minute candidate entering the fray yesterday. The former army chief who toppled his Islamist predecessor in 2013 won 96.9 percent of the vote in an election the following year, and is setting the stage for a similar performance. Voting takes place from March 26-28, and the deadline for nominations was 2:00 pm (1200 GMT) yesterday.

One last-minute surprise candidate did come forward - the head of Egypt's liberal Ghad party, Mussa Mustapha Mussa. But given that he backs the president, his token candidacy would appear meant to ensure that Sisi will not be the only name on the ballot paper. Before becoming president, Sisi was defense minister and head of the army that toppled his Islamist predecessor Mohamed Morsi in 2013. Ironically, he was appointed by the man he ousted, and the crackdown on the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood that followed Morsi's removal was long and bloody.

Ahead of the March election, all potential presidential contenders have either been hobbled or thrown in the towel because they feel the entire process has been rigged. "He wants to be the only candidate in the running," said Hassan Nafaa, Emeritus professor of political

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Old enmity tips Lebanon into another crisis

BEIRUT: An old enmity between the Lebanese president and parliament speaker is fuelling a political row that threatens to paralyze government and inflame sectarian tension in the run-up to elections in May. The dispute between President Michel Aoun, a Christian, and the Shiite Parliament Speaker Nabih reflects personal hostility dating to the 1975-90 civil war. It also touches on the balance of power between their sects in a system that shares

out government participation according to religious sect.

The tension reached boiling point yesterday as footage of Aoun's son-in-law, Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil, calling Berri "a thug" was circulated on social media. Berri's camp reacted with fury, saying Bassil had crossed "red lines". Supporters of Berri from the Amal movement he has led for decades protested by setting tyres ablaze in Beirut. The crisis has spiraled since December when Aoun signed a decree promoting dozens of army officers without the signature of Shiite Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil, a member of Amal and one of his closest aides.

Berri has said that Aoun, by moving to promote pro-Aoun officers, has exceeded

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KUWAIT: Filipinos line up outside the Philippines Embassy in Sidq to obtain travel documents yesterday. (See Page 5)



CAIRO: A member of the Egyptian special forces stands guard in front of the National Election Authority yesterday. — AFP



BEIRUT: Supporters of Lebanon's parliament speaker burn tyres as they block a main road yesterday. — AFP

Nationwide flag-hoisting ceremonies signal start of national celebrations

Six governors attended the celebrations



KUWAIT: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Al-Hamad Al-Sabah hoists Kuwait's national flag during a ceremony in Ahmadi yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat, Joseph Shagra and KUNA

KUWAIT: A festive atmosphere pervaded Kuwait's six governorates yesterday as a nationwide flag-hoisting ceremony was held to usher in national celebrations and mark the 12-year anniversary of the ascendency of His Highness the Amir. Leading the festivities in their respective administrative divisions as Kuwait celebrates its 57th Independence Day and 27th Liberation Day, the country's six gov-

ernors conveyed their heartiest congratulations to the Kuwaiti leadership and people over the joyous occasion.

The governors, Hawally's Lieutenant General Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah, Ahmadi's Sheikh Fawaz Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Farwaniya's Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, the Capital's Lt General Thabet Al-Muhana, Mubarak Al-Kabeer's Lt General Ahmad Al-

Rujaib and Jahra's Lt General Fahad Al-Amir, collectively pointed out that the celebrations highlight the need of building a prosperous future for forthcoming generations. They also hailed Kuwait's well-chronicled contributions towards humanitarian causes and the progress the country has made under the sage leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA



Kuwait's flag is raised in Mubarak Al-Kabeer.



Capital Governor Lt General Thabet Al-Muhana delivers a speech.



Hawally Governor Lt General Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah delivers a speech.



Mubarak Al-Kabeer's Governor Lt General Ahmad Al-Rujaib kisses Kuwait's flag during the flag-hoisting ceremony at his governorate yesterday.



Hawally Governor Lieutenant General Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah hoists Kuwait's flag.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Sabah performs a folklore dance during a flag-hoisting ceremony yesterday.



Kuwait's flag is raised in Farwaniya.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Sabah greets children during a flag-hoisting ceremony yesterday.



Children participate in a cultural event during Ahmadi governorate's flag-hoisting ceremony yesterday.



Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Al-Hamad Al-Sabah tours an exhibition held during the governorate's flag-hoisting ceremony yesterday.



A folklore 'Artha' dance is performed during the Jahra Governorate's flag hoisting ceremony.

Local

Amir receives congratulation from top state officials

Kuwait marks 12th anniversary of Amir's reign



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attend a flag-hoisting ceremony at Bayan Palace yesterday. — Amiri Diwan photos



Officers carry Kuwait's national flag during the ceremony.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday received a congratulatory letter from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the 12th anniversary of His Highness the Amir's reign.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince hailed His Highness the Amir's great efforts nationwide, which produced major achievements and successes thanks to His Highness the Amir's far-sightedness and political and diplomatic wisdom. His Highness the Crown Prince wished His Highness the Amir well-being and good health, and success in achieving all-out renaissance for the interest of Kuwait and its people. In return, His Highness the Amir sent His Highness the Crown a congratulatory letter thanking him for these noble sentiments, wishing everlasting security, stability and prosperity to the nation.

“
Amir's great efforts produced major achievements
”

have reinforced such virtues as forgiveness and unity, as he wished Kuwait continued stability and development. In return, His Highness the Amir was grateful for well wishes, expressing hope for persistent peace and prosperity in the country.

Furthermore, His Highness the Amir received cable from His Highness Sheikh Nasser Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, who underscored the blissful occasion as an opportunity to cherish the sage leadership of His Highness the Amir, citing achievements that have propelled Kuwait to global prominence, as he wished His Highness the Amir and the nation's continued prosperity. In response, His Highness the Amir thanked His Highness Sheikh Nasser for well wishes, expressing hope that the country will continue to navigate a path towards success and development.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received a cable from Chief of the National Guard His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, congratulating him on the 12th anniversary of His Highness the Amir's ascension to power.

In his cable, His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali conveyed his heartfelt congratulations to His Highness the Amir on the joyous occasion, thanking him for his diligent efforts that have resulted in numerous outstanding achievements. In response, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to the Chief of the National Guard, thanking him for his words and wishing Kuwait persistent security, prosperity and development.

His Highness the Amir also received a cable from His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, in which he lauded the achievements made with His Highness the Amir at the helm, adding that His Highness the Amir's words of wisdom

that the country will continue to attain further success and development. In the meantime, His Highness the Amir received a cable from Deputy Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in which he extolled a slew of achievements made with His Highness the Amir at the helm of the nation, saying these accomplishments have elevated Kuwait to global excellence. His Highness the Amir thanked Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad for the well wishes, expressing hope that the nation will continue to attain further success and development.

Moreover, His Highness the Amir received a cable from First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, who expressed his blessings and congratulations on the occasion, as well as best wishes and good health to His Highness the Amir. In turn, His Highness the Amir sent a cable thanking Defense Minister for his kindness and sentiments. — KUNA



Senior state officials attend the ceremony.



KUWAIT: Balloons are released to the air during a ceremony held by the Public Authority of Industry to celebrate the 12th anniversary of His Highness the Amir's ascension to power. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Industry Authority celebrates anniversary

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Public Authority of Industry (PAI) celebrated the 12th anniversary of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's ascension

to power. The celebration, held yesterday at PAI premises, witnessed the release of 4,380 balloons colored with Kuwait flag's colors.

Abdulkareem Taqi, Director General of the Public Authority of Industry (PAI) said that all PAI employees are proud to celebrate the anniversary. "We all wish His Highness the Amir good health and to have good prosperity in his duty. We also congratulate Kuwait and all Arab nations on this occasion. I hope that this 12th year will be a year of success and improvement in all sectors in general and the industrial sector in particular under the supervision of His Highness the Amir. We hope that Kuwait will always live in peace," stressed Taqi.

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* This campaign is limited to participants in Kuwait only. Ministries and their departments, companies and NGOs cannot enter the festival.
* Kuwait Times employees, spouses and their second-degree relatives also cannot participate.

Local

Over 100 hopefuls showcase creations at 10th Int'l Invention Fair in Kuwait

Inventors from 39 nations participate in Amir-sponsored event

KUWAIT: Some 130 inventors from 39 nations are taking part in the 10th International Invention Fair in the Middle East, which is regarded the second-largest event of its kind in the world, a Kuwaiti official said on Sunday. His Highness the Amir strongly supports the event and similar conventions, his representative, Amiri Diwan Affairs Deputy Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said in an address after attending the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The number of participants has significantly risen 30 percent this year, he said, as he praised the all-Kuwaiti organizing committee for its efforts on the event's continued success.

Organized by the Kuwait Science Club in collaboration with the Geneva-based International Exhibition of Inventions, the four-day event includes an exhibition and several prizes for best invention, handed out by a panel of judges.

It represents an opportunity for inventors to possibly one day see the light and inventors to meet businesses willing to invest in their creations, believes Salem Al-Ablani, an official from Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, which is taking part.

Ahmad Nabil is one of the Kuwaitis exhibiting his invention on behalf of the Kuwait Association of Surgeons. The Kuwaiti



Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah visits a booth at the 10th International Invention Fair for the Middle East.



KUWAIT: Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah attends the 10th International Invention Fair for the Middle East. —KUNA

surgeon's endoscopy project has reached international fame, and has been successfully used throughout surgeries worldwide.

Another local organization present is the Sabah Al-Ahmad innovation Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC), which

this year has nominated the creations of eight inventors. The center, which has participated in all of the event's 10 editions, is the proud

base for 17 inventions which are all currently in the final stages of marketing, its head of innovation Abdullah Al-Jadaan said. —KUNA

Kuwait National Library remembers late poet Fahad Burusli

KUWAIT: Kuwait National Library hosted an event Sunday in honor of late poet Fahad Burusli, as part of Al-Qurain Cultural Festival. Bader Burusli, a poet and a relative of the late Fahad Burusli, said he learned from the deceased as a "relative, a human being and a Kuwaiti national who had genuinely loved his country, his dialect, culture and tradition." Fahad Burusli, he added, "loved and stuck to his dialect ... The deceased was like a daily newspaper for the people around him. He

transformed then problems of water, electricity, supply of rations and women education into poems." The late burusli was a strong supporter to science and knowledge," he said. Dr Nouriya Al-Roumi, Arabic Literature criticism professor at Kuwait University, spoke about the poems of late Burusli from a critical point of view. Novelist Hamad Al-Hamad, who wrote a book about Burusli, said the late poet was a poet by nature and since he was seven years old. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Speakers attend an event in honor of late poet Fahad Burusli. —KUNA

Village named after Kuwait springs up in Philippines

KUALA LUMPUR: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has unlocked a new suburb bearing the name of Kuwait in the eastern Filipino province of Samar. The Southeast Asian archipelago of the Philippines now welcomes its newest suburb christened, 'Kuwait Humanitarian Village,' with 297 housing units, a KRCS statement cited its Chairman Dr Hilal Al-

Sayer as saying yesterday. He hailed Kuwait's prompt and effective aid to the Philippines, saying the village's name was a reference to Kuwait's UN bestowed moniker of 'Humanitarian Center.'

The KRCS Chairman thanked Filipino officials for their cooperation and support, which proved instrumental in making this fledgling village see the light of day. "KRCS remains steadfast in its commitment to address humanitarian challenges, including poverty and malnutrition, all over the world," Sayer pointed out. Disaster-prone the Philippines is battered by some 20 typhoons a year, leaving millions of Filipinos vulnerable and underprepared for such calamities. —KUNA



Kuwait Red Crescent Society Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer (second from left) signs a document during a ceremony to handover the Kuwait Humanitarian Village in the Philippines. —KUNA



KUWAIT: A group photo of artists honored at a gallery held during Al-Qurain Cultural Festival. —KUNA

Some 66 Kuwaiti artists display works at annual event

KUWAIT: The works of 66 young and aspiring Kuwaiti artists were displayed at Ahmad Al-Adwani gallery Hall in Kuwait City as part of Al-Qurain Cultural Festival on Sunday. A judging panel awarded 10 works out of a total 87 at the annual exhibition, which is already in its ninth edition. This year's event focused on the youth, with all of the works on display by artists under the age of 30, National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature Assistant Secretary-General Bader Al-Doweesh said. The annual exhibition and 10-winner prize aims to shed light on aspiring artists in the country. —KUNA



Officials tour the gallery.



Artist Fatma Jrag poses with her works.



Artworks displayed at the gallery.



Artist Abdurrahman Al-Hamli poses with one of his works.



Local

Filipinos throng embassy to avail of amnesty on first day

Violators urged to secure their travel documents

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The Philippine Embassy in Kuwait yesterday witnessed a large crowd of people eager to take advantage of an amnesty for residency violators announced by the Kuwaiti government. The amnesty went into effect from yesterday for all violators, including absconders and runaways. The Philippine Embassy has advised Filipinos who want to avail of the amnesty to secure their travel documents, especially if they have no valid passports. Those who have valid passports however are advised to go directly to the airport and leave the country without paying any penalty. Those with travel documents will still be subjected to fingerprinting, and if they have cases filed against them, they will not be allowed to leave the country.

"I am very pleased to finally get the chance to leave Kuwait after two years without a visa," said Dally-Ann Quinalagan, who was in the queue at the embassy yesterday. "I am here to get a travel document and am ready to go," she said. Dally-Ann is a domestic helper from Zamboanga City. She arrived in Kuwait in June 2013 and worked for three years for her original employer. She asked for a release in 2016. Her employer allowed her to leave, but demanded KD 1,000. Dally-Ann failed to pay the amount, leaving her without an iqama.

"I have been living in this country for the last two years without an iqama. Every day I am afraid of the police, because they are checking civil IDs all the time.

When I see the police, I hide. Imagine the anxiety I've gone through, but thank God I survived," she said. Dally-Ann is a single mother and if given the chance, she will apply for a job in Kuwait again if the ban on Filipinos is lifted soon. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has banned Filipinos from working in Kuwait after several reported cases of mistreatment and abuse.

Julietta Delfin from Davao City also worked as a housemaid, but returned to her recruitment agency. "I left my original employers after working for three months with them. I told them to return me to the agency so I could look for a better employer. The agency sent me to another employer, and they were even worse, so after a few days I told them to return me to the agency again," she said.

"There were 10 of us at the agency, and we were transferred from one employer to another, but didn't get our salaries. I told them we need to get a salary because we want to feed our families back home. So the next time they wanted to send me to another employer, I refused. I then left the agency with nine others. We looked and managed to find jobs by ourselves," Julieta said. She has been working as a saleslady since then. "For the last four years, I managed to avoid police checking. I work and go home after my duty," she added.

130,000 expatriates

The interior ministry issued a decree granting a general amnesty to expatriates living in Kuwait



KUWAIT: People lined up outside the Philippines' embassy in Kuwait yesterday on the first day of an amnesty announced by the Interior Ministry for visa violators. —Photo by Ben Garcia

without valid visas. The amnesty runs between Jan 29 and Feb 22, 2018 and is expected to benefit nearly 130,000 expatriates in violation of residency laws. The amnesty decree (no. 64/2018) gives illegal residents two options - they can either leave the country during the abovementioned period through any port without getting permission from any authority and without paying any penalties; or they can legalize their status and continue residing in Kuwait after paying all fines and obtaining a valid visa without being referred to the investigation department.

Residency violators who are banned from travelling or have a court case should visit the residency affairs department to discuss the possibility of getting a valid visa during the amnesty period.

Those who leave the country during this amnesty period are allowed to enter Kuwait again if they meet the regular conditions of entry and if they were not banned for another reason. This decree does not apply to expats who will lose their legal residency status after the amnesty period. If an illegal resident is caught during the amnesty period, they will be deported immediately.

Those who want to legalize their status and stay in the country will pay a penalty of KD 2 for each day up to total of KD 600, even if they were in violation for a longer period. The last time an "amnesty" was granted was in January 2016, but it was partial, as violators who wanted to leave the country still had to pay fines. The last full amnesty (leaving without paying fines) was granted in 2011.

Cabinet voices support to Social Affairs Minister

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti cabinet lauded Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh for the arguments she made during the debate of her recent grilling motion, which were 'armed with documents and concrete facts.' During its weekly meeting held at Bayan Palace and presided over by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the cabinet renewed confidence in Sabeeh and spoke highly of her tangible efforts to achieve the aspired goals and to live up to her due national responsibilities. The ministers also appreciated MPs' commitment to objectivity and civilized dialogue while grilling the ministers.

Moreover, the ministers congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Kuwaiti people on national festivals, including a flag-hoisting ceremony. Afterwards, the cabinet reviewed the outcomes of a recent visit to Kuwait by Lebanese President Michel Aoun and his talks with Kuwaiti officials on bilateral relations, issues of mutual interest and the latest Arab and international developments. First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. —KUNA

Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah briefed his colleague on the outcomes of his recent visit to Qatar, where he had attended a military college graduation ceremony.

The ministers then listened to a briefing from Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on an Azeri presidential envoy's latest visit to Kuwait. Internationally, the cabinet sharply condemned two recent terrorist

attacks in the Afghan capital of Kabul, which left scores of people dead or injured. It billed the blasts as criminal acts that targeted innocent people and completely violate all heavenly religions and human values, while offering condolences to the Afghan government and people. Finally, the Kuwaiti cabinet lauded recent Saudi security efforts that led to preventing a terrorist Qaeda plan and arresting a number of terrorists. —KUNA

British minister says confident in Kuwaiti efforts for Mideast peace

KUWAIT: Kuwait is "more than capable" of contributing to peace in the Middle East, despite the challenges that come with its newly obtained non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), said a British minister. In an interview yesterday, Britain's Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa Alistair Burt said Kuwait joining the UNSC comes amid eventful times, as the UN body grapples with crises in Syria and Yemen. He expressed his concern over veto power in the UNSC, especially as it relates to humanitarian issues, saying that his country will back up Kuwait in its two-year stint in the UNSC. On the Gulf diplomatic row, Burt said that Britain highly appreciates Kuwait's efforts to defuse tensions in the Gulf region. The British minister commended Kuwait for hosting a February 12-14 conference over the reconstruction of war-torn Iraq, saying he was sanguine the event would meet its objectives.



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh meets with British Secretary of State for Middle East at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Alistair Burt. —KUNA

On Turkey's military intervention in Syria, Burt called on Ankara to be vigilant and focus on the fight against terrorism, chiefly, the so-called Islamic State (IS). He weighed in on US President Donald Trump's decision to move the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, saying that his country does not have similar plans. Meanwhile, on Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, Burt stressed that Jerusalem should be the joint capital between harmonious Palestinian and Israeli states. He also hailed the long-standing camaraderie between his country and Kuwait, citing exceptional ties in sectors running the gamut from education and aviation to trade.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh discussed with Burt various issues regarding the 11th joint committee and 11th meetings. Saleh received at his office at Seif Palace Burt and his accompanying delegation on the sidelines of his visit to the country.

A statement released by Saleh's office noted that the two sides also tackled ways of boosting bilateral relations and the latest developments in the region and international arena. The statement added that Saleh expressed appreciation and affirmed importance on cooperation to continue the work of the joint committee. —KUNA

1,781 arrested in crackdowns

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Public security authorities carried out several security campaigns in Kuwait's governorates during the period between Jan 19 and Jan 27 by setting up 326 inspection points. The campaigns resulted in the arrest of 1,781 wanted people and violators and 517 people wanted on criminal, civil and absconding cases, in addition to 1,102 residency violators, while 97 were arrested over drugs cases and 433 for fighting. Meanwhile, 115 vehicles were impounded and 2,145 traffic citations were issued.

Kabd fight

Paramedics responded to a call about a fight in Kabd near the first roundabout, and two persons had to be taken to hospital - one was stabbed and the other was run over. Both were in critical condition.

Electronic passport

The Ministry of Interior's (MoI) Nationality and Passport Department began use of the pre-appointment service to issue the new electronic passport electronically through the ministry's website (www.moi.gov.kw). MoI's relations and security information department said the nationality and passport department launched the service of making prior appointments through the MoI website, adding that the ministry increased the number of applications from 150 to 300. The department said the new mechanism is part of MoI's strategies that aim at saving time and effort, while providing a better service. It said that in cases of illness, arrangements are made for an employee to go to the house of the person and get the information from him.

Scholarship students demand more allowances

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf met Secretary General of Kuwait Medical Association Dr Mohammad Al-Qinae and Head of the Kuwait Doctors Union in Canada Dr Mohammad Al-Mutawa to discuss the exchange rate of the Canadian dollar, which has negatively affected doctors on scholarship in Canada. Qinae said the drop in the amount of money transferred in Canadian dollars was by 700 Canadian dollars, about 17 percent lower than what it was last month. He said that a proposal was submitted to increase allowances for scholarship doctors to KD 1,200, adding that current expenses haven't changed since 1986.

Charges dropped

The criminal court exonerated six persons (five Syrians and one Iraqi) from money laundering and terrorism financing charges. It also exonerated two Syrians from charges of financing the Islamic State (IS) with \$11 million.

Manpower authority supports SMEs

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Acting Director General of the Manpower Public Authority and Deputy Director General for Planning and Skill Approval Mubarak Al-Jafoor said the authority stands with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and participates in all their activities out of

the belief in the importance of their role in the state's development. He said SMEs deserve the state's support, especially since small businesses have proven to be successful and have attracted the youth.

New parks

The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) will open 15 new parks in eight residential areas next month. There are six new parks in Ishbiliya, one in Jahra, two in Adan, two in Salmiya, one is Salwa, one in Qurain, one in Jahra and a park in Na'em. This step comes within plans to

increase green areas in residential areas. A public park in Industrial Shuwaikh was also planned, but the limited budget postponed this project until the parks in the residential areas are completed.

Market crackdown

A committee comprising members from four different state departments carried out a wide-scale campaign in the Friday Market as part of efforts to organize the market place and arrest violating marginal labor. Several illegal workers were apprehended during the campaign, a committee member said.



Philippine farmers defy volcano anger

Iran grants US citizen four-day release from prison

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AFRIN, Syria: Relatives of a Kurdish herder mourn outside the hospital in Afrin, after he was killed in a Turkish airstrike on their village near the Kurdish enclave. —AFP

‘More civilians killed’ as Turkey hits targets

55 civilians die as Turkey intensifies Syria campaign

AFRIN: Clashes and air strikes again hit Syria's border region of Afrin yesterday, with new civilian casualties reported as Turkey pursued an offensive against Kurdish forces. The operation, launched on January 20, sees Turkey providing air and ground support to Syrian opposition fighters in an offensive against Kurdish militia in northwestern Syria. Ankara, which considers the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in Syria a "terror" group, has vowed to continue and possibly expand the operation despite international concern and strained relations with Washington.

In reaction to the offensive, the Kurds have said they will not attend peace talks aimed at resolving Syria's long civil war which will be held today in the Russian city of Sochi. Turkish air strikes and artillery fire were continuing yesterday in northern and western parts of a Afrin, a predominantly Kurdish region of Syria on the border with Turkey, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group.

"Fighting has intensified on several fronts," said Rami Abdel Rahman, the head of the Britain-based Observatory, which uses a network of long-established sources to monitor Syria's war. He said pro-Turkish forces had captured eight areas near the border since the start of the operation. The Turkish military said Sunday it had seized control of Mount Barsaya near the town of Afrin, a strategically important high point. At least 14 people, including five children, died Sunday in Turkish air strikes on the region, the Observatory said.

Clouds of smoke

It says 55 civilians have been killed since the start of the offensive. Turkey strongly rejects such claims, saying it is doing everything possible to avoid civilian casualties in the operation. At the main hospital in Afrin, a pick-up truck pulled up on Sunday carrying wounded civilians, including children in blood-stained clothes, who were rushed inside for treatment. An ambulance arrived bearing the bodies of a man and a small child, its skull crushed. Clouds of black smoke were seen rising from the hills around Afrin, but fighting has not yet reached the city. Shops were open and many residents were going about their business as normal, walking outside and gathering in public squares. Turkey says seven of its soldiers have died since operation "Olive Branch" was launched, while around 40 others have been injured.

At least 76 pro-Turkish rebels have been killed, as well as 78 Kurdish fighters, according to the Observatory. The

Turkish army said in a statement yesterday that "597 terrorists have been neutralized" since the start of the operation. Turkish relations with the United States have soured over Ankara's stance on the YPG—which Ankara says is a "terrorist" offshoot of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The PKK, which has waged a war against the Turkish state for three decades, is proscribed as a terror group by Ankara and its Western allies. The YPG has received support from the United States, with its fighters spearheading the battle against the Islamic State group across swathes of Syria.

Peace talks in Russia

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has threatened to expand the offensive against the YPG to Manbij, east of Afrin. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu lashed out at US support for the militia in an opinion piece published Sunday in the New York Times. "A NATO ally arming a terrorist organization that is attacking another

NATO ally is a fundamental breach of everything that NATO stands for," he wrote. Turkey's interior ministry said yesterday that authorities had detained 311 people suspected of disseminating "terror propaganda" in connection with the Syria offensive.

Delegates were meanwhile arriving yesterday for the first Syria peace congress in Russia, but expectations were tempered after the country's main opposition group, like the Kurds, refused to participate. Regime-backer Moscow has invited hundreds of people to Tuesday's talks in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, which are being co-sponsored by Turkey and Iran, another supporter of President Bashar Al-Assad. After another round of failed peace talks in Vienna last week, the main opposition Syrian Negotiation Commission (SNC) said it would not attend the Sochi congress.

The SNC accused Assad's regime and its Russian backers of continuing to rely on military might—and showing no willingness to enter into honest negotiations—as the war, in which more than 340,000 people have died, approaches its seventh year. Assad's forces have managed to regain control of much of the territory lost in the initial years of the war and in recent months have been concentrating efforts on the northwestern province of Idlib. Large parts of the province are controlled by a group dominated by Al-Qaeda's former Syria affiliate. The Observatory said yesterday that regime air strikes had killed 33 civilians in the past 24 hours in Idlib. —AFP



76 pro-Turkish rebels, 78 Kurdish fighters killed

Indonesia draft proposals aim to ban extramarital sex

JAKARTA: Indonesia's parliament is drafting proposed revisions to the national criminal code that could ban all consensual sex outside marriage, sparking alarm among activists who it would breach basic rights and could be misused to target the LGBT community. The parliamentary committee drawing up recommendations to change the Dutch colonial-era criminal code has still to finalize its proposals. But a draft, seen by Reuters on Monday, included measures to criminalize extramarital sex, same-sex relations, and co-habitation, all of which were previously unregulated by law. Adultery is already deemed a crime in Indonesia, the Southeast Asian country with the world's largest Muslim population. Last month, the Constitutional Court narrowly voted to strike down a similar petition filed by the Family Love Alliance, one of the conservative groups behind the move to push legislation through parliament. "The truth is the majority of religions in Indonesia hold the same values, so... (the revisions) are representative of the majority and of all cultures in Indonesia," said Euis Sunarti, a member of the Family Love Alliance, which likens itself to conservative evangelical Christian groups in the United States. The parliamentary committee has been holding consultations with the public, taking the opinion of religious scholars, legal experts and rights groups over how to change the criminal code where it relates to

extramarital sex. Most political parties are reported to be for the changes, particularly those that outlaw gay sex. Few Indonesian politicians have voiced support for LGBT rights for fear of alienating a largely conservative voter base ahead of legislative and presidential elections next year. Parliament has debated revisions to the criminal code, including regulations on corruption, sex and alcohol, for many years. But after repeated delays it is expected to finalize proposals during coming weeks.

Rights activists say the proposals, if approved, would be difficult to police without violating privacy and could threaten social development. "The draft law will create new discriminatory offences that do not exist in the current criminal code. It will slow down Indonesia's efforts to develop their economy, society, knowledge, education etc... if law enforcement agencies are busy policing morality," said Andreas Harsono of Human Rights Watch. "It's sounding like the Aceh sharia code," he added, referring to the ultra-conservative province at the northern tip of Sumatra island, which is the only Indonesian region to implement Islamic law. Activists are particularly worried the new law may be used to target the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community, which has faced rising hostility in recent years. A recent survey found that nearly 90 percent of Indonesians who understand the term LGBT feel "threatened" by the community and believe their religion forbids same-sex relations.

Junimart Girsang, a member of parliament from the nationalist Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), said same-sex relations could not be accepted in the country. "In legal terms, religious terms and ethical terms, we cannot have that in our country," he said. —Reuters

Syria regime air raids kill 33 civilians



SARAQIB, Syria: Photo shows destruction around the Udai hospital following airstrikes by government forces on the town of Saraqeb in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib. —AFP

BEIRUT: Regime air strikes have killed 33 civilians in the past 24 hours in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib where government forces are fighting jihadists, a monitor said yesterday. Yesterday alone, the strikes killed 16 civilians including 11 in a vegetable market in the town of Saraqeb, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The 17 others were killed on Sunday in raids on various areas of the province, large parts of which are controlled by Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS), which is dominated by Al-Qaeda's former Syria affiliate. "Regime war planes have intensified their strikes over the past 24 hours after relative calm due to bad weather," Observatory chief Rami Abdul Rahman said. Syrian troops had been advancing on Idlib as part of a fierce offensive launched in late December with Russian backing. At the market in Saraqeb, an AFP correspondent saw pools of blood

on the ground. Small trucks loaded with sacks of potatoes stood abandoned after their windows were blasted from their frames. In front of a hospital in the town, a motorbike and a car were trapped below the rubble and twisted metal.

An alliance of jihadists and rebels overran the vast majority of Idlib province in 2015. On January 21, Syria's army said it had captured the vital military airport of Abu Duhur on the edge of Idlib province, in a breakthrough for the government in the last Syrian province beyond its control. With the airport's capture, the army said, troops would secure a key route leading from the neighboring province of Aleppo south to the capital Damascus. Syria's war has killed more than 340,000 people and displaced millions since it began in March 2011 with the brutal repression of anti-government protests. —AFP

International

'Fog' of Ukraine war: Russian's death in Syria sheds light on secret mission

Kremlin denies military involvement in east Ukraine

MOSCOW: In the fall of 2015, pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine were introduced to a mustachioed new commander who, like his predecessors, went by the codename Tuman - "fog" in Russian. Also like his predecessors, he appeared to be a Russian national. He signed documents as General Primakov. When he was killed while on official assignment to Syria two years later, it turns out that this name was also fake, a deception to hide Russia's central role in a conflict that Moscow and the rebels maintain was entirely homegrown.

In fact, Valery Asapov was a Russian general working undercover. The Kremlin has repeatedly denied providing military support for separatists who rejected a new pro-Western leadership in Kiev in 2014 and set up two states in eastern Ukraine, where many people identify as ethnically Russian. Five rebels independently told Reuters that Asapov was a commander in the armed forces in one of them, the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic. Specifically, two of the rebels said, Asapov commanded the rebels' key armed division, the First Army Corps.

Asapov's younger brother Vyacheslav also confirmed that his brother was in Ukraine. "He was there. For an entire year," he told Reuters in September, several days after giving a eulogy at his brother's funeral. "How did he feel about it? He was okay with it, like any military man," he said by telephone from the Moscow's hometown in the Kirov region, 800 km east of Moscow. Asked to comment on Asapov's case, the Kremlin said it had no information and suggested sending questions to the defence ministry. The ministry did not reply to a request for comment. Three rebels said Asapov was not

the first general seconded to be their leader, and that there continues to be a rotation of Russians in charge of the rebel army. Asked whether the defense ministry of the Donetsk republic plays any military role, a senior separatist officer said: "No. The defense ministry deals only with politics and humanitarian activities." The rebels who spoke to Reuters asked not to be named because they did not want to be identified giving away secrets. Asapov's story once again shows a deeper Russian involvement in the conflicts in both Ukraine and Syria than Moscow has been willing to admit. It also shows the inner workings of the strategy of "hybrid warfare", whereby Russia projects power by putting undercover people in command of local forces without publicly risking large numbers of boots on the ground.

Asapov was one of series of Russian commanders

Sanctions
Russian President Vladimir Putin himself has said no Russian troops have ever been deployed in Ukraine, not at the beginning of the rebellion in the east and not anytime since. Asked about instances of Russian servicemen captured in the former Soviet republic, Putin said in one case that a group crossed the Russian border into the country by accident.

In a second case, he conceded that those captured may have included "people who dealt with certain issues including in military sphere", but added: "that does not mean we have regular Russian troops there." Based on the accounts of Russian servicemen, their relatives and witnesses, Reuters has reported on Russian regular troops entering eastern Ukraine at least twice amid fierce fighting in late August 2014 and

around the time of the battle for Debaltsevo in the Donetsk region in February 2015. Kiev and the West say Russia invaded eastern Ukraine and have imposed sanctions on Russia and on individuals believed

to have been involved in the conflict and the earlier annexation of Crimea. The Ukraine government's sanctions list includes more than a thousand Russian and Ukrainian citizens, including Russian military officers. —Reuters



KIEV: A Ukrainian serviceman kicks a ball at a mannequin depicting Russian President Vladimir Putin dressed in a football uniform, during the 'Stop Putin. Stop war' rally and 'Kick Out Putin' flashmob in Independence Square in Kiev. —AFP

to have been involved in the conflict and the earlier annexation of Crimea. The Ukraine government's sanctions list includes more than a thousand Russian and Ukrainian citizens, including Russian military officers. —Reuters



News in brief

African Union spying report

ADDIS ABABA: China's ambassador to the African Union yesterday denounced as "absurd" a report by French newspaper Le Monde alleging that Beijing has been spying on the continental body. The report published last week claims technicians at the body's headquarters in the Ethiopian capital discovered last year that the contents of their computers had been regularly copied to servers in Shanghai since 2012, citing several unnamed AU sources. "I think the report is a sensational story, but is also preposterous and absurd," Chinese envoy Kuang Weilin said on the sidelines of the AU summit in Addis Ababa. The twice-yearly meeting is taking place in a soaring conference hall built by the Chinese as a symbol of their friendship with Africa and inaugurated the same year the alleged spying began. Weilin said the report published last week on the eve of the summit "will undermine the image of the newspaper" but not the relationship between China and Africa.

Rebels frees 15 prisoners

JUBA: A South Sudanese rebel group said yesterday it had released 15 army soldiers it had been holding to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in line with a ceasefire agreed by the government and rebel groups last month. SPLA-IO spokesman Lam Paul Gabriel told Reuters the rebel group had released the prisoners on Sunday and that it was collecting names of prisoners of war from battlefields across the Equatoria region, which borders Uganda. More prisoners will be released in the coming days, he said. International monitors have said the truce negotiated by the East African regional bloc IGAD in December—which included a commitment to release detainees—was violated within hours. Contacted by Reuters yesterday, the ICRC referred to a statement it released on Sunday saying it had "informed parties involved in the conflict in South Sudan that it can facilitate any potential release of persons detained in relation to the conflict."

BBC's radio services

LONDON: The BBC yesterday launched new daily radio services producing news, current affairs, features and English language training for Ethiopians and Eritreans. The BBC World Service programs will be broadcast from Monday to Friday in the Amharic, Afaan Oromo and Tigrinya languages and will be aired on shortwave radio and streamed on Facebook. "There will be a strong focus on culture, health and original journalism from the region," the British broadcaster said. It will also offer beginner, intermediate and advanced English language lessons once a week to speakers of the three regional languages. The BBC last year launched an online portal entirely in Nigerian Pidgin, which takes inspiration from Portuguese, English, as well as Jamaican patois. It also launched a Korean service that is said could be available to listeners in North Korea if the signal is not blocked. The BBC World Service, which is funded by Britain's television licence fee, is the world's largest international broadcaster, reaching a global audience of 269 million weekly, on radio, television and online.

Bahrain upholds jail term

DUBAI: Bahrain's court of cassation yesterday upheld a one-year suspended jail term for an aide to Shiite spiritual leader Sheikh Isa Qassim and confirmed a decision to revoke his citizenship, a legal source said. Sheikh Hussein Mahrus Al-Kassab was handed the sentence along with Qassim and another aide by the appeals court in May. He was also fined 100,000 Bahraini dinars (\$265,000) after they were all convicted of illegal fundraising and money laundering. Kassab was the only one of the three to appeal to the court of cassation, whose verdicts are final, the legal source said. In another ruling, the supreme court yesterday upheld the death sentence against a Bahraini Shiite for murdering a policeman in a bomb attack in Feb 2013. The court also upheld life terms for six other defendants and confirmed jail terms of six years and five years for two other men involved in the attack.

Al-Sisi, Egypt's undisputed leader

CAIRO: With his trademark black sunglasses and blanket media presence, Egypt's President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi projects an air of benign paternalism. Whether the people love or loathe Sisi, seeing him as a bulwark of stability or as a domineering autocrat—there is little doubt that he will remain Egypt's president for years to come.

In 2014 he stormed to victory in the presidential election, having led the military a year before in ousting the North African country's first freely elected leader, the Islamist Mohamed Morsi. Morsi now languishes in jail, convicted on many and varied counts and sentenced to multiple terms including the death penalty. Sisi successfully silenced all forms of political opposition during his first four-year term. This has included sweeping aside all token opposition in the upcoming March 26-28 election, leaving himself as the main choice on the ballot paper. The former career army officer was born in November 1954 in El-Gamaleya neighborhood in the heart of Islamic Cairo. Even as a child, Sisi sought to exert control over those around him, according to people who knew him at the time. He graduated from the Military Academy in 1977, later studying in Britain and the United States, before becoming military intelligence chief under Hosni Mubarak who was toppled in an January 2011 uprising.

There to serve

As Egypt's leader he is often seen microphone in hand, presiding over public ceremonies. Speaking in the Egyptian Arabic dialect, sometimes laughing in the middle of his own lengthy speeches, Sisi projects an image of father of the nation. He is fond of telling Egyptians that they are the apple of his eye, stressing that he is there only to serve them. Enjoying near-unanimous media support, he is popular among many Egyptians who see him as the right man to lead the country after years of political, security, and economic turmoil that followed the ouster of long-time president Mubarak.

A father of four whose wife wears a hair veil, Sisi is described by those close to him as a pious Muslim who does not miss any of the five daily prayers. But he is also reported to have a strong sense of self-belief, with audio records leaked by Islamic-leaning media pointing to a big ego. In one leak, Sisi recalls a dream about the late presi-



CAIRO: Supporters of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi drive a pickup truck bearing his portrait and loudspeakers, in the capital Cairo's Tahrir square. —AFP

dent Anwar Sadat, which he saw as an omen that he would one day become powerful himself. In another, he tells of a dream in which he held a red sword inscribed with the Muslim declaration of faith. Ironically, it was the Islamist Morsi himself who appointed Sisi defense minister and commander-in-chief of the armed forces in 2012.

Security problems

A year later, Sisi ended Morsi's turbulent year in power and cracked down on the Islamist's supporters, with hundreds of people killed in weeks. On one bloody day—August 14, 2013—security forces killed more than 700 people in Cairo when they dispersed sit-ins by pro-Morsi protesters. At the time, Human Rights Watch said the "mass killings of protesters" that day "probably amounts to crimes against humanity". Since Morsi's removal, tens of thousands of his followers have been jailed, and hundreds

sentenced in expedient mass trials strongly denounced by the United Nations. As Islamist-related security issues mounted, Sisi launched a military campaign against Islamic State group fighters based in North Sinai province. But so far he has been unable to fully quash an insurgency that has killed hundreds of police and military personnel.

Economically, he has begun an IMF-mandated campaign of drastic economic reforms that include cutting energy subsidies, adopting a value-added tax and floating the pound. Many secular and left-wing activists who initially supported Sisi soon came to regret it: Sisi has been regularly accused by international rights groups of committing serious violations to silence dissent. During his first presidential campaign in 2014, he said that "talking about freedoms" should not take precedence over "national security", and that it would take "20 to 25 years to establish a true democracy" in Egypt.—AFP

Southeast Asia faces a 'cooling crisis', pollution

KUALA LUMPUR: Southeast Asia faces a "cooling crisis" as more and more people crank up inefficient air-conditioning to cope with rising temperatures and worsening air pollution, researchers said. More than 420 managers and experts from government agencies and multinational companies in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam took part in a survey on cooling systems and energy efficiency, conducted by Eco-Business and released at a Bangkok conference yesterday.

Energy demand from members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) climbed 70 percent from 2000 to 2016, with air-conditioning accounting for a large part of household electricity demand, the report said. The trend is likely to continue as populations grow, cities expand and wealth levels increase. "The domestic aspect of electricity consumption has grown massively - more so than industry and the service sector in ASEAN - and as a result the air-conditioning bill is going through the roof,"

said Tim Hill, research director at Eco-Business, a media organization covering sustainability in Asia.

Electricity for the region's air-conditioning units is largely provided by coal-fired power stations. The report urged governments and businesses to adopt new policies and rules to help countries meet global targets to cut planet-warming emissions. "Governments need to drive this by putting in regulations that enforce more efficient forms of air-conditioning - making sure they're not dumping grounds for old-fashioned products," Hill told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. The survey's respondents said manufacturers and suppliers of air-conditioning should focus on producing more energy-efficient systems and educating customers better.

Excessive cooling in public buildings - like offices, shopping centers and cinemas - must also be tackled, while public awareness campaigns would help promote energy efficiency. Cinema-goers in some Southeast Asian cities bring socks to keep warm, while officer workers wear woolly hats and shoppers in malls can be seen wearing winter jackets to stop the shivers. At street level, air-conditioned shops often keep their doors open to entice buyers. "Air-con is designed to make people feel more comfortable but it's actually doing completely the reverse - it's making people feel more uncom-



AMRITSAR: Indian commuters make their way through heavy fog and air pollution in Amritsar yesterday. —AFP

fortable and making them more unproductive by freezing them," Hill said.

Stricter government regulations that promote or enforce energy-efficient cooling systems, and financial incentives to install such systems in homes would help, the report said.

Consumers, businesses and governments must also work together to man-

age electricity demand better, reduce emissions and pollutants, and move away from a reliance on coal-fired power stations, said Mark Radka, head of energy, climate and technology at UN Environment in Paris, who also worked on the report. "The ASEAN countries as a whole should try to up their game," he added.—Reuters

International

Challenged on all fronts, May faces pressure over Brexit law

Weakened PM under pressure; leadership in question

LONDON: British Prime Minister Theresa May came under further pressure over her Brexit blueprint yesterday, with members of the upper house of parliament saying there were "fundamental flaws" in a law crucial to the departure. The law has also deepened splits in her Conservative Party, which has for years been divided over Britain's relations with the European Union. It is yet another battle for a weakened prime minister whose leadership is being questioned after scandals within her party, gaffes and an ill-judged election that lost her party its majority in parliament.

Facing calls to axe her finance minister, who favors a gentle Brexit, and criticism over a lack of big ideas to revive the fortunes of the Conservatives, May needs to drive through legislation to sever ties with the EU before March next year. The largely pro-EU House of Lords, which will start debating the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill today, have made no secret of their opposition to the legislation which they say amounts to little more than a power grab by the government.

It is designed to put current EU legislation into British law essentially in one move, allowing for changes later. "We acknowledge the scale, challenge and unprecedented nature of the task of converting existing EU law into UK law, but as it stands this bill is constitutionally unacceptable," said Ann Taylor, head of the influential Constitution Committee. "The bill grants ministers overly-broad powers to do whatever they think is 'appropriate' to correct 'deficiencies' in retained EU law," the committee said in a report. While many peers are opposed to the legislation, the House of Lords is not expected to veto the law after it was passed in the lower house of parliament.

But more criticism over what even some government

officials say was a hastily created bill to "copy and paste" EU rules and regulations into British law by the time it leaves the bloc next year underlines the size of the task facing May. In Brussels, EU ministers, whose unity in the negotiations has amplified the arguments in Britain, are due to formally endorse its guidelines for a transition period that will leave the relationship largely unchanged. But even with both sides mostly in agreement over the transition period bar a few questions over citizens rights and trade agreements, May faces criticism by Brexit campaigners for bowing to EU demands and accepting the status quo.

'Get a grip'

Since being appointed prime minister shortly after the "Remain" side, which she backed, lost a referendum on EU membership in June 2016, May's style of leadership has been increasingly challenged

House of Lords to challenge the Brexit blueprint

by her party, which is losing support at a time when the opposition Labor Party is enjoying record levels of members. Her spokesman defended the prime minister's record, saying she had not only won an agreement with the EU to move onto the second phase of negotiations on future ties, she had also boosted housebuilding, education standards and health funding.

Brexit campaigners have aired their concerns that May is delivering a Brexit in name only, while EU supporters accuse her of putting the party's interests above those of the country in the talks to end more than 40 years of membership in the bloc. Talk of ousting her has grown louder in recent days, with local media reporting that more lawmakers are supporting a no-confidence motion against her. But several lawmakers asked by Reuters say her removal is a risky strategy for the party, which is divided down the middle over Brexit. The promotion of either side's representatives to the top post



BRUSSELS: European Union Chief Negotiator in charge of Brexit negotiations Britain Michel Barnier (center) arrives for a General affairs council debate on the article 50 concerning Brexit in Brussels at the EU headquarters yesterday. —AFP

could trigger mutiny. "There were times last year for the prime minister to step aside - immediately after the June 2017 election, or after Party Conference.

That didn't happen. Maybe the Cabinet should have asked her to go, but they didn't," said Nicky Morgan, education minister under May's predecessor, David

Cameron. "Even more importantly, we are now into a critical nine months for the future of the country, so the cabinet need to get a grip by acting collectively to shape Brexit and agree an ideal end-state based in reality, on what parliament will approve eventually - and then stick to it." —Reuters

US pays tribute to 'mother of forensic science'

WASHINGTON: A homicide detective trains on the job for years, but one woman's pioneering miniature crime-scene replicas are still used more than half a century after her death to teach police investigators from across the United States. Starting in the 1940s, Frances Glessner Lee, known as the "mother of forensic science," subverted traditionally feminine crafts to make breakthroughs in a male-dominated field of criminal investigation that was then still in its infancy.

Her dollhouse-sized, three-dimensional creations, inspired by true crime scenes, formed the subject of an exhibition that closed Sunday at the Renwick Gallery across from the White House in Washington, the first time all 19 studies still known to exist have been shown to the public. All but one, known as the "lost nutshell" and on loan from the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, were loaned from the Harvard Medical School via the Maryland Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME). The Glessner family donated a tree farm to the New Hampshire society in 1978.

Charming at first glance, the handmade dioramas are also undeniably macabre, featuring the bodies of people who met a variety of grisly fates. They are meticulously detailed, featuring piles of newspapers or letters in Lilliputian print, an ashtray overflowing with hand-rolled tiny tobacco cigarettes whose ends Lee would burn for added realism, finely knit socks or working window and door locks. Overturned chairs, blood-spattered sheets or a cake still sitting on an open oven rack next to a dead housewife hint of unspeakable violence frozen in time.

Lee, who died in 1962 and who was in her 60s when she began crafting her dioramas, deliberately chose to feature victims who would otherwise often be overlooked, such as women and the poor, in an effort to help trainees recognize and overcome biases. Thanks to the hyperreal studies, budding criminal investigators have learned how to approach their trade scientifically, becoming better observers and taking into account all key evidence without mishandling it or tampering with crime scenes. Lee's "Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death" are so effective that the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore still uses them today in training seminars.

Strangling or hanging?

Lee, America's first female police captain, helped found the Department of Legal Medicine at Harvard University, the first of its kind. The discoloration of the corpses, the angle of minuscule bullet holes and the blood-spatter patterns are just some of the details meant to give trainees clues to solve crimes and to determine whether a natural death, an accident, a suicide or a murder was at play.

The solution to each crime scene remains a secret, since they are still used for training, but visitors to the Renwick were encouraged to make their own findings, flashlight in hand. Forbidden by her wealthy parents from attending college, Lee was made to marry at age 19 and had three children. Only once her marriage had ended in divorce and Lee had obtained an inheritance was she finally able to pursue her interest in forensic pathology. "Frances Glessner Lee was generous, forward-thinking, persistent, stubborn and innovative," said author and DeSales University forensic psychology professor Katherine Ramsland. "A fan of Sherlock Holmes and true crime stories, she focused on what mattered to her rather than on what society (and her father) thought was proper." —AFP

Fighting flares in Yemen's Aden after separatist 'coup' attempt

ADEN: Fresh fighting flared in Yemen's southern city of Aden yesterday after separatist forces seized government buildings in what the prime minister said was an attempted coup. Aden has served as the headquarters of Saudi-backed President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi's government since it was forced out of the capital Sanaa by Shiite rebels three years ago. The separatists-who want the return of the independent South Yemen that existed before 1990 - supported Hadi's forces against the rebels but tensions between the two sides have risen in recent months.

The flare-up in Aden has added yet another dimension to one of the world's most complicated conflicts, a civil war that left thousands dead and millions on the brink of starvation. Yesterday, sporadic clashes continued after fighting overnight in the port city, especially in its north where separatist forces tried to take control of a military camp, security sources said. The separatists dispatched additional forces from the central province of Marib and the southern province of Abyan, the sources said.

The forces from Abyan progressed towards Aden after clashes with loyalists on the way. After the separatists seized the government headquarters on Sunday, Prime Minister Ahmed bin Dagher on

Sunday denounced a "coup... in Aden against legitimacy and the country's unity". He urged a Saudi-led military coalition backing Hadi to intervene in its defense. The coalition launched air strikes against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels in March 2015 and sent troops to support Hadi's forces, fearing that Tehran would gain a foothold in the country on Saudi Arabia's southern border.

'Shooting' all night

On Sunday, security sources said separatist units trained and backed by the United Arab Emirates had taken over the government headquarters in Aden after clashes. By early evening, separatists took control of two roads leading to the presidential palace where several members of the government were staying, security sources said. The International Committee of the Red Cross said fighting continued overnight in the port city. "All night shooting in Aden #Yemen, including heavy weapons," Alexandre Faite, the head of the ICRC delegation in the country based in Sanaa, said on Twitter. "Those in southern part of city, including (ICRC staff) still unable to get out."

UN envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed urged all parties to return to "calm and dialogue". The top negotiator is to step down in April after three years of overseeing UN-brokered negotiations between the government and rebels, none of which have stemmed the violence in the country. More than 9,200 people have been killed in Yemen since the Saudi-led military coalition intervened. The separatists joined forces with Hadi's government to oust the rebels from southern provinces in 2015, but tensions have soared since a secessionist governor's sacking last year.

The Russian historian giving Stalin's victims back their identity

SAINT PETERSBURG: He has shone a light on the lives and deaths of tens of thousands of Joseph Stalin's victims, but Russian historian Anatoly Razumov says his work is greeted with "indifference" in a country that still struggles to acknowledge the enormity of the bloody purges. For the last three decades, Razumov has worked through archives to make public the names of those executed during Stalin's purges in Leningrad, now Saint Petersburg, which targeted suspected "counter-revolutionaries" or so-called "enemies of the people" in the late 1930s.

"I haven't discovered any logic to it. It was inhumane and inexplicable," the historian told AFP of his findings, which he regrets now prompt little reaction. Commemorating the victims remains a vexed question in Russia, more than 80 years after the height of the Great Terror, which saw millions executed and sent to Gulag prison camps or into exile in remote regions. Under President Vladimir Putin, authorities have downplayed these darkest pages of Soviet history in the name of national unity and are sometimes

even overtly hostile to such research. Since the late 1980s, Razumov has compiled 13 volumes of what he calls a "Leningrad Martyrology," using an ancient term for books listing Christian martyrs, with the dates of birth, arrest and death of the victims. They also list the names, jobs and addresses of the people who lived in Leningrad before they were disappeared.

At best, relatives would have been told their loved ones had been "convicted without the right to written correspondence," without ever learning what had actually happened to them. "I launched my research in 1987 in the era of Perestroika reforms, as soon as it became possible," Razumov said. The son of a Soviet army officer, Razumov does not come from a family that was touched by the repressions.

But he chose to take on this mission to pay final respects to the men and women executed in the purges, from all walks of life including engineers, workers, tailors and shop assistants. The 62-year-old works in a room in the giant Russian National Library, right in the centre of Saint Petersburg. Razumov's study is lined with hundreds of files he has collected, often from the archives of the Stalin-era secret police, the NKVD, but also sent to him by relatives of victims. He opens up one of them: it has a transcript of the interrogation and verdict issued against a 28-year-old woman called Nina Dubrovskaya, who was a student of Polish origin. She was accused of being a Polish spy and executed on December 11, 1937. —AFP



ADEN: Fighters from Yemen's southern separatist movement gather in a street of the country's second city of Aden, during clashes with forces loyal to the Saudi-backed president. —AFP

'Outlaws'

Dagher held a cabinet meeting overnight to discuss "military developments and sabotage acts targeting government installations", loyalist news agency Saba reported. He condemned the actions of "outlaws" against the "legitimacy represented by President Hadi" in the city. Sunday's fighting in Aden killed 15 people including three civilians, hospital sources said, after separatist protesters were prevented from entering the city for a rally to demand the government's ouster. The separatists accused the prime minister of ordering his troops to open fire at the protesters.

Sunday's rally was called by the

Southern Transitional Council, an autonomous body not recognized by the government and aimed at overseeing self-governance in southern provinces. Former Aden governor Aidarous Al-Zubeidi formed the council in May last year after Hadi fired him. The council had asked Hadi to make changes in the government and gave him one week to do so—a deadline that expired on Sunday. It had warned that if Hadi did not accept the demand, its supporters would begin a protest campaign to oust Dagher's government. South Yemen was independent-with former British colony Aden as its capital—from its formation in 1967 until 1990, when it was unified with North Yemen. —AFP

Iran authorities grants US citizen four-day release

WASHINGTON: Iranian authorities granted a four-day leave on humanitarian grounds yesterday to Baquer Namazi, the oldest of a group of American citizens known to be held in the Islamic Republic. His lawyer Jared Genser said that Namazi, an 81-year-old former UNICEF official, cannot leave Iran and is prohibited from speaking to the media. His son, business consultant Siamak Namazi, is still in jail. Both are dual Iranian-American citizens. Namazi was rushed to a hospital on January 15 - the fourth time in the last year-after a "severe" drop in his blood pressure, an irregular heartbeat, "serious" energy depletion and white coloring, Genser said.

In September, he underwent emergency heart surgery to install a pacemaker. "We welcome the release of Baquer Namazi given his deteriorating health, but we note that his release is only temporary," State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement. "We call for the immediate and full release of the Namazi family, including his son Siamak, as well as other Americans unjustly held by the Iranian gov-

ernment." The Namazis were given 10 years in prison for "espionage and collaboration with the American government" in October.

The elder Namazi's son Babak said "a return to prison would be life-threatening for him." "I beg the Iranian authorities to show compassion and grant my father a permanent release so he can spend his remaining time with his family before we face an irreversible tragedy," he added. Genser said returning to prison Thursday as ordered would amount to a "death sentence" for Namazi. "On humanitarian grounds, his leave must be made permanent. And it is urgent that Siamak Namazi and the rest of the wrongfully imprisoned Americans also have their cases resolved," Genser said.

Xiyue Wang, a Chinese-American researcher from Princeton University, was also given a 10-year sentence for espionage. Ex-FBI agent and CIA contractor Robert Levinson went missing in March 2007. Washington and Tehran have had no diplomatic relations since April 1980 in the wake of the Islamic revolution, and tensions have sharpened under Trump after a brief warming under his predecessor, Barack Obama. The two countries along with other major powers signed an accord July 14, 2015 aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear program. Washington has continued to honor the accord, despite Trump's threats as a candidate last year to "rip it up." —AFP

International

11 Afghan soldiers killed in latest attack in Kabul

Militants attack army post near military academy

KABUL: Militants yesterday raided a military academy in Kabul, the Afghan capital, killing 11 soldiers, the fourth major attack in a spate of violence over the past nine days that is putting a new, more aggressive US strategy under the spotlight. Five gunmen attacked an army outpost near one of Afghanistan's main military academies yesterday and 11 soldiers were killed and 15 wounded before the attackers were subdued, the defense ministry said.

Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack near the Marshal Fahim military academy on the city's western outskirts, in which four of the gunmen were killed and one captured. It came two days after an ambulance bomb in the city centre killed more than 100 people and just over a week after another attack on the Hotel Intercontinental, also in Kabul, killed more than 20. Both of those attacks were claimed by the Taliban. Ministry of Defense officials said the five militants, armed with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic rifles, attacked the outpost near the well-defended academy just before dawn.

"The Afghan National Army is the country's defense force and makes sacrifices for the security and well-being of the people," the ministry said. Security officials at the scene said the gunmen had used a ladder to get over a wall into the post. In October, a suicide attacker rammed a car full of explosives into a bus carrying cadets from the academy, known as the Defense University, killing 15 of them. While militants claiming allegiance to Islamic State operate in mountains in the eastern province of Nangarhar, little is known about the group and many analysts question

whether they are solely responsible for the attacks they have claimed in Kabul and elsewhere.

Islamic State claimed an assault on the office of aid group Save the Children in the eastern city of Jalalabad on Wednesday in which six people were killed. The attacks have put pressure on President Ashraf Ghani and his US allies, who have expressed growing confidence that a new, more aggressive military strategy has succeeded in driving Taliban insurgents back from major provincial centers. The United States has stepped up its assistance to Afghan security forces and its air strikes against the Taliban and other militant groups, aiming to break a stalemate and force the insurgents to the negotiating table.

IS claims responsibility for the attack

Message to Trump

However, the Taliban have dismissed suggestions they have been weakened and said Saturday's bombing was a message to President Donald Trump. "The Islamic Emirate has a clear message for Trump and his

hand kissers, that if you go ahead with a policy of aggression and speak from the barrel of a gun, don't expect Afghans to grow flowers in response," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement, using the term the Islamist militants use to describe themselves.

The United States and Afghanistan have accused neighboring Pakistan of helping the Taliban in a bid to undermine old rival India's growing influence in Afghanistan. Ghani, speaking alongside visiting Indonesian President Joko Widodo, said the Taliban claim of responsibility for the Saturday blast, even though it inflicted so many civilian casualties, showed that their "overlord"



KABUL: Afghan security personnel detain a suspect as they guard the site of an attack near the Marshal Fahim Military Academy base in Kabul yesterday. —AFP

wanted to make a statement of defiance. But Pakistan, which denies accusations it fosters the Afghan war, condemned the attack yesterday as it did the Saturday blast, saying it reiterated its "strong condemnation of terrorism".

The surge of violence is unlikely to sway the US strategy, or breathe life into stalled efforts to get peace talks

going. The US military and the Afghan government say big attacks on civilians are evidence that the militants are being squeezed in the countryside. Trump condemned the Saturday attack, saying it "renews our resolve and that of our Afghan partners". "We will not allow the Taliban to win!" he said on Twitter yesterday.—Reuters

Fearless Philippine farmers defy volcano anger

GUINOBATAN: As blistering lava spews from the seething volcano nearby, Philippine farmer Jay Balindang leads his buffalo through the ash-strewn paddy fields of the no-go zone, creeping closer to danger in a desperate bid to support his family. Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated from around the erupting Mayon volcano, as a white-hot cocktail of gas and volcanic debris streaks down its flanks, threatening local communities who rely on the fertile land at its base. Fearing a significant eruption that could engulf whole swathes of the nearby land in burning rock and lava flows, authorities have cordoned-off a nine kilometer danger zone around Mayon. But that has not stopped defiant farmers like Balindang from tending to crops and livestock that are a crucial part of their livelihoods.

Each day the father-of-eight leaves his children at a government evacuation centre, sneaking past police as he returns to his small farm at the foot of the volcano to feed his precious "carabao" water buffalo. "I am not afraid of the volcano. We are used to its activity," the 37-year-old told AFP, at the edge of his rain-lashed rice fields, a few kilometers inside the danger zone. Farmers make up around 10,000 of the 84,000 people displaced by the eruption of Mayon in Albay province, some 330 kilometers southeast of Manila. The lush region is famous for its chili peppers, as well as less fiery crops like rice, corn and vegetables.

All are threatened by the volatile volcano, which has gushed molten lava and belched giant clouds of superheated ash since it began erupting two weeks ago. Local authorities say that beyond the immediate damage to crops caused by the coating of smoldering embers, there are concerns that heavy rainfall could combine with ash and rock to form deadly, fast-moving mudflows that could sweep away entire settlements and block vital rivers.

"This is a new and daunting challenge to our agriculture workers who in the past had to cope with



GUINOBATAN: Farmer Jay Balindang tends to his water buffalo under heavy rains in a rice field at the foot of the Mayon volcano in the town of Guinobatan in Albay province. —AFP

typhoons, landslides and floods," Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Pinol said.

Farming the 'Ring of Fire'

Farmers are among the most vulnerable to the meteorological miseries that afflict the Philippines, which is hit by an average of 20 typhoons a year and is in the earthquake-prone volcanic belt around the Pacific known as the "Ring of Fire". The 2,460-metre (8,070-foot) Mayon has been both a blessing and a curse to the farmers living near its slopes for generations. Volcanic ash can kill vegetation immediately after an eruption, but as it seeps into the ground it can also enrich the soil with minerals that sustain future crops. "If the ash is thin, it would become a fertilizer but if the ash is thick it would mean farmers who had spent money a lot of money to plant the vegetables lose everything," Renato Solidum, head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said. Vegetable prices have already begun to soar in parts of Albay as the eruption hampers access to key crops. "We are very famous for

these dishes wherein the (laro) leaves are being grown just at the foot of Mount Mayon," Elsa Maranan, chief of the agriculture department's local breeding station said. "If all this will be destroyed then the production of our delicacies and the income of our farmers will be very much affected."

Dangerous dash

In a bid to stop farmers from slipping back to tend their own fields, local authorities have set up communal areas, where farmers can graze livestock on ash-free grass. "We appeal to them not to be stubborn because they are putting the lives of our responders in danger," Brigadier-General Arnulfo Matanguihan, head of a local task force for the eruption said. But many still make a daily hazardous dash back to their own land. Balindang said the choice was clear—if he ensures that his pigs, carabaos and cows are fed, then his family will also be assured of something to eat. "It's very difficult because I don't know if we will have any rice left to harvest. For now, we have nothing," he said.—AFP

Philippine police return to war on drugs; case filed

MANILA: Police in the Philippines yesterday resumed President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs, making visits to the homes of users and dealers to convince them to surrender, but the national police chief said he could not promise a bloodless campaign. The announcement came as the justice department filed its first criminal case against police officers in the battle against drugs, bolstering human rights activists' accusations of fabricated accounts of shoot-outs with drug suspects.

The program of visits, known as "Oplan Tokhang", made a comeback with an assurance from police chief Ronaldo dela Rosa that it should be free of violence if offenders agreed to go quietly and did not resist. But he could not promise a "foolproof anti-drug campaign that would be bloodless", Dela Rosa added, as the police were "not dealing with people who are in their proper state of mind". In the dialect of Duterte's southern hometown of Davao, "Tokhang" is a combination of the words "knock" and "plead". Besides the visits, police have also run so-called "buy-bust" or sting operations and raided suspected drug dens and illicit laboratories.

In many of these operations, say rights activists, suspects did not get the chance to surrender, but were executed in cold blood instead. But police insist suspects died because they violently resisted arrest. Nearly 4,000 drug suspects have died in gun battles with police since June 2016, when Duterte came to power. The government lost 85 police and soldiers in the drugs war, police data show. More than 1.2 million people had also turned themselves in



LIGAO, Philippines: Young evacuees play in the compounds of a school serving as their temporary shelter in Ligao town in Albay province, south of Manila. —AFP

after the home visits. Duterte has stopped police anti-drugs operations twice due to questions over the conduct of the force, including the killing of a teenager in a supposed anti-drug operation.

Yesterday, the justice department filed murder charges and two drug-related cases against three police officers who killed the teenager, Kian Loyd delos Santos, after witnesses disputed the police version of the killing. National police spokesman Dionardo Carlos said the force welcomed the filing. "The police officers have to face their accusers in court and prove their innocence, they have to follow the procedures," he said, urging due process for the officers. To ensure transparency, Dela Rosa invited human rights advocates, priests and the media to join the relaunched program of home visits. The police officers involved would also undergo a vetting process to weed out "rogue" officers, said Dela Rosa, adding that past abuses had involved the police seeking bribes to drop the names of people from the lists they compiled.—Reuters

Indian man killed after being sucked into MRI machine

MUMBAI: An Indian man died after being sucked into an MRI machine while visiting a relative at a hospital in Mumbai, police said yesterday. Rajesh Maru, 32, was yanked towards the machine by its magnetic force after he entered the room carrying an oxygen cylinder, the city's police said in a statement. "We have arrested a doctor and another junior staff member under section 304 of the Indian penal code for causing death due to negligence," Mumbai police spokesman Deepak Deoraj said. The incident occurred on Saturday night at the Indian financial capital's Nair Hospital. Police said preliminary reports suggested that the man had died from inhaling liquid oxygen that leaked from the cylinder.

It is thought the cylinder was damaged after hitting the machine. Ramesh Bharmal, the dean of the hospital, told AFP that an investigation had been launched to determine the exact cause of death, adding CCTV footage of the incident had been handed over to police. The victim's uncle said Maru had been asked to carry the cylinder by the junior staff member who assured him the machine was switched off. "The ward boy who was supposed to prevent such incidents told my family members to go inside when the machine was turned on. We are shocked and devastated," Jitendra Maru said. The state government of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai is the capital, announced compensation of 500,000 rupees (\$7,870) for the victim's family. MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging, machines use a powerful magnetic field to produce images of the body's organs.—AFP

News in brief

'Supergrass' terrorist jailed

LONDON: A former pro-British paramilitary leader in Northern Ireland, who turned police informer, was yesterday sentenced to at least six-and-a-half years in prison for 202 terror offences including five murders. Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) unit leader Gary Haggarty, 46, struck a deal that saw him receive a reduced prison term in return for admitting the murders and giving evidence against fellow paramilitaries, one of whom is to be prosecuted over a murder as a result. Judge Adrian Colton at Belfast Crown Court called Haggarty's case one of "exceptional gravity". "He has been involved in a terrorist campaign over a 16-year period. That campaign has resulted in deaths for which he was directly responsible," he said. "The organization he supported and assisted has resulted in untold damage to individual lives and society as a whole." His sentence was reduced from 35 years to six-and-a-half years as a result of cooperating with the police for 11 years and for pleading guilty.

Search for missing boat

MOSCOW: Russian rescuers yesterday ended a search for a fishing boat with 21 people on board that went missing in the Sea of Japan, saying there was no more hope of finding survivors. "The search for the crew members of Vostok continued from 25 to 29 of January," said head of the Vladivostok sea rescue centre Nikolai Pirozhkov. "Due to lack of any reasonable hope of finding any of the crew alive... the search was halted at 8pm" and any further searches will be conducted by ships passing the area, he said. The Vostok sent out an emergency radio signal on Thursday from 200 kilometers off the coast of the far-eastern Primorye region. Emergencies ministry planes and several ships carried out searches for five days in rough seas and strong winds but with no success. The vessel was going from the South Korean port of Donghae to Kholmok on the Russian island of Sakhalin.

Bitcoin armed robbery

LONDON: Armed robbers have raided the house of a British virtual currency trader, forcing him to transfer Bitcoins after tying up his wife and threatening him with a gun, British media reported yesterday. The robbery happened on January 22 at the couple's home in the village of Moulsoford in southeast England, according to the Daily Mail, which said the cryptocurrency crime was the first of its kind. Four robbers wearing balaclavas broke into the house of Danny Aston, 30, and his wife Amy Jay, 31. A Thames Valley Police spokesman quoted by the Daily Telegraph said only that police were investigating an "aggravated burglary" in Moulsoford last week and that the occupants of the house had been "threatened". According to company registry records, Aston and Jay are directors of Aston Digital Currencies, which specializes in managing virtual currency portfolios. The company was created in June 2017 at a time when Bitcoin was trading at around 2,500 euros.

Murdered French jogger

GRAY: French police yesterday detained an IT worker whose wife was murdered while out jogging in a grisly case that shocked the country. The charred body of Alexia Daval, a 29-year-old bank employee, was found in a wood in October in Esmoulines in eastern France. She had been beaten and probably strangled, prosecutors said, before her killer set fire to her body and hid it under tree branches a few kilometers (miles) from her usual jogging route. Her husband Jonathann, 34, said at the time that his wife had gone out running and never came back. The case shocked the sleepy bucolic community where the couple live, with nearly 10,000 people turning out in their town of Gray for a silent march in her memory in November. Hundreds of people organized group running excursions across the country in tribute to the murdered young woman. Local prosecutor Edwige Roux-Morizot told AFP that police had detained Jonathann Daval at his home in Gray on Monday morning and taken him into custody.

Analysis

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How Sanofi's setback could lead to better dengue vaccines

New dengue vaccines being developed by Takeda Pharmaceuticals Co Ltd and US government scientists are poised to provide a safer alternative to Sanofi's Dengvaxia, according to vaccine experts, because they already take into account some of the issues that sidelined the product last year. Sanofi revealed in November that Dengvaxia - the world's first dengue vaccine - might increase the risk of severe disease in people who had never been exposed to the virus. The news prompted an uproar in the Philippines, where more than 800,000 school-age children had been vaccinated.

Next-generation vaccines by Japan's Takeda and the US National Institutes of Health, in conjunction with Brazil's Butantan Institute, are now in late-stage testing. They both differ significantly from Dengvaxia, which may increase the chances for a stronger, more durable immune response, according to more than a dozen dengue experts interviewed by Reuters. They expressed especially high hopes for the NIH vaccine, which protected 100 percent of volunteers who received it in a small study.

Merck & Co Inc holds an exclusive license for the NIH vaccine in the United States, Canada, China, Japan and the European Union, and plans to begin its own trials in the first half of 2018. It's too early to say whether either candidate will ultimately succeed, and experts await data from large, late-stage clinical trials. And while Sanofi's early safety troubles may delay licensing of new vaccines for a few years as global regulators seek assurances from longer-term data, the increased scrutiny should result in a better, safer product, they said. "We've learned a tremendous amount about dengue from the Sanofi vaccine," said Dr. Anna Durbin, a researcher at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who helped develop the NIH vaccine. "There is hope the two candidates coming down the pike can provide the benefit of a good dengue vaccine without the risk."

Lessons learned

Dengue is the world's fastest-growing infectious disease, afflicting up to 100 million people worldwide, causing half a million life-threatening infections and killing up to 25,000 people, mostly children, each year. An effective vaccine could be worth more than \$1 billion globally, according to industry analysts. There are four distinct types of dengue. A first infection with any one of them can increase the chances of severe disease when exposed to a second.

Experts say an effective vaccine must protect against all four types at once. A weak response to one of them could act like a first infection and leave a person vulnerable to severe disease when exposed a second time. That is what appears to have happened with Sanofi's Dengvaxia, according to vaccine experts. "It wasn't a uniformly high level of response to all four subtypes (of dengue) simultaneously," Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the NIH's National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said in an interview.

Sanofi's late-stage clinical trials, which were designed in 2009, only collected blood samples from 10 to 15 percent of study participants before they were vaccinated. As a result, it was impossible to know when the studies were published in 2015 whether risks were greater in children who had never been exposed to dengue, said Dr. Su-Pei Ng, Sanofi's global medical head, in an interview. To answer this question, Sanofi developed a special test to re-analyze its results, leading to the November 2017 disclosure. "We've been extremely transparent with our data," Ng said, adding that the company consulted with the field's leading experts as it was developing its vaccine. Clinical trials testing the two new vaccines both require blood samples for all participants before they are vaccinated so they can quickly identify any similar risks. Dr. Stephen Whitehead, who developed the NIH vaccine, said in a 2016 review that the long-term follow up from Sanofi's studies "was instrumental in identifying safety concerns that are currently being investigated."

Immune response

Dengvaxia uses a widely effective yellow fever virus vaccine as its genetic backbone. To induce an immune response to dengue, certain yellow fever genes were swapped out for dengue genes. "It seemed like a bright idea 20 years ago," said dengue expert Dr. Scott Halstead, an adjunct professor at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland. In hindsight, Halstead said, simply splicing select dengue genes into a yellow fever vaccine may not present enough of the virus to the immune system to induce full protection. Instead of yellow fever, Takeda's vaccine, TAK-003, is based on a weakened version of a live dengue 2 virus. "We've taken a dengue 2 virus backbone and inserted elements of dengue 1, 3 and 4," said Dr. Rajeev Venkayya, president of Takeda's global vaccine business unit. That's important, Venkayya said, "because it exposes an individual that is immunized to a broad range of proteins on the outside and the inside of the virus, which allows individuals to generate a broad immune response."

Data published in November in *Lancet Infectious Diseases* showed Takeda's vaccine produced responses against all four virus types, regardless of previous dengue exposure. There were no safety concerns. Takeda's vaccine is being tested in 20,000 children aged 4 to 16 in Asia and Latin America. Initial data are expected in late 2018. Venkayya said the company's research has shown the vaccine, given in two doses, can produce both antibodies to dengue as well as a second type of response in which immune cells - known as CD8-positive T cells - recognize and kill virus-infected cells. —Reuters

IS ROHINGYA
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I GIVE YOU BACK YOUR ARM ...
NO HARD FEELINGS, OK ?



Why Canada is next frontier for shale oil

The revolution in US shale oil has battered Canada's energy industry in recent years, ending two decades of rapid expansion and job creation in the nation's vast oil sands. Now Canada is looking to its own shale fields to repair the economic damage. Canadian producers and global oil majors are increasingly exploring the Duvernay and Montney formations, which they say could rival the most prolific US shale fields.

Canada is the first country outside the United States to see large-scale development of shale resources, which already account for 8 percent of total Canadian oil output. China, Russia and Argentina also have ample shale reserves but have yet to overcome the obstacles to full commercial development. Canada, by contrast, offers many of the same advantages that allowed oil firms to launch the shale revolution in the United States: Numerous private energy firms with appetite for risk; deep capital markets; infrastructure to transport oil; low population in regions that contain shale reserves; and plentiful water to pump into shale wells.

Together, the Duvernay and Montney formations in Canada hold marketable resources estimated at 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, 20 billion barrels of natural gas liquids and 4.5 billion barrels of oil, according to the National Energy Board, a Canadian regulator. "The Montney is thought to have about half the recoverable resources of the whole oil sands region, so it's formidable," Marty Proctor, chief executive of Calgary-based Seven Generations Energy, told Reuters in an interview.

Canada's shale output stands at about 335,000 bpd, according to energy consultants Wood Mackenzie, which forecasts output should grow to 420,000 bpd in a decade. The pace of output growth could quicken and the estimated size of the resources could rise as activity picks up and knowledge of the fields improves, according to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

Seven Generations and Encana Corp., also based in Calgary, are among leading producers developing the two regions. Global majors including Royal Dutch Shell and ConocoPhillips - who pulled back from the oil sands last year - are also developing Canadian shale assets.

Chevron Corp announced its first ever Canadian shale development in the Duvernay in November. Spokesman Leif Solid called it one of the most promising shale opportunities in North America. ConocoPhillips sees potential for the Montney to deliver significant production and cash flow to the company, executive vice president of production drilling and projects Al Hirschberg said in November.

Shell will invest more money this year in the Duvernay than any other shale field except the Permian Basin in West

Texas, the most productive US shale play, spokesman Cameron Yost said. "We may learn something in the Permian that becomes applicable in the Montney, and vice versa," Yost said. The oil sands boom dates back two decades, when improved technology, rising crude prices and fears of global oil shortages sparked a rush to develop the world's third-largest reserves. But in the last five years, much of that investment has migrated south as US shale firms pioneered new drilling techniques and flooded global oil markets with cheaper-to-produce crude.

The oil sands currently account for two-thirds of Canada's 4.2 million barrels per day of crude. They will continue to contribute heavily to Canada's energy output because oil sands projects, once built, produce for decades. But the era of oil sands mega-projects will likely end with Suncor Energy's 190,000 barrel-per-day Fort

ing to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. Spending outside the oil sands is expected to grow again this year to C\$33 billion, nearly three times the amount predicted for oil sands investment.

Hydraulic fracturing of shale oil and gas can yield quicker returns on smaller investments than extracting tar-like bitumen from the oil sands. Shale production is also less carbon-intensive, addressing a major concern among international investors reluctant to finance what environmental groups deride as the "tar sands". "The last decade has been dominated by conversations about the oil sands, and people have maybe missed the opportunities" in shale fields, Encana Chief Executive Doug Suttles told a conference in British Columbia in November. "All these things have a much lower carbon footprint than the average barrel refined today."

'Absolutely Huge' potential

The Duvernay in central Alberta is a shale play, while the Montney, straddling northern Alberta and British Columbia, is technically a formation of siltstone, a more porous rock. Drilling and extraction techniques are the same, however, and many in the industry use the term shale for both. Drillers face challenges in both fields because of their distance from key markets, but the high potential of their reserves is unquestioned.

The Duvernay is comparable to the Eagle Ford shale field in South Texas. The Montney is unique, with its enormous gas resources and extremely thick rock formation containing several different levels at which oil and gas can be drilled, said Mike Johnson, technical leader of hydrocarbon resources for the National Energy Board. Weak prices in an oversupplied natural gas market have hampered development, along with added costs of shipping from the far-flung fields and limited capacity on pipelines. That makes it harder to compete with producers in shale gas plays such as the Marcellus in the north-eastern United States.

Meanwhile, proposed Canadian liquefied natural gas export terminals on the west coast, which were expected to provide a huge source of demand, have been cancelled or stalled due to weak prices. Such obstacles, however, have not stopped producers from staking claims in the region. Last year, Alberta oil and gas land sale prices reached levels not seen since 2014 because of a rush to buy land in the Duvernay East Shale Basin. "The potential is absolutely huge," said Mark Salkeld, president of the Petroleum Services Association of Canada. "The only thing holding us back is access to market and the cost." —Reuters



Canada's shale output stands at 335,000 bpd

Hills mining project, which started producing this month. Canadian energy officials are now counting on shale, also known as "tight" oil, to lure new investment.

"Increasingly we are going to see light tight oil and liquids-rich natural gas forming a key part of Alberta's energy future," said Margaret McCuaig-Boyd, energy minister for the province where the oil sands and much of the nation's shale reserves are located.

A future in fracking

Oil sands development drove Alberta's economic growth at a rate of 5.5 percent annually between 2010 and 2014, about twice the national rate. But the oil price crash in 2014 sent the region into a recession and has since prompted producers to scrap at least \$32 billion in planned projects. Oil sands capital spending fell for a third straight year in 2017 while other oil and gas investment rose 40 percent from 2016 to about C\$31 billion, accord-

Voting to survive: Romanians elect mayors despite graft records

Romanian mayor Dragos Vladulescu has a criminal conviction in a country with one of the EU's worst corruption records, and yet local voters keep re-electing him and many think he's doing a great job. For Vladulescu's admirers, what matters is that their mayor has upgraded or built new schools, clinics and even churches during his 14 years at the town hall. On top of that, the Social Democrat has installed street lighting, mains gas and water supplies, as well as paving muddy roads in their community of Dragomiresti, which lies in lush hill country about 90 km northwest of Bucharest.

Voters in the wealthier European Union states to the west would take such services for granted, but not in Romania, which is still catching up after enduring a particularly brutal form of communism under Nicolae Ceausescu. So when a court found Vladulescu guilty of conflict of interest in 2014 for granting public works contracts to a company owned by his son-in-law, people shrugged it off and two years later re-elected him for a fourth term.

"Things are going well, he has done many good things here," said 64-year-old pensioner Gheorghe Baicoianu, while municipal workers shovelled away snow from bus stops in the village centre. "I certainly voted for him, he deserved it." The fact that the mayor was handed a six-month suspended jail sentence seemed not to trouble Baicoianu. "I am not interest-

ed in other issues, only what I can see with my eyes in the locality," he told Reuters. Dragomiresti is by no means unusual in Romania, which came fourth from bottom of the 28 EU nations in a 2016 corruption perceptions index compiled by the anti-graft group Transparency International. That year Vladulescu's Social Democrat Party (PSD) was re-elected nationally even though its leader Liviu Dragnea has also got a suspended jail sentence: Two years in a vote-rigging case. Dragnea is now on trial for abuse of office and prosecutors have opened a separate inquiry on suspicions that he formed a "criminal group" to siphon off cash from state projects, some of them EU-funded. This involves a company once controlled by a county council that Dragnea headed until 2012. He denies all the charges.

Symbiotic relationship

Sociologist Daniel Sandu says part of the PSD's success is a close relationship between its national leadership and its mayors. This involves how government money to build infrastructure and pay social benefits is channelled to a local level, funding the kind of public works that have made Vladulescu and other mayors so popular. "One way or another, the ruling party needs to control these mayors because they are the ones who bring votes, and mayors need the party because it helps them get funds," Sandu, a researcher at the European University Institute, told Reuters. "There is a symbiotic relationship."

All parties that have governed Romania since the 1989 fall of communism have been accused of favoring their own mayors and county administrations in allotting funds. Dragnea created a multi-billion euro state-funded program in 2013 when he was regional development minister. Under this, money for rural and municipal infrastructure projects is now distributed to the counties by a deputy prime minister, without the need for overall government oversight.

Reuters calculations show that Social Democrat mayors

have generally done well out of this National Programme for Local Development (PNLD). For 2017-2020 PSD-controlled county councils have been earmarked, on average, 17 percent more than those controlled by the opposition Liberal party, and about 40 percent more on average than counties run by leaders from Romania's ethnic Hungarian minority.

Dragnea's successor as regional development minister, Sevil Shhaideh, has denied preferential distributions. "The poorest counties, with the largest populations and areas and with the most administrative units, will get the largest allotments," said Shhaideh, whose ministry drafted the PNLD allocations. Shhaideh lost her ministerial post in a government reshuffle last October after prosecutors opened a corruption inquiry into her. She denies the allegations.

Almost feudal

The European Commission has the Romanian judicial system under special monitoring, and the country's prosecutors are vigorously pursuing corruption cases, sending to trial hundreds of mayors, county councillors and lawmakers from across party lines. The bulk of investigations involve public contracts awarded to firms in return for bribes, fraud with EU funds, rigged auctions and conflicts of interest. Jail sentences are, however, frequently suspended with relatively few officials behind bars.

Attempts by the PSD government to decriminalize several corruption offences last year triggered the country's largest street protests in decades. And yet the party, which won both the national and local elections, retains strong support. Romania is booming, with the economy growing at annual rates of almost nine percent in 2017, but it remains poor. Per capita GDP was just 58 percent of the EU average in 2016, while 2011 data put Romanians' average annual earnings at less than 6,000 euros (\$7,500) compared with almost 18,000 euros in Portugal, one of western Europe's poorest countries. —Reuters



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump speaks during lunch with members of the United Nations Security Council in the State Dining Room of the White House yesterday. — AFP

Trump sometimes tweets from bed, eats good food

LONDON: US President Donald Trump, who has garnered a large following on social media with rambunctious postings, said he sometimes tweets from bed, though he occasionally allows others to post his words. Trump frequently uses Twitter to announce policy, assail his adversaries and to tangle with countries, including North Korea, over world affairs. The @realDonaldTrump account had 47.2 million users as of Sunday.

In an interview with Britain's ITV channel, he appeared to appreciate the wide impact of his postings in Twitter and said that he needed social media to communicate with voters in the era of what he termed fake news. "If I don't have that form of communication I can't defend myself," Trump said in an interview broadcast on Sunday. "I get a lot of fake news, a lot of news that is very false or made up."

It was a crazy situation, he said, that many people in the world waited for his tweets. He usually tweets himself, sometimes from bed. When asked about whether he was lying in bed with his phone thinking of how to wind people up, Trump said: "Well, perhaps sometimes in bed, perhaps sometimes at breakfast or lunch or whatever, but generally speaking during the early morning, or during the evening I can do whatever, but I am very busy during the day, very long hours. I am busy." "I will sometimes just dictate out something really quickly and give it to one of my people to put it on," he said.

Asked about eating burgers and drinking Coke,

Trump, 71, said: "I eat fine food, really from some of the finest chefs in the world, I eat healthy food, I also have some of that food on occasion... I think I eat actually quite well." Trump said that he was very popular in the United Kingdom. Some British politicians have called for Trump not to visit and 1.86 million people have signed a petition asking for him to be banned from entering the United Kingdom. "I get so much fan mail from people in your country - they love my sense of security, they love what I am saying about many different things," Trump said.

Brexit

Trump would take a "tougher" approach to Brexit negotiations than British Prime Minister Theresa May. When asked if May was in a "good position" regarding the ongoing Brexit talks, Trump replied: "Would it be the way I negotiate? No, I wouldn't negotiate it the way it's negotiated... I would have had a different attitude." Pressed on how his approach would be different, he said: "I would have said the European Union is not cracked up to what it's supposed to be. I would have taken a tougher stand in getting out." He said the United States would do a post-Brexit trade deal with the United Kingdom.

He was pressed on how some women opposed him and he said he supported women and that many women understood that. Trump said women in particular liked his support for a strong military as they often wanted to feel safe at home. "There's nobody better than me on the military... I think women really like that. I think they want to be safe at home," Trump said. "I have tremendous respect for women." "No, I wouldn't say I am a feminist. I mean, I think that would be maybe going too far: I am for women, I am for men, I am for everyone." He said French President Emmanuel Macron was a friend and that he liked him a lot. — Reuters

on money transfers abroad, which is important to win the confidence of foreign investors and help the inflow of foreign investments into the country. The decision of the committee will be reviewed by the financial and economic affairs committee, of which Hashem is the rapporteur. Even if the financial panel approves the proposal, the final decision will be made by the full house.

In other decisions, the legal panel approved a draft law calling to grant stateless people or bedoons full civil and social rights. It also approved a proposal for the management of crises and catastrophes and approved another draft law calling to stop the implementation of jail sentences before they were approved by the court of cassation, the highest court in the country.

Sisi set for new term as presidential...

Continued from Page 1

science at Cairo University. Nafaa believes that in this election, Sisi is seeking "a kind of plebiscite and personal endorsement". Across the country, electoral posters show only Sisi, and the government has tightened its grip even further on television and the press. Rarely is any opposition mentioned, or if it is, coverage is disdainful or pejorative. Last week, former armed forces chief-of-staff General Sami Anan was excluded from standing shortly after announcing his candidacy. Anan was accused of illegally announcing his intention to contest the election before getting the military's approval. His relatives say they have not heard from him since.

Other top challengers to drop out include Ahmed Shafiq, a prime minister under former long-serving president Hosni Mubarak, and Mohamed Anwar Sadat, a dissident and nephew of the former president of the same name. Shafiq reversed a pledge to stand after he was returned to Egypt

from exile in the United Arab Emirates, while Sadat said the climate was not right for free elections.

On Sunday, Sadat was one of five public figures to call for an election boycott, condemning "security and administrative practices that the current regime took to prevent any fair competition against it". On Wednesday, leftist human rights lawyer Khaled Ali, seen as the most serious candidate left standing against Sisi, pulled out. Ali cited "signs that pointed to a will to poison the whole operation and to corrupt and empty it of its supposedly democratic content". And in November, military candidate Colonel Ahmed Kouswa found himself in prison soon after announcing he would be a contender. "The attitude of the presidency and regime shows fear and a lack of confidence," said Nafaa.

On the economic front, Sisi has embraced Egypt's international partners and initiated a series of IMF-mandated reforms in a bid to counter one of the worst crises facing the country. In Nov 2016, the IMF granted Egypt a \$12-billion loan over three years conditional on reforms including the adoption of a value-added tax, energy subsidy cuts and floating the pound. But galloping inflation since the currency was devalued in Nov 2016 and the drastic reduction of state subsidies on fuels and energy have proved highly unpopular. — AFP

Old enmity tips Lebanon into...

Continued from Page 1

his powers at the expense of other sects. It has shattered the rare moment of national unity that saved Lebanon from strife during the crisis over Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri's shock resignation in November. The tensions have also shaken Aoun's ties with the Iran-backed Shiite group Hezbollah, whose links to Berri and Amal run much deeper than its political alliance with Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement (FPM).

Bassil expressed regret for his remarks in an interview with the pro-Hezbollah Al-Akhar newspaper. But this did little to ease the standoff. A political source close to Berri said the dispute was "open to all possibilities, up to the point of paralyzing the country", but did not see a risk to civil peace. "We will not see a return of anarchy," the source said.

Berri and Aoun, both in their 80s, were civil war-time enemies. The conflict ended in 1990 when the Syrian army forced Aoun, then head of one of two rival governments, from the presidential palace and into exile. Berri emerged from the war as one of the most powerful figures in Lebanon. Aoun only returned to Lebanon in 2005 when the era of Syrian military presence was brought to an end by the assassination of Rafiq Al-Hariri, which triggered pressure on Damascus to withdraw troops from Lebanon.

Helped by his alliance with Hezbollah, Aoun finally realized his long-held ambition of becoming president in 2016 in a deal that made Hariri prime minister. Berri and Amal MPs were among the few not to support Aoun's candidacy.

Aoun and Berri cooperated closely to help resolve the crisis caused by Hariri's unexpected resignation in November. Lebanese officials say Saudi Arabia forced him to step down and held him against his will before French intervention led to his return.

Hariri, Lebanon's top Sunni, said he was working on an initiative to end the Aoun-Berri standoff. "The country is not in need of escalation or crisis," he said after talks with Aoun, later in a statement describing the row as saddening. Hezbollah rejected what it described as an insult to Berri. "This language takes the country towards dangers it could do without," Hezbollah said in a statement.

Hariri hopes to secure international support for Lebanon's security forces at a Rome conference in February, and billions of dollars of investment in its struggling economy at a Paris conference in late March or early April. But the Aoun-Berri standoff could rumble on until the parliamentary elections, and even beyond them, analysts say. Berri says Aoun contravened the peace deal that ended the civil war by approving army promotions without the finance minister's signature. Aoun - an opponent of the peace deal when it was agreed in 1989 - says he did not. The agreement diluted the powers of the Maronite Christian presidency.

The parliamentary election, Lebanon's first since 2009, is expected to go ahead regardless. Bassil, 47 and head of the FPM, aims to secure a seat in parliament. "No doubt matters are heading towards more escalation for two reasons: firstly we are approaching parliamentary elections and there is a fight for popularity," said Rajeh Khoury, a columnist with An-Nahar and Alsharq Al-Awsat newspapers. "Secondly, there is a dispute over authority and responsibilities in government... How the constitution is interpreted has unfortunately become a matter of opinion." — Reuters

MoI issues general amnesty guidelines...

Continued from Page 1

• People who entered the country with work or residency visas that expired on Jan 23, 2018 or earlier will be given a temporary residency and must leave the country before Feb 22, 2018, unless they get a regular residency visa according to the rules.

For persons who are reported to have absconded, the following applies:

• Absconders are allowed to leave the country directly during the period mentioned in the ministerial decision, whether holders of article 18 or 20 residencies, provided that the absconding report is dated before Jan 24, 2018.

• For holders of regular and temporary residencies as well as entry visas expiring on Jan 24, 2018 or after this date, regular procedures apply, as they are not under the amnesty decision.

Those who have lost their passports and received new passports or travel documents should fill up a loss form to be stamped by the designated employee at the residency detectives department, followed by these procedures:

• If a residency or visa is found that ended before Jan 24, 2018, it will be matched with the person's file at the department or the original civil ID if it exists, then the unified number will be written on the last page of the new passport or document and stamped with the department's seal, so violators can leave the country without having to transfer passport data.

If it is not possible to get any information or no information is available of the violator, a form will be given to the person and they will be asked to go to the criminal evidence department. When they return, the following steps will be taken:

• If it is found that a residency or a visa exists, the abovementioned procedures will be followed.

• If there is no data for them, a database will be created and a temporary residency will be issued on the computer only without a unified number. The document will be stamped with the department's seal, and violators will be asked to leave the country and will not be allowed to correct their status.

• If data exist of the person at the security supervision system that matches the data at the criminal evidence department, and if there is difference in the data in the new passport or travel document, the name and data will be corrected as per the passport.

• If the person is found wanted for another reason other than violation of the residency law, they will be arrested immediately and sent to the concerned authority.

Cabinet approves budget with deficit...

Continued from Page 1

Hashem, who has been mounting an anti-expat campaign, said that by imposing the tax, expatriates will be discouraged to send huge sums of money to their home countries, thus helping the national economy.

Like all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, Kuwait adopts a very liberal economic policy, especially

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Sports

Evergreen Federer planning Melbourne return in 2019

Federer to make decision about his schedule after spending time with family

MELBOURNE: Australian Open champion Roger Federer is set to continue defying Father Time after announcing he will return to defend his title next year, the Swiss said yesterday. The 36-year-old notched up his 20th grand slam title and sixth at Melbourne Park on Sunday with a 6-2 6-7(5) 6-3 3-6 6-1 victory over Croatia's Marin Cilic, but initially forgot to say whether or not he planned to defend the title.

"Yeah, I'd love to come back. I know I forgot to say that after the match," a bleary-eyed Federer told reporters yesterday. "But I hope I come back again next year." Federer equalled the record of six Australian Open men's titles, held by Novak Djokovic and Roy Emerson, and emulated Ken Rosewall's feat of claiming three grand slam titles after the age of 35.

His longevity has in part been put down to the careful management of his playing schedule. Despite being fully fit, he skipped the entire claycourt season last year to concentrate on Wimbledon, a decision that paid off with his eighth title on the south-west London grass courts.

He reiterated yesterday that he would continue to manage his schedule tightly and despite being within sight of the world's top ranking, a decision on whether or not his next tournament would be in Dubai in late February had yet to be made.

"We were in talks with them (Dubai organisers) but

when the (Australian Open) tournament started, I just said 'look, if it's okay, I'd like to decide after the tournament'," he said. "That's an ideal scenario for me. After the tournament, I'll know how I feel... did I come out injured or not?"

"So now we know what the situation is. "I also have to decide on the claycourt season so all these things are kind of interlinked. "But it's possible I'll play something, but it's also possible that maybe I just don't play anything (for a while)."

MORE SURREAL

Federer said he would make the decision about his schedule after spending some time with family at home in Switzerland, where he hoped the fact he had won the Australian Open title again would finally sink in. "This year seems more surreal, I can't believe I was able to defend my title after

all these years, that I could do it again," he said. "To reach number 20, number six here, it's just a lot trying to take it in.

"Last year was a lot more straightforward, just disbelief that I won and there I was waking up with the trophy. "But, I don't know, this year feels more surreal. I can't believe that I was able to defend my title, that after all these years I could do it again. "It's super special, one of the great moments in my career, and maybe this one is going to take longer to sink in." —Reuters

“ I can't believe I was able to defend my title ”



MELBOURNE: Switzerland's Roger Federer gestures next to the Norman Brookes Challenge Cup during a press conference after he beat Croatia's Marin Cilic in their men's singles final match. —AFP

Roger, Martina and Jack: Golden oldies in sports

MELBOURNE: Roger Federer, 36, is showing no signs of slowing down after winning his 20th Grand Slam title at the Australian Open. AFP Sport looks at other athletes who successfully rolled back the years:

JACK NICKLAUS

The Golden Bear fired a sensational final round to win his record 18th major title at the Masters at Augusta in 1986 — when he was 46. Nicklaus shot 30 on the back nine as he moved from tied ninth overnight to clinch a dramatic one-shot victory over Greg Norman and Tom Kite. It was a sixth Masters title for Nicklaus, who remains the oldest player to win the tournament.

MARTINA NAVRATILOVA

The Czech-American tennis legend won the US Open mixed doubles title with Bob Bryan in 2006, just weeks away from her 50th birthday. It was her 31st Grand Slam doubles title—an all-time record—to sit alongside her 18 Grand Slam singles and 10 major mixed doubles crowns. Navratilova turned professional in 1975, embarking on a career which brought her 167 singles titles and 177 doubles trophies on the WTA circuit, both also all-time records.

BERNARD HOPKINS

Hopkins beat Jean Pascal for the WBC light heavyweight title in 2010 at the age of 46, making him the oldest boxer in history to win a world championship. But "The Executioner" wasn't done there: he won the IBF light heavyweight from Tavoris Cloud, and the WBA (Super) title from Beibut Shumenov at 48 and 49 respectively, extending the record.

ROGER MILLA

Plenty of footballers have played on into extra time, but Cameroon's Roger Milla set what could be an unbreakable record when he scored in the 1994 World Cup at the age of 42. With his goal against Russia, Milla shattered his own record after he grabbed four, aged 38, at the 1990 World Cup, followed by a trademark celebratory jig at the corner flag. Milla's exploits snatched the record from Sweden's Gunnar Gren, who was 37 years and 236 days when he scored in the 1958 World Cup.

ICHIRO SUZUKI

Now a free agent after a celebrated MLB career, Suzuki is making no noises about retiring, even at the age of 44. The former Yankees and Marlins outfielder has clocked up an extraordinary career including the all-time MLB record of 262 hits in a season, and is the only player to make 200 hits in 10 consecutive seasons. The 10-time All Star also holds the record for most MLB hits by a foreign-born player. —AFP

Chung hoping Melbourne run sparks Korean tennis boom

SEOUL: Chung Hyeon hopes his surprise run to the Australian Open semi-finals will give South Korean tennis a shot in the arm and the 21-year-old said his next target was breaking into the top 10 in the world rankings. Chung, who beat six-time champion Novak Djokovic in the fourth round at Melbourne Park last week, was forced to retire from his last four clash with eventual champion Roger Federer due to blistered feet on Friday. President Moon Jae-in issued a statement congratulating Chung for writing a "new chapter in South Korean sports history" and the player was welcomed home by hundreds of fans at Incheon International Airport on Sunday evening.

"I didn't expect this many people to be here," he said of his reception. "I must have done something big." Chung rose from 58th in the world to 29th when the latest rankings were released on Monday, the highest position ever achieved by a Korean player.

"I really want a place in the top 10 now," Yonhap News quoted Chung as saying. "I'm setting my sights on something high and going after it." The Korean Tennis Association is planning to pour more resources into the game to capitalise on Chung's exploits, while sales of tennis equipment surged last week. "Tennis isn't a popular sport here right now but I want it to become popular," Chung said. Chung added that he would visit a hospital yesterday for treatment on his blisters before deciding on his upcoming schedule. —Reuters



MELBOURNE: South Korea's Chung Hyeon speaks during a press conference. —AFP

Li Haotong wins 2018 OMEGA Dubai Desert Classic

DUBAI: Following four days of enthralling golf at the OMEGA Dubai Desert Classic, the "Major of the Middle East" has concluded in victory for Li Haotong of China. The golfer, who played strongly throughout the competition, finished on 23 under par, with just a 1 point lead over OMEGA ambassador Rory McIlroy on the renowned Majlis course at the Emirates Golf Club.

The close victory earns Li Haotong a trophy, winner's cheque and a brand new OMEGA Seamaster Aqua Terra 150M Master Chronometer. Driven by the OMEGA Master Chronometer calibre 8901 - the elegant 41 mm timepiece features an 18K Sedna gold case, brown leather strap, and 18K Sedna gold hands and indexes that are coated with white Super-LumiNova for superb visibility in all lighting conditions. The brown sun-brushed dial is distinguished by a horizontal teak pattern inspired by the wooden decks of luxury sailboats. OMEGA President and CEO Raynald Aeschlimann said: "I'm proud to sincerely congratulate Li Haotong on his win and for treating us all to such world class golf. It's been a thrill from the first day to the final few putts. OMEGA feels very honoured to be part of this fantastic event, which is a real highlight of the golfing year. This has been the perfect start to 2018 and I wish all the players a fantastic season ahead." The OMEGA Dubai Desert Classic has been a part of the European Tour since its inception in 1989. This is the ninth year that OMEGA has been the title sponsor.

Alonso satisfied after Daytona spin

MIAMI: Fernando Alonso believes he has gained vital experience for a future crack at the Le Mans 24 Hours after finishing 38th in the Daytona endurance race on Sunday. The Spanish former Formula One world champion's campaign in Florida was derailed by mechanical problems that included two brake failures in his United Autosports Ligier JS P217.

The 36-year-old admitted however he had been unnerved by the experience. "You're scared a little bit, no



doubt," Alonso said. "It happened two times in the first corner - you're right there at 300-310 kilometres an hour then you hit the brakes and there's no brakes.

"At night, you don't see clearly the tire wall or the escape road, so there was even a little more of a scare." The McLaren driver took to the track in Florida this weekend to gain experience for racing Le Mans.

Alonso has spoken of his desire to take a crack at the "Triple Crown" of motor-racing - winning the Formula One Monaco Grand Prix, the Indianapolis 500 and Le Mans. Only one other driver-Graham Hill-has successfully achieved that hat-trick. Alonso has two wins in Monaco, and impressed at the Indy500 on his debut last year.

Alonso, who posted the 13th fastest qualifying time in

Daytona this weekend, said his experience in Florida would be invaluable when he eventually races in Le Mans. "It is a positive feeling despite the issues and reliability. It was a very nice experience the whole event," Alonso said.

"If and when I will be Le Mans, it will be the second time at least," he added. "So I will be much more prepared for the practice, the race, driver changes, communication, driver preparation between the teams, how much rest you need to have."

Alonso said last week his chances of racing in Le Mans this year are "50-50". McLaren have indicated Alonso will be free to race at Circuit de la Sarthe on June 16-17 should he wish to do so as it does not clash with his F1 commitments. —AFP

Sports

Russia's team suspended from Paralympics, some athletes exempt

Eligible athletes to compete in alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing

BONN: Russia's team will be suspended from the Paralympic Winter Games in Pyeongchang, but individual athletes will be allowed to compete under a neutral flag, the International Paralympics Committee said yesterday.

The agreement is similar to that put in place to allow able-bodied Russian competitors to take part in next month's Winter Olympics that precede the Paralympics. Russia was suspended by the IPC in August 2016 following revelations of widespread state-sponsored doping uncovered in a report by Richard McLaren on behalf of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

After a review, the IPC said in a statement yesterday that "it is maintaining the suspension of the Russian Paralympic Committee (RPC)". "However, in recognition of the progress made by the RPC in improving its anti-doping activities, it will allow eligible Russian Para athletes who meet strict conditions to compete in five sports under the name Neutral Paralympic Athlete (NPA)," it said.

Eligible Para athletes from Russia will be allowed to compete in alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, snowboard and wheelchair curling at the Winter Paralympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, on March 9-18, the IPC said at a meeting in the western German city of Bonn.

“Key criteria to end the wider suspension were still outstanding”

It said that two key criteria to end the wider suspension were still outstanding—the full reinstatement of the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) by WADA, and an official response adequately addressing the McLaren findings. IPC president Andrew Parsons said that in 2016 “the anti-doping system in Russia was found to be totally compromised, corrupted and open to abuse”.

“This made it impossible to determine which Russian Para athletes were clean and which were not: it was clear that Russia's participation in Para sport events would severely question the integrity and credibility of sporting competition.”

Parsons said the measures taken then by the IPC were “necessary and proportionate” and “essential to ensure clean sport”. “Seventeen months on, we face a different picture in Russia and it is important that once again our decision is necessary and proportionate to what is in front of us,” he said.

“Although the RPC remains suspended they have made significant progress and we have to recognise this.” Russian Para athletes were now regularly tested and “amongst the most scrutinised Para athletes in the world”, he said.

“Under the supervision of WADA, we now have greater confidence that the anti-doping system in Russia is no longer compromised or corrupted.” Russia's Paralympic committee deputy chief Rima



MOSCOW: File photo taken on September 08, 2016 shows Russia's Paralympians as they compete during a track meet at the Novogorsk Training Center, outside Moscow. Russia's team will be suspended from the Paralympic Winter Games in Pyeongchang, but individual athletes will be allowed to compete under a neutral flag. —AFP

Batalova said the announcement was not a surprise.

“We expected such a decision, taking into consideration what has happened to our Olympic team,” Batalova told R-Sport agency. Akzhana Abdikarimova,

a Russian Paralympic skier and biathlete, said the announcement was “not bad”. “I already compete as a neutral athlete and expected that events would develop this way,” she told R-Sport. —AFP

Ski queen Shiffrin eyes fantastic four

WASHINGTON: In a moment of teen exuberance after winning the 2014 Olympic slalom gold, Mikaela Shiffrin blurted out her dream of winning five gold medals at the Pyeongchang Games. Now with the showdown in South Korea less than two weeks away, the 22-year-old American is leading the Alpine Ski World Cup overall standings and is a serious threat for multiple medals.

“I still haven't had a chance to let it sink in,” Shiffrin says of her Sochi success. “I guess the best way to realize it is to just go to Korea and win some more.” Three-time reigning world slalom champion Shiffrin has won nine World Cup races this season, boosting her career total to 40. She captured four races in seven days to begin 2018.

In a timely reality check, she overbalanced a missed a gate when yards from victory at the Lenzerheide slalom on Sunday, opening the door to her Sloval rival Petra Vhlova. Despite the error, she figures to be favored in Olympic slalom and giant slalom. She is also likely to chase the combined crown, and could make a run at the downhill as well.

“If I compete in four events, it's because I think I have shot to medal in four events,” Shiffrin said. “Five might be biting off too much. Even though I did go on record saying I want five gold medals—I want the world and (to be) the king of the universe and all those things.”

This time, Shiffrin is a target rather than a talented prodigy and has had to deal with fame and success and its impact on training time. “I feel like my face has been out there more than it was four years ago,” Shiffrin said. “It's adding more that I have to manage and still be able to go back to training and keep my nose to the grindstone.”

“Sometimes the next challenge feels like the very next day of skiing. The challenge is to find ways to improve. I was at the top in slalom and now the top at giant slalom. I need to work on building my strength, technique and speed and it's more in practice than it is in events.”



LENZERHEIDE: Mikaela Shiffrin of the US clears a gate during the first run of the women's slalom race at the FIS Alpine Skiing World Cup in Lenzerheide, Switzerland on Sunday. —AFP

LUCK IS 'WORK IN DISGUISE'

There's plenty of hype and expectation around Shiffrin's bid to become the first back-to-back Olympic slalom champion. “When I start to think about expectations, it's too much to focus on. The thing I concentrate on is trying to meet my own goals,” she said.

“I don't have to change my tactics (for the Olympics). I can focus on those goals. It's a season-long thing. I'll be hoping to perform well in every style race and the best thing I can do to prepare for the Olympics is have a great season.”

When it comes to looking ahead to the starting gate in the South Korean mountains, Shiffrin isn't fretting about the emotions she might feel. “I'm pretty much in

control of where my nerves are,” Shiffrin said. “Not to say I won't be nervous before the first race at the Olympics but I'm not really nervous.”

It's in part because she has put in the work during training. One exercise has her pulling a sled up a hill for 45-second bursts multiple times. “After 20 seconds, you're already thinking, ‘I don't think I can do it.’ Coach says, ‘Come on. You can do it now,’” Shiffrin said. “It's one of those things where you are taken out the rest of the day.”

Shiffrin said building strength has been a key to avoiding major injury as well as speed in combination with technique drills. “A lot of it is in my preparations in the gym,” Shiffrin said. “Luck looks a lot like hard work in disguise.” —AFP

Korea Ice Hockey Association (KIHA) told the South's top-selling Chosun daily. “But people are still in the process of getting used to it, so we hear a mishmash of terms from both sides during practice.”

THREE LETTER CODE

The joint team was forged as part of peace efforts by Seoul to use the Pyeongchang Winter Games in the South to ease tension on the flashpoint peninsula.

The atmosphere at the first practice was “serious but amicable”, Seoul's News1 news agency said, citing a KIHA official, adding many Northern players had demonstrated “great focus and fighting spirit”. Since the division of the peninsula the two Koreas have only competed as unified teams in 1991, when their women won the team gold at the world table tennis championship in Japan, and their under-19 footballers reached the world championship quarter-finals in Portugal.

North and South have their own three-letter Olympic country codes—PRK and KOR respectively, for People's Republic of Korea and Korean Republic—and the unified team has been accorded its own country code, COR, from the French word for Korea, Coree.

The ice hockey squad is made up of 23 South Korean players and 12 Northerners, who crossed the Demilitarized Zone last week. They are scheduled to hold a warm-up match against Sweden on Sunday. But the last-minute creation of the team sparked controversy among many South Koreans who accused Seoul of using athletes for political purposes and robbing Southern players of opportunities to compete at the Olympics.

The North will send another 10 athletes to take part in the Games in other sports including cross-country skiing and figure skating after its leader Kim Jong-Un announced a plan to join the event in his New Year speech. —AFP

Koreas' Olympic ice hockey team lost in translation

SEOUL: The unified Korean women's ice hockey team faced an unexpected challenge at their first joint training session, reports said yesterday—vastly different hockey terminology on either side of the divided peninsula.

Seven decades of almost total separation after the 1950-53 Korean War, with all ordinary civilian contact blocked between North and South, has seen their once common language diverge in many respects. The two Koreas still share the same writing system, known as Hangeul—an alphabet developed in the 15th century to replace Chinese characters. But different words are emerging as they develop separately, and in the capitalist South, ice hockey players adapted the sounds of English words for most sporting terms.

Skating is called “seu-ke-ee-ting” and a “t-push”—a defensive technique by a goalie—is “tee-pu-sh”. But the North created its own Korean-language words for each move, calling skating “apuro jee chee gee”, while a “t-push” is a “moonjeegee eedong”, literally meaning “a move by a gate-keeper”.

To overcome communication issues the South's sports authorities put together a list of the different vocabularies and distributed it to the players ahead of their first skate together on Sunday. It also includes the English pronunciation of the North Korean terms—apparently for the use of the South Korean team's Canadian coach Sarah Murray. The list was intended “to help players understand”, one official of the

WADA probes possible flaw in test bottles

MONTREAL: The World Anti-Doping Agency said Sunday it had launched an investigation into a possible glitch in drug-testing kits which could allow sample bottles to be opened manually. WADA said in a statement it had been alerted by an accredited laboratory in Cologne that bottles manufactured by Swiss manufacturer Berlinger could be opened after being frozen.

The glass containers, known as the BEREG-KIT Geneva, were touted as the next generation of sample bottles after being released last year in the wake of the Russian doping scandal that dogged the 2014 Winter Olympics. It was not clear if the new Berlinger bottles were due to be used at next month's Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. WADA did not immediately respond to a request for clarification from AFP. In its statement, WADA said it had “initiated an investigation into a potential integrity issue with the new generation BEREG-KIT Geneva security bottles and will recommend appropriate measures, if needed, in order to maintain the integrity of the doping control process.” The agency said it was alerted to the possible flaw by the Cologne laboratory on January 19.

The lab had found that the bottle “may potentially be susceptible to manual opening ‘upon freezing’ of a sample.” WADA said it had contacted Berlinger over the issue, and the Swiss company later responded that it had been unable to replicate the flaw found by the German laboratory. “WADA is following up with the Cologne Laboratory and Berlinger to further clarify the testing protocols that have been undertaken to date,” WADA said in a statement. “WADA acknowledges that this situation, if confirmed, will raise concerns and questions. We wish to reassure athletes and other stakeholders that WADA is resolutely committed to following up with Berlinger until the matter is resolved; and that, we will keep stakeholders apprised as the situation evolves.” WADA added. —AFP



JINCHEON: Members of North Korean women's ice hockey team (in white and red) are welcomed by members of the South Korean team (in blue) as they arrive at South Korea's national training centre in Jincheon on January 25, 2018. —AFP

Sports

Woods 'very pleased' after tie for 23rd in Tour return

Day and Noren still locked in battle

LA JOLLA: Tiger Woods gave his surgically fused spine its toughest test to date and came away with a tie for 23rd place in the Farmers Insurance Open. The former world number one carded an even-par 72 on Sunday on the Torrey Pines South Course, where his eight PGA Tour victories include his 14th and most recent major title at the 2008 US Open.

"Today I played a lot better," said Woods, who had four birdies and four bogeys in a round that gave him a three-under par total of 285 and a share of 23rd place.

"It was tough conditions out there," he added of Santa Ana winds gusting across the course. "It was tough scoring." The wind helped make for a marathon day, and Australian Jason Day and Alex Noren were still locked in battle when darkness fell as they completed the fifth playoff hole. Ryan Palmer had been eliminated at the first hole of sudden death, but Day and Noren continued to duel through four more holes and were to return on Monday morning to settle it.

"I'll play all day tomorrow if I have to," said Day, a former world number one seeking his first title since 2016 who carded a final-round 70. Sweden's Noren, a nine-time winner on the European Tour who held the overnight lead, posted a 73 and Palmer carded a 72.

Woods was seven shots off the 10-under total of 278 that put Day, Noren and Palmer into the playoff. Woods was playing his first US tour event since missing the cut at Torrey Pines last year. He had missed all of 2016 with back trouble, and his comeback bid last year was cut short by recurring pain and spinal fusion surgery in April. Woods hit just 17 of 56 greens all week, but he displayed a deft touch around the greens and solid put-

ting to bring it in under par. Most importantly, there was no sign of any back trouble as he looks ahead to his next scheduled start at Riviera in Los Angeles February 15-18.

SOLID FOUR DAYS

"Very pleased," said Woods, who hadn't made the cut in a PGA Tour event since his tie for 10th at the Wyndham Championship in August of 2015. "After not playing for a couple of years to come out here on the Tour and really play a solid four days-I fought hard for these scores.

"These weren't yawners, down the middle, on the green, two-putt and one-hand all your second putts in the hole," he said. "I had to fight for every score on every hole. It showed that I had heart. I fought my tail off and it was good stuff."

Woods said before the tournament that his expectations were "tempered." But after rounds of 72-71-70 he said he went out Sunday-clad in his traditional final-round red and black-with an ambitious number in mind. "I wanted to shoot something around 65 — thought that would be a playoff number," Woods said.

For the first time all week, Woods put his opening tee shot in the fairway en route to a par at the 10th. Although he again hit just three of 14 fairways, Woods's misses weren't as wild as those of Friday and Saturday.

A birdie chance at 13 went begging when an over-eager fan in the immense gallery following Woods yelled as he stroked his 10-footer. But Woods, clearly angry, shook it off to roll in a 12-footer for birdie at 14.

That launched a sequence of birdie-bogey-birdie-bogey-birdie, with Woods rolling in a five-footer at the

“It was tough conditions out there”



SAN DIEGO: Tiger Woods plays a shot from the rough on the 15th hole during the final round of the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines South on Sunday in San Diego, California. — AFP

18th. He reached five-under for the tournament-and broke into the top 20 on the leaderboard—with a birdie at the second before two bogeys coming home.

"I'm excited to get this one under my belt," said Woods, adding that until his next start he'll be working on "everything." —AFP

Spin-heavy Bangladesh to face upbeats Sri Lanka in first Test

CHITTAGONG: Bangladesh are depending on their spin force led by veteran Abdur Razaq to deliver the opening punch against Sri Lanka in the first of two Tests starting tomorrow.

Razaq, 35, was the third spinner added to the squad for the match in Chittagong after skipper and star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was ruled out with a finger injury.

Uncapped left-arm orthodox spinner Sunzumul Islam and leg-spinner Tanbir Hayder are also part of the 16-man squad to be led by Mahmudullah Riyad.

Razaq, who played the last of his 12 Tests against West Indies in 2014, is determined to prove that the selectors made the right call.

"Shakib is the best player, not just in our team (but) he is also the best all-rounder in the world," Razaq told reporters in Chittagong yesterday.

"It's difficult to replace him because you need to pick a bowler and batsman in his place and still there is no guarantee that they will perform equally good.

"I will try to play my normal game without trying anything extraordinary," the left-arm spinner said. Bangladesh have been a dominant home side after registering memorable Test wins against England and Australia in the 2016-17 season.

But their only Test win against Sri Lanka came in their landmark 100th Test in Colombo, when the visitors drew the two-match series 1-1.

Sri Lanka, led by Dinesh Chandimal, are upbeat after their recent triumph in the tri-series one-day international tournament. They beat Bangladesh in Dhaka on Saturday.

They will also seek inspiration from their 2-0 Test triumph over Pakistan in the UAE last year. However Sri Lanka also have a gap to fill after veteran all-rounder Angelo Mathews was ruled out of the first game due to injury.

Manager Asanka Gurusinha confirmed that the team would not seek a replacement for Mathews. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have so far played 18 Tests against each other, with the islanders winning 15 of them.

Squads:

Bangladesh: Mahmudullah Riyad (capt), Tamim Iqbal, Liton Das, Mushfiqur Rahim, Imrul Kayes, Mominul Haque, Mosaddek Hossain, Taijul Islam, Mustafizur Rahman, Kamrul Islam, Mehedi Hasan, Rubel Hossain, Naeem Hasan, Sunzumul Islam, Tanbir Hayder, Abdur Razaq.

Sri Lanka: Dinesh Chandimal (capt), Dimuth Karunaratne, Danushka Gunathilaka, Kusal Mendis, Dhananjaya de Silva, Niroshan Dickwell, Roshan Silva, Rangana Herath, Suranga Lakmal, Dilruwan Perera, Dushmantha Chameera, Lakshan Sandakan, Akila Dananjaya, Lahiru Gamage, Lahiru Kumara. — AFP

Australia end Afghanistan run to reach U-19 WCup final

CHRISTCHURCH: Australia cruised into the final of the Under-19 World Cup with an easy six-wicket win over Afghanistan at Hagley Oval in Christchurch.

The three-time champions chased down Afghanistan's target of 182 at a canter, losing just four wickets as they reached it with more than 12 overs remaining. Australian all-rounder Jonathan Merlo took four for 24 with the ball before opening batsman Jack Edwards smashed 72 in a man-of-the-match knock. They will play the winner of today's semi-final between India and Pakistan in the tournament decider on Saturday. Afghanistan have had a dream run at this year's tournament, defeating Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the group stages, then thrashing hosts New Zealand by 202 runs to make the final for the first time.

But their batsmen failed to fire against Australia, leaving a spin-heavy attack little to defend. "We did a bit of research on their spinners and thought it'd be a good idea to take the game to them," Edwards said. "Try to get them before they get us."

"The pitch was pretty slow, probably gave us a bit of time to read the spin, which helped." Afghanistan won the toss and surprisingly chose to bat in humid conditions, making a slow start after losing opening batsman Ibrahim Zadran early.

Five talking points from IPL auction

BANGALORE: The eight teams in the cash-rich Indian Premier League spent almost \$70 million at an auction for players ahead of the Twenty20 tournament, which starts in April. The results showed a marked shift away from purchasing big-name foreign stars, in favour of up-and-coming players from India and elsewhere.

Here are five talking points: ROOT GETS THE BOOT

While there were no bidders for England's Test and one-day captains Joe Root and Eoin Morgan, Kings XI Punjab paid \$628,000 for Mujeeb Zadran, a 16-year-old spinner from Afghanistan. Mujeeb, the youngest player to be signed by an IPL team, was spotted by Indian scouts at the under-19 Asian Cup in Kuala Lumpur last November. Nepal will also get its first IPL player after 17-year-old leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane landed a \$31,446 deal with Delhi Daredevils. One reason for the signings could be a desire to expand the IPL's fanbase in other South Asian countries. "We will have some new fans for IPL... I hope this will start a cricket revolution in Nepal," Delhi chief executive Hemant Dua said.

ROYAL RETURN

Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings are returning from two-year bans for illegal gambling. The Royals, who won the first IPL in 2008 under Shane Warne, turned out to be big spenders, shelling out \$10.3 million for 23 players including the top two buys, Ben Stokes (\$1.96m) and Jaydev Unadkat (\$1.8m). They will be relying on the big names to lift their less exalted team-mates to success. But the conservative Super Kings, twice IPL champions, spent just \$6.4 million in two days and did not make any of



CHRISTCHURCH: Australia's Nathan McSweeney (R) bats as Afghanistan's wicketkeeper Ikram Ali Khil (L) looks on, during the U19 semi-final cricket World Cup match between Australia and Afghanistan at Hagley Oval in Christchurch yesterday. — AFP

Ikram Ali Khil worked hard to steady proceedings, patiently bringing up his half century off 80 balls. But he played a lone hand and could not find a partner at the other end as regular dismissals prevented the Afghans from building any momentum.

They struggled to 86 for four at the halfway mark

and hopes of a significant total ended when Ikram departed on 80. Afghanistan ended their innings all out for 181 after 48 overs. Defending a modest total, they did themselves no favours when they dropped Edwards on eight. He went on to top score for the Australians, supported by Param Uppal, who was 32 not out. — AFP

the top 10 purchases. Mahendra Singh Dhoni was retained as captain ahead of the auction. Their top buy, Kedar Jadhav, who cost \$1.2 million, could be a smart buy for his explosive batting and surprising off-spin. With reputations to restore, both teams will be in the spotlight on their return from scandal.

INDIAN TALENT

Jaydev Unadkat is not with the Indian Test or one day team touring South Africa, but he is one of the hottest T20 bowlers on the planet. Unadkat, player of the series in India's recent T20 games against Sri Lanka, went for \$1.8 million to Rajasthan Royals, making the 26-year-old the second most expensive player behind Ben Stokes. Unadkat's deal also highlighted a tendency to pick Indian talent rather than foreign stars who may not perform well on Indian pitches. Batsmen Manish Pandey and Lokesh Rahul came third and fourth in the rankings, both costing about \$1.7 million. Players with no experience in the national team also featured prominently: the Royals spent almost \$1 million on uncapped off-spinner Krishnappa Gowtham, and Krunal Pandya became the costliest uncapped buy when he went to Mumbai Indians for \$1.38 million. "If we look at the history of IPL, teams which had a strong core group of Indian players have done well consistently," former India opener Wasim Jaffer wrote in The Times of India. TV pundit Dean Jones said: "They (the teams) all started to tell these (established) players that enough is enough. They are looking for the younger player."

ARCHER: BOLT FROM THE BLUE

Jofra Archer was one of the IPL auction sensations. The Rajasthan Royals paid \$1.1 million for the all-rounder from Barbados who is seeking to qualify for England, and has already made a name for himself with English county Sussex and for Hobart Hurricanes in Australia's Big Bash League. He has bowled at up to 150 kilometres (94 miles) an hour and made scintillating run-outs in the field. Archer, only 22, will not be eligible to play for England until 2022,



Jaydev Unadkat

ruling him out of the 2019 World Cup. But he is set to compete for the spotlight with Ben Stokes and the rest of the star-studded Royals team.

GOING, GOING, GONE

The weekend IPL auction, with 169 players bought for nearly \$70 million, was the biggest in four years—and could be the last. The previous three years witnessed featured more than 300 players in a one-day auction, compared to 581 over two days this year. Next year could see a shift to transfers between teams, and new signings within current limits of eight overseas players. IPL officials are also considering introducing a draft system. "This time we had this big auction after four years because we had two suspended teams for two years. So we extended the player regulations by one year and had this auction," IPL chief operating officer Hemang Amin told The Hindu newspaper. "Going forward the thinking is that we will not have this mega auction but will consider having a draft system for the new players which acts as a feeder system for the teams." — AFP

Sports

Fabinho grabs Monaco point at Marseille, Bordeaux stun Lyon

Chase for Champions League places remains wide open in France

PARIS: Fabinho struck to secure French champions Monaco an entertaining 2-2 draw at southern rivals Marseille on Sunday, while Malcom was at the centre of a penalty controversy as Bordeaux stunned Lyon. Both teams at the Stade Velodrome missed the chance to take second place from Lyon, with Paris Saint-Germain now 11 points clear at the Ligue 1 summit.

Keita Balde gave the visitors a fourth-minute lead, but Marseille centre-back Adil Rami quickly levelled with a close-range header. The hosts moved in front shortly after half-time as Valere Germain headed in against his former club. But Fabinho waltzed through the hapless home defence to equalise for Monaco, denying Marseille a seventh straight win in all competitions and extending his team's unbeaten league run to eight matches. "Fabinho played a big match today, not only for the goal but for his defensive quality and ability to break the line," said Monaco coach Leonardo Jardim.

The chase for the Champions League places remains wide open in France, with Lyon, Marseille and Monaco separated by just one point in the hunt for the second and third spots behind PSG.

"One point each was fair. In the war for second place there are no easy games, and it will continue like this until May," Jardim added. Senegal striker Balde, a close-season signing from Lazio, pounced on a loose ball to race clear and clip home his sixth league goal for Monaco and give them the perfect start.

But the lead lasted less than three minutes, as Monaco shot themselves in the foot. A low cross from

Valere Germain caused havoc and Florian Thauvin put pressure on right-back Almamy Toure, who saw his clearance deflected straight into the air for Rami to nod in his first league goal for Marseille.

The game settled down after its frenetic start, but Rudi Garcia's hosts should have forged ahead in the 27th minute when Dimitri Payet blazed over with the goal at his mercy. Marseille completed the turnaround in the 47th minute, as Payet whipped in a free-kick and Germain stooped to send a diving header past away goalkeeper Danijel Subasic.

It was the 27-year-old's 12th goal for OM since joining from Monaco last July. The champions hit back four minutes later, though, as Brazilian midfielder Fabinho strolled straight through the middle of the Marseille backline and slotted the ball in off the post. Monaco thought they had retaken the lead, but Jemerson's header was ruled out by the linesman's flag, despite the defender not being one of two visiting players in an off-side position when Rachid Ghezzal swung in a free-kick. Both sides had chances to snatch all three points, with Marseille keeper Steve Mandanda denying Ghezzal and Germain volleying agonisingly wide, but neither could find the winner they needed to go second.

Marseille completed the turnaround in the 47th minute



MARSEILLE: Olympique de Marseille's French midfielder Florian Thauvin (R) outruns Monaco's Brazilian defender Jemerson during the French L1 football match Marseille vs Monaco on Sunday at the Velodrome stadium in Marseille, southern France.—AFP

scored the 27th-minute penalty to give Bordeaux a shock 2-0 lead.

Payet had already seen Nicolas De Preville put the home side in front in south-western France, with Gaetan Laborde scoring another penalty for the hosts after Marcelo had pulled one back for Lyon.

Bordeaux had another Brazilian, Otavio, sent off after the break but they held on to make it two wins

from two games since previous coach Jocelyn Gourvennec was sacked. The result was a big blow to Lyon, who had beaten PSG at home last weekend and then won at Monaco in the French Cup on Wednesday. PSG beat Montpellier 4-0 on Saturday, with Neymar scoring twice and Angel Di Maria also on target after Edinson Cavani got the opener to take him to a club record 157 goals in all competitions.—AFP

Liverpool look to shore up defence against Huddersfield

LIVERPOOL: Joel Matip accepts Liverpool must quickly resolve the defensive problems that sparked their FA Cup exit ahead of a Premier League visit to Huddersfield Town today. Reds manager Jurgen Klopp acknowledged his side were guilty of making mistakes for each of West Bromwich Albion's goals in the visitors' 3-2 cup win at Anfield that ended Liverpool's lengthy unbeaten home run. Defeat came on the back of Liverpool's shock 1-0 reverse at Premier League basement club Swansea City.

Now, two weeks after the Merseysiders enjoyed the high of becoming the first team to beat Manchester City in domestic competition this season, Klopp's side are in need of another lift.

Cameroon centre-back Matip accepted responsibility for one of West Brom's goals and the defender acknowledged Liverpool cannot afford a repeat when they face Huddersfield if they are to keep a firm hold on a top-four spot and a guaranteed place in next season's Champions League.

"We started in front, our offensive play was okay, but in the defence we had problems," Matip told Liverpoolfc.com after the West Brom defeat. "Mistakes like my one kill every team. This mistake cannot hap-

pen, I have to clear this ball.

"In the first half, (conceding) three goals, it hurts every team. It was really hard to come back then. "We have to do everything to turn things around, to get in better shape and get better results."

Klopp agreed the turnaround must start this week when he is reunited with his longstanding friend David Wagner, the Huddersfield manager. "First we have to really think about what happened (against West Brom) and make ourselves ready for Huddersfield," said Klopp. "A long run starts with the first game and that's on Tuesday," the German added.

Adam Lallana missed the West Brom game with a small muscle tear and could be back in contention for the trip to Yorkshire, although having been sidelined for much of the season, the England midfielder will not be risked if there is any threat of causing more damage.

Daniel Sturridge was omitted from the matchday squad on Saturday, prompting further questions about the striker's future at Anfield. Huddersfield have not been in the relegation zone all season, but sit just two points above the bottom three after a six-match run without a Premier League win. Survival would be a remarkable achievement for a club operating on a minimal budget by top-flight standards, but the fact that they have gathered only nine points from their past 13 matches suggests it may be a struggle. A 2-0 defeat at relegation rivals Stoke in their most recent league game, on January 20, was a significant setback, and the FA Cup has provided little consolation since then, with a team showing eight changes held 1-1 at home by Championship strugglers Birmingham on Saturday. Midfielder Danny Williams suf-



LIVERPOOL: File photo shows West Bromwich Albion's English goalkeeper Ben Foster (C) catches the ball during the English FA Cup fourth round football match between Liverpool and West Bromwich Albion at Anfield in Liverpool.—AFP

fered a back injury in the cup game and is a doubt, although Aaron Mooy would have been expected to return to replace him anyway.

Huddersfield visit Manchester United four days after facing Liverpool, and

Wagner has warned his players must cut out individual errors or risk further defeats. "We are making too many mistakes in attack and too many mistakes in the defence and this means it's difficult to win," said Wagner.—AFP

Mkhitaryan set for Arsenal bow as Wenger waits on Ozil

LONDON: Henrikh Mkhitaryan is poised to make his Arsenal debut when Arsene Wenger's side resume their Premier League campaign at bottom club Swansea City today. The Gunners head to South Wales boosted by their League Cup semi-final triumph over Chelsea and rested following a free weekend, a consequence of the holders' early exit from the FA Cup at the hands of Championship side Nottingham Forest.

Mkhitaryan's arrival from Manchester United also means Wenger's players have been able to prepare for the game without the sideshow caused by Alexis Sanchez's protracted departure from the Emirates Stadium. The swap deal that saw Sanchez and Mkhitaryan change clubs has drawn a line under a saga that was threatening to destabilise the second half of Arsenal's season. But with Sanchez gone, Wenger hopes he can rebuild his side around the axis of Armenian playmaker Mkhitaryan and Mesut Ozil.

The extent to which that partnership can flourish will depend on whether Ozil opts to stay at Arsenal beyond the end of his current contract which expires at the end of this season. There have been reports suggesting the Germany playmaker could be in line for an Old Trafford reunion with Sanchez and Wenger admitted he is not yet sure what Ozil's future holds. "Not close enough to be optimistic and not far enough to be pessimistic," was Wenger's assessment of negotiations with Ozil when he spoke at a media briefing. "The vibes I get from his commitment, his focus and his desire for achievement with the team is that he behaves like someone who is completely focused and committed and ready to commit but after that contract negotiations are what they are."

The Frenchman added: "We are not close enough to tell you 'Yes, he will do it.' I don't know." It is clear, though, the manager sees the relationship between Ozil and Mkhitaryan as key to Arsenal's hopes of forcing their way into the top four.

"As I have said before, we signed Mkhitaryan on a long-term contract and our intention is to keep Ozil at the club and hopefully we will manage to do that very soon," said Wenger. The Arsenal boss's first task will be to restore Mkhitaryan's confidence after the player found himself frequently sidelined under United manager Jose Mourinho.

"You see straight away that he's a great football player, which we knew before we got him here," said Wenger on Friday. "After that, I will know more about him in two or three days. "We now have two or three good days to prepare (and find out) what the best possible position is for him and how quickly he can integrate the way we want to play. It doesn't look like there will be any problem in there."—AFP

American Tourister announces Ronaldo as its 2018 Brand Ambassador

KUWAIT: American Tourister, world's leading fashionable, youthful, international luggage brand, is proud to announce the signing of international football superstar and fashion icon, Cristiano Ronaldo, as its new brand ambassador for 2018. Five-time winner - a world record, and the current holder of the FIFA Ballon d'Or Award (2008, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017), the former Manchester United (2003-2009) and Real Madrid (2009-present) goal-scoring record-breaker has won 24 trophies over the course of his illustrious career, including four UEFA Champions League titles, and has captained Portugal to victory in the 2016 UEFA European Championship. Cristiano is a true legend of the game and one of today's most popular and recognizable sporting icons.

Dynamic, stylish and confident, with most followers across Facebook and Instagram globally, Cristiano embodies the soul of the American Tourister brand. His appointment also comes as football fever begins to grip global audiences ahead of the FIFA World Cup, which kicks off in Moscow, Russia on June 14th, 2018.

Expressing his excitement on the signing of Cristiano, Subrata Dutta, President of Asia Pacific at Samsonite, said, "There couldn't be a better time to bring Cristiano on-board. His lively and vivacious personality, on and off the field, res-



onates perfectly with our fun-loving, vibrant brand personality. His presence will help bring American Tourister to a whole new audience, allowing us to stand out from the competition, and enabling us to take the Brand to the next level."

Equally delighted to join the American Tourister family, Cristiano said, "American Tourister is a functional yet cool brand that appeals to everyone. I'm delighted to be the face of the brand for 2018. As a frequent traveler myself, I appreciate the need for high quality luggage that still allows you to express your personality." Speaking on the association, Syed Shaheen Jamil, Business Head for Middle East, Africa, CIS and SAARC countries, said "Cristiano Ronaldo is arguably the most popular football star in our region. We hope to leverage his popularity, in a football-crazy region, especially when the FIFA World Cup is just around the corner, to strengthen our brand's connection with all his fans."

Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
West Ham United v Crystal Palace beIN SPORTS HD 7	22:45
Swansea City v Arsenal beIN SPORTS HD 5	22:45
Huddersfield Town v Liverpool beIN SPORTS HD 2	23:00

13 Russia's team suspended from Paralympics, some athletes exempt



14 Australia end Afghanistan run to reach U-19 WCup final



15 Fabinho grabs Monaco point at Marseille, Bordeaux stun Lyon



NEW ORLEANS: Dante Cunningham #33 of the New Orleans Pelicans dunks against the LA Clippers on Sunday at Smoothie King Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. — AFP

Clippers erase deficit to beat Pelicans

Casey will be Raptors' first-ever head coach in the All-Star Game

LOS ANGELES: Blake Griffin sank a clutch three-pointer as the Los Angeles Clippers completed the team's greatest road comeback since 2004 with a 112-103 win over the New Orleans Pelicans on Sunday. Griffin drained his three-pointer with 43 seconds remaining en route to a 27-point performance against the Pelicans who were playing their first game since a leg injury ended the season of all-star center DeMarcus Cousins. Griffin also had 12 assists for the Clippers, who rallied from a 21-point first-half deficit and ended the Pelicans' four-game win streak. Griffin said they got an earful at halftime about their play in the first half from

coach Doc Rivers. "He got into us a little bit. He said all the things we needed to hear," Griffin said. "When coaches say what you need to hear and players come out and execute on it, it's a perfect harmony." Lou Williams tallied 22 points, DeAndre Jordan had 12 points and 19 rebounds, and Tyrone Wallace scored 19 points in the win. "We never feel like we are out of a game. We find hope in being naive," Williams said. "We never think we are going to lose."

Anthony Davis had 25 points and 17 rebounds for the Pelicans, who missed star forward Cousins after he tore his Achilles tendon in the final minute of Friday's

win over Houston. Cousins was averaging 25.2 points and 12.9 rebounds when he went down.

The Pelicans suffered just their second loss in their last nine contests. Elsewhere, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 27 points to lead his Milwaukee Bucks to a 110-96 win over the Chicago Bulls.

The all-star forward added nine rebounds and eight assists to help the Bucks improve to 3-0 since interim coach Joe Prunty replaced the fired Jason Kidd.

In Toronto, Fred VanVleet came off the bench to score a career-high 25 points as the Toronto Raptors manhandled the visiting Los Angeles Lakers 123-111 at

the Air Canada Center. With Sunday's win, it became official that Raptors head coach Dwane Casey and his staff are going to join players DeMar DeRozan and Kyle Lowry in Los Angeles for next month's 2018 NBA All-Star Game.

LeBron James had 25 points, 14 assists, and narrowly missed his second straight triple-double, as the Cleveland Cavaliers beat Detroit 121-104. It was the Pistons' eighth straight loss.

Russell Westbrook scored 37 points to lead the Oklahoma City Thunder in a win over the Philadelphia 76ers, 122-112 for their eighth straight victory.— AFP

Egypt Kung Fu champion Mizo craves home recognition

CAIRO: Egypt's Moataz Radi, or "Mizo", competes successfully with China's top kung fu fighters in international championships, but yearns for recognition in his own country where football dominates.

As Egyptians obsessively follow the preparations of the national football team for the World Cup in Russia and every move of star striker Mohamed Salah, Mizo is preparing for the next world championship in a sport that lacks sponsors and supporters.

Despite his heavy build, 28-year-old Mizo, who is almost two metres tall, moves lightly during training at a modest gym in the October 6 district in western Cairo. He is preparing to join the national team's training camp ahead of the world championships later this year in China. Kung fu, also known as wushu, is an unarmed Chinese martial art practised through display or combat.

'BRUCE LEE INSPIRED US'

According to Mizo, the sport became popular in Egypt through movies. "Egyptians learned about kung fu from Bruce Lee and Jet Li, and they pictured kung fu players always in mid-air," said Mizo. Like other Egyptians, Mizo was initially attracted to football, before he was forced to quit because he wasn't good enough. In kung fu things were different.

Since 2006, Mizo had dominated the sport in Egypt for his weight class of above 90 kilogrammes and has also enjoyed success on the world stage. "I won the world gold medal in 2015, silver in 2016, and bronze in 2017, and I am now training for the coming championship," Mizo told AFP at training sporting the dragon-pattern shorts, which he wore at the previous world championship.

He is becoming a model for younger kung fu players. "I hope to be like Captain Moataz, or even have the grit and will that he has," said 21-year-old Abdel-Rahman Mahmoud.

MARTYRED SPORTS

In November 2014, Mizo broke his leg so badly that, he says, no one expected him to fully bounce back. Yet the following year, he competed in his first world championship and won the gold medal.

"I saw in Moataz during the period of his injury perseverance that I have never seen in any fighter in the world," said Ahmed Abdel Aziz, the kung fu manager at Mizo's club. During that time, Miz had three three-hour training

sessions a day, said his coach Ramadan Abdel Meguid.

Mizo was born in Cairo to a middle-income family, and graduated from Cairo University where he studied literature. "I'm the only Egyptian-even the only Arab and African-to win the a kung fu world championship's gold medal for the +90 kilogrammes weight class, and I found that my popularity in China is more than in my country," said Mizo.

He said he reached stardom without any support from the state. No government representatives received him at the airport upon his return from Jakarta in 2015 with a gold medal, as the celebratory scenes he had dreamed about failed to materialise. However, the government gave him a 50,000 Egyptian pounds (around \$6,500 at the time) as a reward.

"I call these sports that we play the 'martyred sports' and that's because of the media's lack of interest in them," said Mizo. Mizo, a Barcelona club fan, said football swallows most of the sponsors' attention as the most popular sport in the country.

In October 2017, Mizo participated in one of the sport's top tournaments "the king of kung fu" in China, invited by the local kung fu federation. The tournament had eight matches, "but more than 70 channels were covering it and there were a lot of viewers."

At home, without sponsors, Mizo, gives kung fu lessons to provide for his wife and young daughter and cover his training, travel, and injury costs. He also hopes to win a second gold medal. "This sport runs in my blood."— AFP



Moataz Radi

Business

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Al-Kharafi: Culture of innovation a necessity for corporate growth

Nuqat cooperating with Zain to re-engineer Kuwait's education system

KUWAIT: During the Human Capital Forum organized by local non-profit organization Nuqat and held in Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Centre, Kuwait last week, Zain Group Vice-Chairman and CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi, delivered a keynote presentation to the packed audience on the vital importance of Investing in Creativity for Social Impact. Nuqat, is based in Kuwait and aims to develop creative problem-solving skills in the Arab world.

In his presentation, Al-Kharafi spoke of how the Fourth Industrial Revolution has brought about radical changes in business. Digital applications have increased economic productivity and the continued development of modern technologies has become essential for economic growth. "While there's a general state of optimism about modern technologies, which promise to improve social and economic life, there is also a big dilemma regarding the impact of technological unemployment," commented Al-Kharafi.

On her part, Ms Hussa Al-Humaidhi, Co-founder of Nuqat, explained that the creative economy is about doing what a person loves to do in order to create jobs as a social impact. "Kuwait is not only going to be an economic center, but also a center of culture and creativity," she vowed. She added that "the technological advancement in areas such as

Education is a very important factor in providing business with the necessary skills and the educational process should never stop at a certain age," Al-Kharafi said.

Importance of education

Al-Kharafi believes the current education system does not provide young people with sufficient skills to deal with modern developments. He believes that if a nation wants to achieve its strategic objectives of social and economic development, it must take real steps to reform its educational system, relying on a curriculum that takes into account the creativity of younger generations. Al-Kharafi revealed that statistics from the World Economic Forum with respect to human capital ranked the State of Kuwait in the 96th place out of 130. On average, Kuwait spends amongst the highest amounts in the world on education per student per year USD 14,300 while the quality of actual education attained of this expenditure is valued at USD 3,300, thus a 23% of the real value.

"When one considers these statistics, I believe it is clear we need to change our educational curricula and adopt programs based on cultivating a culture of creativity and innovation. We need new fields to study such as data sci-

“ The quality of actual education is only 23% of the real value ”



artificial intelligence is forecasted to result in the loss of 60% of current jobs according to recent studies, highlighting the need to better understand the nature of these radical changes to society, but human creativity will not be replaceable".

Among the initiatives and solutions presented at the forum, Nuqat is cooperating with Zain to develop an index to measure the impact of creativity on society, with both entities agreeing that the current education in Kuwait must be re-engineered and replaced with a creative one. Both parties stating that, "Values of flexibility shall not only be taught at school and university, but also at work. Everyone has the responsibility to develop themselves. We can anchor and build a solid future for Kuwaitis."

Modern technologies are driving companies to create more value with less labor with time. Al-Kharafi showcased a pertinent example whereby the valuation of the largest 3 technology companies in Silicon Valley reached up to 30 times higher in 2015 than the market value of the largest 3 industrial companies in Detroit in 1990. More significantly, these huge valuations are driven by companies that possess 10% of actual workers as compared to the industrial companies.

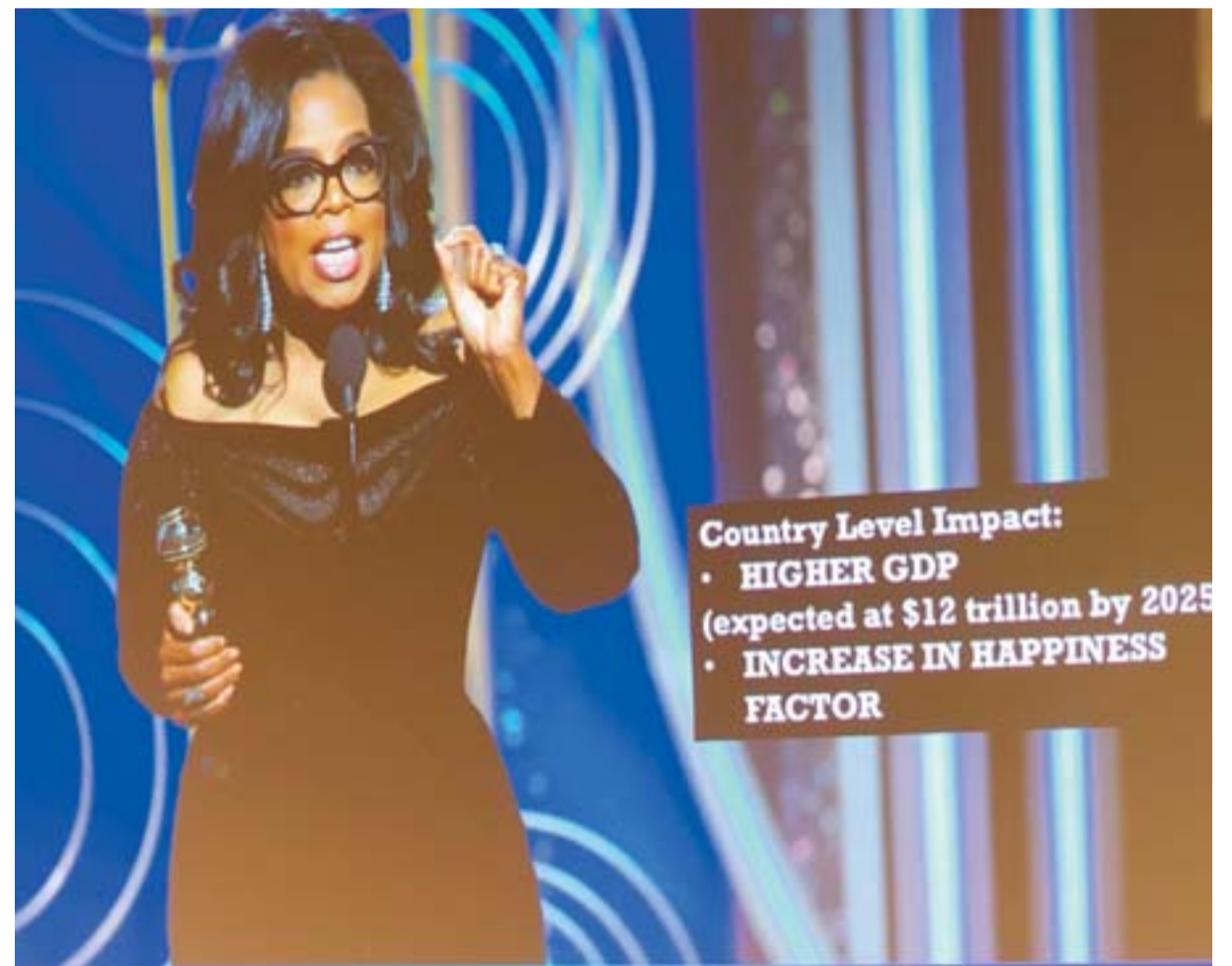
While dependence on natural resources has led to limited economic diversification and lack of investment in human development in Kuwait and other countries in the region, Al-Kharafi highlighted the importance of enabling a creative culture and investing heavily in human resources. Innovative and material support is required as the business environment needs to focus on jobs that keep pace with and harness technological developments. "We need to adopt innovative mechanisms in our educational system to provide future generations with the necessary skills,

ence, coding and complex problem solving. When you get STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) along with arts (art, design and humanities), you get a whole new experience," Al-Kharafi added.

"Based on these facts, we have moved quickly in the Zain Group as a private sector institution, pursuing our sustainability responsibilities, and launching with Nuqatan initiative called IN-DIG-GO, which is an educational program for children ranging between the ages of 6 and 11, aimed at expanding children's perceptions, strengthening their knowledge base and creativity, and developing their personal and educational skills. This initiative is the first of its kind in the Middle East and was launched for the children of Zain employees. The first phase will continue for 13 weeks, and then we will expand the program further."

"We have strengthened our strategic partnership with INJAZ, through which we aim to educate and support young people who are passionate about developing their ideas and projects in accordance with international standards. This project targets youth and the education sector and brings students from middle and high schools together with working professionals." Zain has also targeted young university graduates by launching the third generation of its "Generation Z" training project, which aims to invest in young national talent to provide a new generation of pioneers to the business environment. Four graduates from this project joined Zain in 2016, and became permanent students in 2017. "Zain launched the Zainiac initiative, an e-platform created by employees in a space where ideas are shared and solutions are created," Al-Kharafi said. "This initiative is a

“ Gender equality leads to a higher GDP and a direct impact on the bottom-line ”



Bader Al-Kharafi, Vice-Chairman and Group CEO of Zain

practical example of stimulating creativity in the institutions, and we have already received more than 100 initiatives and projects from our employees.

Women Empowerment Initiative

Zain's committee chose only five ideas to pursue and the main aim of the initiative is to promote innovation in the company and push employees to start new businesses, leave us and hopefully become the next unicorns in our region. Our role is to provide all the required support for the successful ideas. Ultimately, these will create new job opportunities." Furthermore, Al-Kharafi said that Kuwait must support women. "Countries that support gender equality have a higher GDP, and at the corporate level, will lead to an increase in happiness and creativity leading to a direct impact on the bottom-line. 65% of our graduates are

females, but we do not see them enough in the workplace. That is why we need to give them flexible hours, home working opportunities as well as equal growth and salary opportunities".

Based on these facts, Zain launched the Women Empowerment Initiative to take real steps towards gender diversity in the business environment. "Just 23% of Zain's workforce is female while the global average is around 40%. Our plan is to increase the current women leadership positions from 14% today to 25% by 2020." Finally, Al-Kharafi stressed Zain Group's efforts in other aspects far from commercial and technological pursuits, namely, social responsibility. "The Group believes in the importance of supporting social and economic sustainability, and in this regard always takes on the most influential issues. It is our duty and responsibility to give back to the society".



Nuqat team

Business

Angola faces currency test in major economy shake-up

The path to transformation will be long and difficult

LUANDA: Angolan President Joao Lourenco was elected five months ago promising an "economic miracle". But the path to transforming the oil-dependent country's economy will be long and difficult-as was highlighted by anger over the de facto de-valuation of the local currency. Since January, new central bank governor Jose de Lima Massano has been presiding over something of a fiscal revolution, weaning the local kwanza currency off its artificial peg to the dollar, and phasing in a floating exchange rate.

The local unit has been fixed at a rate of 166 to the dollar since 2016, even if the kwanza has changed hands at a rate of more than 400 for a dollar on the black market. "We have an exchange rate that doesn't reflect reality," Massano conceded. Officials are treading cautiously with the reforms. Before the currency is allowed to float completely freely by the end of 2018, the kwanza is now trading between two rates that authorities are for now keeping secret to avoid speculation.

The central bank chief justified the move by pointing to the urgent need to stem the "continuing decline of currency reserves". In 2014, Angola-which is Africa's second largest oil producer-was badly hit by the plunge in the price of crude which is by far the country's largest source of income. The decline threw the country into a prolonged crisis.

After many years of a centrally-controlled exchange rate, Angola came dangerously close to recession and saw its dollar reserves severely depleted by an unsuccessful effort to prop-up the kwanza. Angola was thought to have had \$20 billion in reserves at the start of 2017, which had slumped to \$14 billion by November, according to analysts. "If our foreign currency spending continues at this pace, we run the risk

of seeing (reserves) halve between now and the end of the year," warned central bank chief Massano. Such a dramatic evaporation of hard currency prompted the new government to take action. Major global brands such as the Emirates airlines have recently begun to back off from Angola because of the currency crisis.

'Angola has no other choice'

The Gulf carrier has been struggling to repatriate hard currency from its ticket sales to its head office because of strict exchange controls. In September, President Lourenco succeeded long-serving strongman, Jose Eduardo dos Santos who had ruled the country-and its economy-with an iron fist for 38 years. Lourenco has waged a campaign against corruption, notably targeting Dos Santos family members and challenging critics who said he would be puppet of the old regime.

Exchange rate doesn't reflect reality

His economic plan has been no less drastic, defined by austerity measures, privatisations and efforts to diversify the economy. "Angola has no other choice but to diversify," said Lourenco at a press conference last week. "It's absolutely vital-our survival depends on it." The cornerstone of his reforms are efforts to lure foreign investors and their dollars back to Angola-not least through the currency shake-up. The kwanza has lost 18 percent of its value against the dollar and 25 percent against the euro in just three weeks.

Positive in the long-term?

The shift quickly pushed up prices in the country where inflation officially already runs at 30 percent. In the capital, where millions live in poverty, prices have fluctuated wildly.



LUANDA, Angola: People shop at a market. — AFP

"Any products that are imported are more expensive," complained Ibrahim Nour, a retailer in the Palanca district. "This devaluation should have been done before, during the economic boom," argued Preciso Domingos, an economist at the Catholic University of Luanda.

"Now it's much harder for the people." To avoid increasing the country's widening deficit, the government is now looking

to renegotiate its debts-a process described by finance minister Archer Mangureira as "a priority". Investors have until now welcomed the reforms of Angola's new order. "Lourenco is using the political capital he got after coming into office to make big strides," said William Jackson, an analyst at Capital Economics. "Although the devaluation could cause short-term problems, it might be positive in the long term." — AFP

India sees economic growth improving as reforms bed in

NEW DELHI: India said yesterday it expects economic growth to rise to between 7 and 7.5 percent in the next fiscal year as the negative impact of two controversial reforms diminishes. The economy is expected to grow 6.75 percent this fiscal year on the back of a recovery in the second half, the government said in its economic report released before the annual budget.

Growth has been hit by the introduction of a new national goods and services tax (GST) last year and by a controversial 2016 move to withdraw all high-value banknotes from circulation. The economy has also been helped by a rise in exports, the government's chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian told reporters.

"Growth is picking up because the temporary impact of demonetization and GST have dissipated, corrective actions have been taken and the government is injecting a fair amount of demand," he said. "The direction is very good. The level is still below potential. But in terms of directionality, the economy seems to be picking up quite nicely, quite robustly," Subramanian said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi swept to power in 2014 on a promise to attract foreign investment and create jobs for a burgeoning youth population.

In its report, the government said creating employment for young people would remain a key priority before a general election that must be held by May next year. It also expressed concern about falling rural incomes, saying climate change was having an adverse impact on farm yields. "Climate change could reduce annual agricultural incomes in the range of 15 percent to 18 percent on average, and up to 20 percent to 25 percent for unirrigated areas in India," it said. Less than half of India's farmland is irrigated, with the rest reliant on rainfall. — AFP

German 5-year bond yields turn positive

LONDON: Five-year German bond yields turned positive for the first time since late 2015 yesterday and yields across the euro area hit fresh highs after a European Central Bank policymaker said the ECB should make clear it would end its bond purchases this year.

Dutch central bank chief Klaas Knot said on Sunday the ECB should make clear that it will end its asset purchases after the current bond buying program ends in September, adding: "There is no reason whatsoever to continue the program." The comments, together with a sell-off in U.S. Treasuries, cemented a bearish tone in bond markets, which have been hit in recent weeks by growing expectations that major central banks are moving closer to unwinding the extraordinary stimulus that has underpinned low borrowing costs for so long.

In Germany, the euro zone's biggest economy, five-year borrowing costs rose to a high of 0.013 percent, turning positive for the first time in more than three years. They were last trading at 0.002 percent. Germany's 10-year bond yield rose to its highest in more than two-years at 0.625 percent, while two-year bond yields hit their highest since mid-2016 at minus 0.51 percent. Across the euro area, 10-year bond yields were up 2-5 basis points on the day, with French and Dutch yields climbing to multi-month highs.

"The Knot comments are a factor behind the sell-off in bonds today," said DZ Bank rates strategist Andy Cossor. "There's also the sell-off in US Treasuries." The 10-year Treasury yield rose to 2.724 percent, its highest level since early 2014, while two-year Treasury yields rose to 2.161 percent-their highest since 2008. Comments from the Bank of Japan governor on Friday that inflation is finally close to reaching its target added to a sense of a turnaround in policy among major central banks.

The ECB meanwhile surprised markets by striking a modestly dovish tone last week in the face of a robust euro, leaving German bond yields with a sixth straight week of weekly rises on Friday. — Reuters

Air finance titans ponder whether boom will end

DUBLIN: As the titans of the \$140-billion a year aircraft financing industry gathered in Dublin this week to celebrate an unprecedented boom, a few were casting a cold eye on mistakes of the past - and whether they could happen again. Ireland owes its dominance of global aircraft finance to the rise and spectacular collapse in 1992 of industry pioneer Guinness Peat Aviation (GPA), which demonstrated both the risks and returns possible from financing airplanes.

The former GPA executives who now dominate the industry were debating which of the new players and investors that have flooded in in the last five years might not have learned from those mistakes - and whether the industry had finally broken its cycle of spectacular booms and busts. The five-star venues that every year host the sector's showcase conferences were heaving with hundreds of new investors - many from China - who have poured in to a once-obscure industry as global investors engage in a desperate search for returns.

Thronged financiers spilled into the street from the 200-year-old Shelbourne Hotel during the Airline Economics conference, whose delegate list has tripled to 3,000 in five years. "Sentiment is as positive as I have seen it," Alec Burger the head of No. 2 lessor GECAS - formed from the bulk of GPA - told a packed second conference, Global Airfinance, where airline executives buoyed by surging air traffic eyed funds to expand their fleets. "This will be the fourth year of global airline profits above \$30 billion and that is beyond unprecedented," Flight Ascend chief economist Peter Morris said.

Peak or plateau?

Optimists insist the flood of Asian money - around 20 Chinese lessors have opened Dublin offices since the start of the decade - confirms the emergence of air finance as a worthy asset class in its own right. Aengus Kelly, the former GPA employee who is now CEO of the world's largest

lessor AerCap, said the number of banks and bond investors willing to lend to his firm has mushroomed from 50 to 500 in two decades.

"Is it the case that all of them are in for the long haul? - Of course not. Have they come in looking for yield? - Of course they have," he said in an interview. "But I do think on a structural basis the industry is well understood and people are starting to divorce it from airline cyclicality." Domhnal Slattery, head of No. 3 firm Avolon, told delegates that those who thought the market must be peaking were "cynics" and that the cyclical peak was years away.

Signs of instability

But the money has also caused returns to collapse in the industry's de facto spot market: buying planes from airlines and leasing them back, prompting many big players to abandon it. Leasing giants say they are often left at the back of a queue of two dozen firms for such deals as new players accept tiny - some argue non-existent - returns. "My biggest concern over the past few years has been all the liquidity chasing these assets," Betsy Snyder, Standard & Poor's director, said. "What happens if we get into a downturn?"

The risk for those prepared to wade too aggressively into this market is that rental fees don't cover the cost of paying debt on an over-valued jet, said market veteran Bill Cumberlandidge of Aviation Partners. Yet as lease rates suffer, the value of aircraft rises as airlines find a queue of takers, even before they are delivered. That may have encouraged some airlines to order extra planes in the hope of flipping them into the sale-leaseback market.

If so, they could end up getting burned as markets turn against them, warned John Plueger, CEO of Air Lease. As in other branches of global finance, some worry that while a tide of money moved in during an unprecedented phase of low interest rates, it could recede as quickly as rates rise. "I think interest rates are a real risk in the space generally," said Matthew Little, a partner at Castlelake, a private investment firm, adding leverage was also increasing.

The test will be whether this pressure topples an inexperienced few or shakes the wider industry. "There are a lot of new players and I am sure some of them will thrive and do very well and some of them won't," said Peter Barrett, another GPA alumnus who runs No.4 lessor SMBC Aviation Capital. "Time will tell who the winners and losers will be." — Reuters

Dutch banks hit by cyber attacks

THE HAGUE: The top three banks in the Netherlands have been targeted in multiple cyber attacks over the past week, blocking access to websites and internet banking services, they said yesterday. The number one Dutch bank, ING, was hit by a so-called distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack on Sunday evening while the eurozone nation's third largest lender, ABN Amro, suffered three attacks over the weekend in a total of seven over the last week, Dutch media reported.

Rabobank, the country's number two lender, saw its internet banking services go down on Monday morning. "We have been targeted by a DDoS attack since 9.10 am (0810 GMT) this morning (Monday) and our clients don't have access or very little access to online banking," Rabobank spokeswoman Margo van Wijgerden said. "We are working to resolve the problem as quickly as possible," she told AFP.

ING, which has some eight million private clients, experienced an attack on Sunday evening, it said on its website. "During the DDoS attack ING's internet site was blasted with data traffic causing our servers to overload and which put pressure on the availability of online banking," ING said, adding services had been restored. ABN Amro experienced a similar attack but also said services were restored. It will "keep monitoring availability and is extra alert since the weekend's attacks," it said in a statement. The banks all stressed that clients' banking details were not compromised or leaked. It is not the first time Dutch banks were targeted in a DDoS attack with central bank chief Klaas Knot telling a TV news program Sunday there were "thousands of attacks a day" on his own institution. —AFP



Bollywood Star Anil Kapoor inaugurating Malabar Gold & Diamonds relocated & renovated showroom at Rajkot, Gujarat, India in the presence of Asher O, Managing Director - India Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Nishad AK, Group Executive Director, Malabar Group, Subair MP, Regional Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds and other management team members on 20th Jan, 2018.

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Business

Technology stocks rallies to hit all-time high

LONDON: Technology stocks rallied yesterday at the start of a big week of earnings for the sector globally, while bond yields hit multi-year highs as investors braced for major central banks to step back from ultra-easy monetary policies.

TECH was in focus after Swiss chipmaker AMS, a key supplier for US giant Apple, reported a doubling of its 2017 revenues and raised its earnings guidance far in excess of expectations. "Technology stocks have been at the forefront of equity market gains, and this week is pivotal for keeping the momentum going," said Rebecca O'Keefe, head of investment at Interactive Investor. MSCI's

global information technology sector index was 1.4 percent higher at an all-time high. Industry heavyweights Apple, Alphabet, Facebook, Microsoft and Amazon are all set to report earnings this week.

Tightening talk

US and European bond yields both reached milestones as investors prepare for central banks to tighten monetary policy, and after a European Central Bank policymaker said the ECB should spell out it would end its bond purchases this year.

son whatsoever to continue the program." Borrowing costs for Germany, the euro zone's biggest economy, rose, with the five-year bond yield briefly turning positive for the first time in more than three years to reach a high of 0.004 percent. It was last trading at minus 0.01 percent. US Treasury yields also rose, continuing a move to multi-year highs after strong growth figures posted on Friday.

"The Knot comments are a factor behind the sell-off in bonds today," said DZ Bank rates strategist Andy Cossor. "There's also the sell-off in US Treasuries." Helped by rising bond yields, the dollar edged higher against a basket of currencies, rising a quarter of a percent to 89.30 after scoring six consecutive weeks of losses. Conflicting signals from top

US officials last week did little to discourage bearish positions, with net short dollar bets increasing to their highest level since October, according to latest positioning data.

Despite yesterday's rise the dollar is set to post its biggest monthly decline since March 2016. The currency's decline has been a boon for many commodities, with gold making a 17-month top last week and last trading at \$1,346 an ounce. Oil prices dipped yesterday but remained just off their highest level in three years. Brent crude futures were holding atop \$70 at \$70.28 a barrel. U.S. crude futures were up 23 cents at \$66.23.

Asian markets trim gains

The dollar could experience more turbu-

lence with several major announcements coming up this week, including Trump's State of the Union address today. Markets could also be impacted this week by the outcome of a scheduled US Federal Reserve meeting. The Fed is expected to leave the benchmark US interest rate untouched, but economists say the changing composition of the policy committee could point to faster rate rises in 2018. Industrial data from China and GDP figures from India are also expected this week. Asian markets trimmed gains after an early surge yesterday as investors tracked last week's record-breaking close on Wall Street. The three major US indices all closed at record highs on Friday with earnings season in full swing, on the back of strong earnings announcements. —Agencies

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Monday, January 29, 2018. Index: Price Index, Weighted Index, KXSX 15. Trades: Security, High, Low, Volume, Value (KD), Trades, Last, Change. Real Estate: KINV, FACIL, IFA, etc.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. At 02:00 PM Previous Day. Global Stock Indices: Dow Jones, NASDAQ, etc. MENA Stock Indices: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, etc. Global Currencies Exchange Rate: Kuwaiti Dinar, Saudi Riyal, etc. MENA Currencies Exchange Rate: US Dollar, Kuwaiti Dollar, etc. Global Interest Rates: Currency, 1-Week, 1-Month, etc. Commodities: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, etc.

Business

Mercedes-Benz Kuwait returns to GulfRun Carshow

KUWAIT: Returning for another year of adrenaline and excitement, AR Al-Bisher and Z Al-Kazemi Company has confirmed its participation in GulfRun Carshow 2018. Labeled the premier car show in Kuwait, the auto exhibition will take place from 1 - 3 February at Murooj Sahara Golf Club and showcase a range of the latest and most exotic sport cars. Running since 2005, the annual GulfRun event was established by a group of Kuwaiti motoring enthusiasts who sought to promote automobile racing and training in a professional environment, while educating drivers on proper racing techniques. Now in its 13th year, the event has grown to include a complete season of motorsport activities that include Karting Endurance races, the GulfRun Race in Bahrain, the GulfRun Racing Academy, and the GulfRun Carshow, now in its 10th year.



"GulfRun is one of the most highly anticipated auto events in Kuwait, and this year is shaping up to be another solid edition," said Mohammed Abdul Rahman Albisher, Director of Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Company, the Authorised General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait.

"This is our ninth year of participating and we look forward to again welcoming Kuwait's foremost car enthusiasts to our stand."

Michael Ruehle, CEO of AR Albisher & Z Alkazemi Company continued, "With the AMG C 43 Cabriolet and AMG GLC 43 Coupe on display, we are offering a younger target group yet another alternative to discover the fascinating world of AMG. Our customers will not only have the opportunity to learn everything they need to know about our new family of AMG 43 series vehicles, but they can also book in for a performance vehicle test drive."

Combining a sporty, elegant design with the brand's hall-

mark Driving Performance, the Mercedes-AMG GLC 43 Coupe enjoys the advantages of an SUV in terms of seating position, interior flexibility and also traction off the beaten track. The 270 kW (367 hp) 3.0 liter V6 turbo engine, the automatic transmission 9G TRONIC with shortened shift times and the AMG Performance 4MATIC all-wheel drive configured with a rear bias form the basis for an especially dynamic on-road driving experience.

Also on display, the Mercedes-AMG C 43 all-season Cabriolet features a combination of 270 kW (367 hp) 3.0-litre V6 biturbo engine, fast-acting 9G-TRONIC automatic transmission and standard-fit AMG Performance 4MATIC all-

wheel drive. The first open-top member of the still young C-Class family offers open-air enjoyment for four people, and an agile driving experience mainly thanks to the standard-fit AMG Performance 4MATIC all-wheel drive with rear-biased torque distribution, newly developed front axle, and highly precise steering. A team of knowledgeable sales consultants will be available at the Mercedes-Benz stand to answer any questions and provide insights into the world of Mercedes-AMG. Open to all car enthusiasts, GulfRun Carshow 2018 will be open from 10am - 11pm from 1 to 3 February at Murooj Sahara Golf Club. Visit the Mercedes-Benz stand to book a test drive.

Ooredoo Offers Shamel plans for 50% off includes Shamel Mobile and Shamel Home

KUWAIT: Ooredoo announced an exclusive offer that gives customers all the benefits of Shamel Home and Shamel Mobile for half the price when they commit for a period of 24 months on either Shamel Home or Shamel Mobile. Shamel Mobile includes unlimited local minutes and SMS, 500GB internet, carry over unused internet to the next month, and get a second device which includes the iPhone 8, iPhone 8 Plus, iPhone X, Galaxy Note 8, and Galaxy S8.

Customers can also enjoy Shamel Home, which is a complete package for every home that provides customers with everything that they need. As part of this plan, customers can benefit from high-speed internet up to 10 Mbps at home with unlimited capacity courtesy of FASTtelco, a company owned by Ooredoo Kuwait. On their mobile lines they can enjoy 100 GB internet that can be shared with four additional SIM cards which are considered add-ons and customers can choose how many they want to add upon their discretion to suit their family. Customers will also enjoy 1500 local minutes. Additionally, customers can choose between beIN's beIN CONNECT, OSN's WAVO or STARZPLAY, for digital services.

They can get 2 years of digital content subscription with WAVO, which includes a comprehensive range of entertainment, movies, series and sports programs as well as 21 live TV channels, STARZPLAY, which has 10,000+ Hours of blockbuster Hollywood movies, latest series, Arabic shows,



Bollywood, children's entertainment, and one year of digital content from beIN CONNECT to watch live streaming of the biggest sports events. The content can be streamed through the service providers' websites and their apps for smart devices, including smart TVs, smartphones and tablets. It is worth mentioning that customers can choose from a diverse portfolio of devices which include handsets, tablets, and gaming consoles.

The offer stems from Ooredoo's core values of caring, connecting and challenging, as the company aims to enrich customers' lives through telecommunication technology. Ooredoo's plans aim to complement the lifestyle of customers based on their usage and needs. The plans additionally include a number of Shamel's exclusive features, such as Ooredoo subscribers can now enjoy the privilege of freezing their contract for up to 3 months a year when they travel, without worrying about paying bills for months that they don't use.

Additionally, Ooredoo now allows customers to transfer contracts to other customers even during the contract period, with no penalties or extra fees. All Shamel subscribers in the plans included in the offer can enjoy unlimited calls, and customers with plans that have limited internet can enjoy data rollover, to ensure that they are making full use of their internet package.

Boston, USA. The school's desire to continue to work with the IBS, Kuwait on these projects is an indication of the success of this collaboration.

The IBS Director General explained that the title of the 2018 program is "Leading Strategy Execution in Financial Services", and it consists of two integrated themes: 'Strategic Management' and 'Leadership' and is held during January 27 - February 1, 2018 for six consecutive days at the Ritz-Carlton, Dubai, UAE. It is aimed at upper middle executives of levels such as department heads.

Prof Alrefaei affirmed that executive education programs held by Harvard Business School in the GCC region adhere to the School's high standards, thus ensuring that participants and their banks and organizations will be provided with the same quality of learning experience for which the school is so well known. At the end of the program, participants will receive a Harvard Business School certificate, verifying that they have completed the program.

The IBS Director General elaborated that the world-famous Harvard Business School case studies will be the main learning tool in the program; these case studies are written by the school's faculty and are used in numerous universities and executive development centers. Besides selecting banking and finance cases, the faculty has also chosen some that focus on other industries to diversify participants' learning experience. In addition to that, participants carry out a number of interactive activities in groups throughout the duration of the program.

In conclusion, Prof Alrefaei stressed that development of the talented and qualified nationals in the financial and banking sector will remain a top strategic priority considering the role of executives in developing their organizations. He went on to explain that collaboration amongst the GCC countries in areas of common interest such as training and development has always been and will remain an item of top priority. He expressed his gratitude for members of the Kuwaiti Banks, Central Bank of Kuwait, the GCC Banking communities, and to the Emirates Institute for Banking and Financial Studies (eibfs), who have continued to support the Harvard Business School programs.

Harvard Business School presents education program for Banking Executives

DUBAI: Prof Yaqoub SY Alrefaei, Director General of the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) - Kuwait, announced that the IBS is now working with Harvard Business School for the Ninth year in a row to present an executive education program for banking and finance executives in the GCC region, during January 27 - February 1, 2018, in Dubai, UAE. HE Dr Mohammad Yousef Al-Hashel, Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait and Chairman of the Board of the Institute of Banking Studies inaugurated the program.

The IBS Director General pointed out that the program is one of the strategic developmental projects organized by the IBS. The program, said the Director, aims to upgrade the skills of the Kuwait and GCC national workforce, of which executives comprise the key component. He mentioned that the program was conducted for the first time in 2010 as an exclusive event for the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwaiti banks. After the tremendous success of that first program and with the Harvard Business School showing interest in taking the program to the GCC level, the program continued to be run on an annual basis since then, alternately in one of the GCC states. In 2017, the program was conducted in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, whereas in 2018 it is being held in Dubai, UAE.

Prof Alrefaei pointed out that communication with Harvard Business School started in 2009 to organize the school's first custom program in the GCC region. The Director affirmed that Harvard Business School is very selective in conducting custom programs, especially those beyond its campus in



AUB wins 'Best Call Center' award from CPI Financial

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced that it has won the coveted 'Best Call Center in Kuwait' award for 2017 from CPI Financial's Banker Middle East Magazine. The Bank was awarded this prestigious accolade by Robin Amlot, CPI Financial Consultant on Thursday, 25 January at AUB's headquarters in the presence of a number of the Bank's senior executive management representatives.

AUB's latest recognition reflects the Bank's continued efforts to provide the best services along with tailored financial solutions for its customers through a dedicated and specialized call center that has been designed to accommodate their varied needs and is staffed with professionals equipped to respond to customer queries around the clock and throughout the week, 24/7.

Huda Al Madani, Assistant General Manager for Alternative Distribution Channels said, "This award is a testament to our call center team's efforts towards the ongoing development of the 'Hayakum' service. We continue to provide leading and enhanced services through a highly developed platform that provides customer and account information, monitoring and analysis services and fulfillment services for credit card delivery. Our commitment in training and development of our highly qualified professionals and continued investment in the latest systems ensures that the highest security standards are enforced across all services provided through the call center with a focus on fulfilling customers' requests and providing maximum added value service."

"We are proud that AUB is the first bank to provide an advanced and sophisticated platform to support special needs customers' varied banking needs. The Bank will continue to set leading examples across the competitive landscape by focusing on an underlying strategy that aims at providing increased customer satisfaction levels," added Al Madani.

Moreover, AUB's Senior Deputy CEO, Tareq Muhmood, said, "We are proud to win this important award that reflects our underlying efforts to enhance customer service levels by focusing on multiple communications channels, including a



Huda Al Madani receiving the award from Robin Amlot, CPI Financial Consultant.

dedicated customer service & call center. The center, which has been developed in line with the highest technical international standards, has become one of the most important call and contact centers with customers not only at the level of local banks, but regionally as well."

AUB's CEO, Richard Groves, noted that "This prestigious award is a clear indicator of the success of the Bank's investments made in innovative and effective communication channels in addition to various advanced electronic platforms that are in line with our overall strategy. This important recognition is also the culmination to the efforts of our distinguished call center team."

AUB continues to drive its growth and overall leadership position in the Islamic Banking sector across Kuwait. The success of the Bank is attributed to its innovation and overall strategic approach that have been the driving force behind its management, operations and remarkable success. CPI Financial is amongst the most important sources of economic and financial information across the region. The publisher provides a number of informative websites, leading magazines and conferences. Amongst CPI Financial's publications are Banker Middle East, The Bank Africa, Islamic Business and Finance, Finance Middle East, Wealth Arabia, and Framework magazines.



Call center team with the award

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al Danah Daily Draws

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al Danah daily draws on 28 January 2018 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 21 January - 25 January 2018. The Al Danah daily draws include draws every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners were:

(Sunday 21/01): Elias Bshara Deeb, Abdullah Walid Jawad Al-Jazzaf
(Monday 22/01): Jassem Mohammed Moukhtar Taki, Abdulaziz Alhassan Essa Ahmad

(Tuesday 23/01): Abdullatif Abdulkhadur Abdullah Al-Khabbaz, Bader Nasser Ali Al-Houti
(Wednesday 24/01): Christo Georges Jannan, Khadeeja Abdulnebi Mohammed Ali Shamsaa
(Thursday 25/01): Fuad Essa Motar Al-Bolushi, Nadia Essa Burghuba

Gulf Bank's Al Danah 2018 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day each receive KD1000). Al Danah's 1st Quarterly draw for the prize of KD200,000 will be held on 28 March, the 2nd Quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on 27 June and the 3rd Quarterly Draw for the prize of KD500,000 will be held on 26 September. The final Al Danah draw for 1 Million Kuwaiti Dinars will be held on 10 January, 2019 whereby the Al Danah Millionaire will be announced. Gulf Bank encourages you to increase your chances by depositing more into your Al Danah account, immediately from any local bank, using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's Online and Mobile Banking.

Technology

Japan sanctions Coincheck after massive cryptocurrency heist

Hackers stole hundreds of millions of dollars in digital assets

TOKYO: Japan yesterday imposed administrative measures on virtual currency exchange Coincheck after hackers stole hundreds of millions of dollars in digital assets from the Tokyo-based firm in one of the biggest heists ever. Units of the cryptocurrency NEM worth \$530 million were taken-based on the exchange rate on Friday—exceeding even the \$480 million in bitcoin stolen from the MtGox exchange in 2014.

Coincheck suspended trading of all cryptocurrencies except bitcoin on Friday, and said it had lost 523 million units of NEM, the 10th biggest cryptocurrency in the world based on market capitalization. The Financial Services Agency (FSA) said in a statement that it had ordered Coincheck to investigate the cause of the incident, “properly” deal with clients, strengthen risk management and take preventive measures.

The financial watchdog told the exchange to respond to the orders by February 13, warning that the agency would raid its office if necessary. Coincheck has said it will use its own funds to reimburse about 46.3 billion yen (around \$430 million) — at a rate of 88,549 yen per NEM—to all 260,000 customers who lost their holdings. The company said it would reimburse customers in yen, not cryptocurrency.

The FSA said at a briefing yesterday that it was checking to ensure Coincheck had the ability to make those refunds. The watchdog added that it was carrying out checks at other exchanges in the wake of the theft to detect potential security problems. The agency will supervise Coincheck to ensure the measures are being implemented and contracts are being

honored, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said at a regular briefing. “While examining the cause of the incident and taking necessary measures, we want the ministries and agencies concerned to urgently study what further measures we’d need,” the top government spokesman said.

‘Lacked common sense’

Japan’s Finance Minister Taro Aso told parliament yesterday that the government would take “necessary administrative measures, including an on-site inspection.” Coincheck “did not store the important things separately. I think they lacked fundamental knowledge or common sense,” he said. One unit of NEM was trading at 95 cents at around 0730 GMT on Monday, according to coinmarketcap.com.

Japan is a leading market for cryptocurrencies, with nearly one third of global bitcoin transactions in December denominated in yen, according to specialist website jpbtc.com. As many as 10,000 businesses in Japan are thought to accept bitcoin, and bitFlyer—the country’s main bitcoin exchange—

saw its user base grow beyond one million in November. Many Japanese, especially younger investors, have been seduced by the idea of strong profits as the economy has seen years of ultra-low interest rates offering little in the way of traditional returns. In the wake of the MtGox scandal, Japan passed a law on cryptocurrencies that requires exchanges to be regulated by the FSA. The law went into effect in 2017. Coincheck had submitted an application to the FSA for a license and was allowed to continue operating while it awaited a decision, the agency said. —AFP

“ They lacked fundamental knowledge ”

Exercise tracking map highlights locations of deployed troops

WASHINGTON: A map showing paths taken by users of an exercise tracking app reveals potentially sensitive information about American and allied military personnel in places including Iraq and Syria. While some bases are well known to groups that might want to attack them, the map also shows what appear to be routes taken by forces moving outside of bases—information that could be used in planning bombings or ambushes.

The map, made by Strava Labs, shows the movements of its app users around the world, indicating the intensity of travel along a given path—a “direct visualization of Strava’s global network of athletes,” it says. Routes are highlighted over large parts of some countries, but in others, specific locations stand out. The map of Iraq is largely dark, indicating limited use of the Strava app, but a series of well-known military bases where American and allied forces have been deployed as part of their war against the Islamic State (IS) group are highlighted in detail.

These include Taji north of Baghdad, Qayyarah south of Mosul and Al-Asad in Anbar Province. Smaller sites also appear on the map in northern and western Iraq, indicating the presence of other, lesser-known installations. Stretches of road are also highlighted, indicating that Strava users kept their devices on while traveling, potentially providing details about commonly-taken routes. In Afghanistan, Bagram Airfield north of Kabul is a hive of activity, as are several locations in the country’s south and west.

Opting out an option

Tobias Schneider, a security analyst who was among the group of people who highlighted the military bases shown on the map, noted that it shows military sites in Syria and Iraq as well as the Madama base used by French forces in Niger. “In Syria, known Coalition (i.e. US) bases light up the night. Some light markers over known Russian positions, no notable coloring for Iranian bases,” Schneider wrote on Twitter. US troops are deployed in support of local forces battling IS in Syria as well as Iraq, while Russian and Iranian units are backing President Bashar al-Assad’s Syria government in that country’s civil war.

“A lot of people are going to have to sit thru lectures come Monday morning,” Schneider wrote, referring to soldiers likely to be taken to task for inadvertently revealing sensitive information while trying to keep in shape. “Bases are fixed & hard to conceal,” he wrote, so the “biggest potential threat is to tracking movement.” The US Department of Defense said it is “reviewing” the situation. “Recent data releases emphasize the need for situational awareness when members of the military share personal information,” Major Audricia Harris, a Pentagon spokeswoman, told AFP.

“DoD takes matters like these very seriously and is reviewing the situation to determine if any additional training or guidance is required, and if any additional policy must be developed to ensure the continued safety of DoD personnel at home and abroad,” Harris said.

The Pentagon “recommends limiting public profiles on the internet, including personal social media accounts,” she said. The issue could have been fairly easily avoided. According to Strava, “athletes with the Metro/heatmap opt-out privacy setting have all data excluded” from the mapping project. —AFP

Silicon Valley vet to head mobile-age TV startup

SAN FRANCISCO: A startup created by a Hollywood powerhouse to tailor television for smartphone lifestyles announced Wednesday that its chief will be Silicon Valley veteran Meg Whitman. Whitman will start in March as the top executive at NewTV, a “mobile-first media platform” being nurtured into existence at WndrCo.

WndrCo was created by former Walt Disney Studios chairman Jeffrey Katzenberg, who will serve as chairman of Los Angeles-based NewTV, the company said in a statement. “NewTV is one of the most disruptive and timely ideas I’ve come across during my career,” Whitman said in the statement. “I share Jeffrey’s vision that top-quality programming tailored to our mobile lifestyles is the next big touchpoint in entertainment.”

Whitman added that she was “thrilled to be employee number 1.” Whitman, one of the most prominent women in Silicon Valley and a onetime candidate for California governor, recently stepped down as chief executive of Hewlett Packard Enterprise. She kept a seat on the board at HPE,

Canadian professor suspected of spying for China

MONTREAL: A researcher at McGill University in Montreal whose brother was charged in the United States with stealing technology and sending it to China is now also suspected in the case, a local newspaper said Thursday. Ishiang Shih reportedly used his research position at the school to obtain integrated circuits used in US military radar, jammers and scramblers. The computer chips are at the centre of FBI accusations against his brother Yi-Chi Shih. “I don’t have any comment,” Ishiang Shih told AFP Thursday.

Facebook makes privacy push ahead of strict EU law

BRUSSELS: Facebook said yesterday it was publishing its privacy principles for the first time and rolling out educational videos to help users control who has access to their information, as it prepares for the start of a tough new EU data protection law. The videos will show users how to manage the data that Facebook uses to show them ads, how to delete old posts, and what happens to the data when they delete their account, Erin Egan, chief privacy officer at Facebook, said in a blog post.

Facebook, which has more than 2 billion users worldwide, said it had never before published the principles, which are its rules on how the company handles users’ information. Yesterday’s announcements are a sign of its efforts to get ready before the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) enters into force on May 25, marking the biggest overhaul of personal data privacy rules since the birth of the internet.

Under GDPR, companies will be required to report data breaches within 72 hours, as well as to allow customers to export their data and delete it. Facebook’s privacy principles, which are separate from the user terms and conditions that are agreed when someone opens an account, range from giving users control of their privacy, to building privacy features into Facebook products from the outset, to users owning the information they share.

“We recognize that people use Facebook to connect, but not everyone wants to share everything with everyone — including with us. It’s important that you have choices when it comes to how your data is used,” Egan wrote.

Also among the company’s privacy principles are helping users understand how their data is used, keeping that information secure, constantly improving new controls,



TOKYO: In this picture taken on early January 27, 2018, Coincheck president Koichiro Wada (L) bows in apology at the end of a press conference. —AFP

one of the firms created in the 2015 breakup of Hewlett Packard. Whitman joined HP in 2011. Whitman was credited with leading a “turnaround strategy” as the computer company strove to adapt to trends in using mobile devices and cloud-based services for personal and work computing.

She also engineered a split between the HP enterprise unit, HPE, and the personal computer and printer business HP Inc., that became a household name but faced increasingly fierce competition. Whitman, 61, was the top executive at eBay from 1998 to 2008 and has been a key figure in the male-dominated tech industry. She is also listed among the wealthiest women in tech. She ran unsuccessfully as the Republican nominee for governor of California in 2010, losing to Jerry Brown.

Katzenberg’s vision for NewTV, which was said to be a working name for the company, involved high-quality shows custom-designed to be consumed in ‘bite-sized’ formats of 10 minutes or less. “Imagine a mobile subscription platform, with library content at its foundation, to deliver content on demand to smartphones,” Katzenberg, 67, said at a Wall Street Journal technology conference late last year. “Everything has to be redone from scratch. You cannot take an episode of Game of Thrones and chop it into six pieces; it would be terrible.” Katzenberg said he has commitments from “major Hollywood players” to make content for the platform. —AFP

Earlier he told Montreal’s daily La Presse he had purchased the circuits for research purposes. “I was writing an application for a research grant,” he said. Last Friday, his brother Yi-Chi Shih was arrested by the FBI on charges of scheming “to illegally obtain technology and integrated circuits with military applications that were exported to a Chinese company without the required export license.” The computer chips had allegedly been shipped to Chengdu GaStone Technology Company (CGTC) in Chengdu, China.

The company was blacklisted in 2014, according to the US Attorney’s Office, “due to its involvement in activities contrary to the national security and foreign policy interest of the United States—specifically, that it had been involved in the illicit procurement of commodities and technologies for unauthorized military end use in China.” At the same time, Canadian federal police raided the offices of JYS Technologies in a suburb of Montreal. —AFP

Latest Alphabet ‘moonshot’ aims to thwart cyber attacks

SAN FRANCISCO: Google parent Alphabet’s “moonshot” lab unveiled a new “graduate” on Wednesday which aims to make a business out of preventing cyber attacks. The technology giant unveiled Chronicle, the latest business unit to proclaim independence from the “X” lab devoted to ambitious projects. Other graduates from X include the Waymo self-driving car firm and life sciences operation Verily.

Chronicle began as an X project about two years ago, according to an online post by chief executive Stephen Gillett. He described Chronicle as “a new independent business within Alphabet that’s dedicated to helping companies find and stop cyber attacks before they cause harm.” The X lab has been known for big bets on new technologies. Alphabet has spun companies out when they show signs they might be viable businesses on their own.

Alphabet makes most of its money from Google advertising and would like to add new revenue streams. Chronicle is developing a technology platform to help businesses manage security-related data. The company will include VirusTotal malware intelligence service acquired by Google in 2012, according to Gillett. Chronicle is building on the infrastructure that powers other Alphabet offerings, along with the internet giant’s machine learning and search capabilities.

“We hope that by making this mix of technologies available to more companies at affordable prices, we can give ‘the good guys’ an advantage and help us all turn the tide against cybercrime,” Gillett said. Astro Teller, the “captain” of X lab moonshots, said the latest effort is aimed at being a “digital immune system.” “Most organizations currently have to work like doctors treating a disease after the symptoms have shown up and the damage has been done,” Teller said in blog post. —AFP



MENLO PARK: This file photo taken on November 4, 2016 shows the Facebook sign and logo. — AFP

and being accountable to regulators. “We put products through rigorous data security testing. We also meet with regulators, legislators and privacy experts around the world to get input on our data practices and policies,” the blog post said.

The company’s Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg announced last week that Facebook would be creating a new privacy centre which would put the social network’s key privacy settings in one place. The GDPR

drastically increases the level of fines for companies found to be in breach of data protection law, potentially rising as high as 4 percent of global annual turnover or 20 million euros, whichever is higher. Facebook has faced probes from EU regulators over its use of user data and tracking of online activities. As of yesterday, users will be reminded by their News Feeds to take a “privacy checkup,” Egan wrote in his blog, to ensure they are comfortable about what data they are sharing, and with whom. —Reuters

Health

In the Galapagos, an idyllic hammerhead shark nursery

Biologists discover sharks own hideaway

SANTA CRUZ, Ecuador: For millions of years, new-born hammerhead sharks have grown up in nurseries sheltered by the mangrove swamps and reefs of the Galapagos Islands, safe from all human threat. But until November, biologists had no idea the sharks had their own hideaway that could hold some of the final secrets of this remote archipelago 1,000 kilometers off South America's Pacific coast.

"It was quite by chance that we found this natural nursery for baby hammerheads, a species that is under a high level of threat," said Eduardo Espinoza, the biologist in charge of monitoring ecosystems in the Galapagos Marine Reserve. "It is a unique area, of great interest to conservationists," he said. Still stunned by the find, Espinoza and his team are returning by boat to the spot in northeastern Santa Cruz, one of the main islands in the archipelago, to collect data and attach tracking devices to the young sharks.

The picturesque journey takes the scientists past sea turtles and white beaches where black marine iguanas sun themselves while enormous pelicans soar overhead, before their small boat winds its way down a narrow channel between the mangroves to a shallow, rocky pool. Clearly visible in the water, dozens of small, silver-skinned sharks, one eye on either extremity of their T-shaped heads, glide gently among other species of fish, looking for the crustaceans they feed on during their early years.

'Pit stop' for sharks

"The females arrive to give birth and then leave. The young have all the food they need here and the reefs afford protection from large predators," said Espinoza as he cast a wide net into the water. After one or two years, when they grow and need more food, they make their way to the open ocean and can travel for thousands of kilometers, growing as long as three meters (yards) and living for up to 50 years.

The park rangers have for years been monitoring and

tagging hundreds of sharks, one of the landmark species of the 138,000-square-kilometer marine reserve, the second-largest oceanic park in the world, which has been named a Natural Heritage Site. But the discovery of these small sharks has been a particularly sensitive issue, as overfishing and the illegal capture of sharks has placed them on the list of endangered species, two levels below extinction, according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Their slow physical development and low reproduction rates have only exacerbated the threat. That makes the operation to attach tracking devices all the more delicate. "Shark, there to the right!" shouts one of the team members. At this point, everything moves at a frantic speed. The captain moves the boat closer to the net.

One of the assistants grabs the shark, half a meter long, and holds it on a table so that Espinoza and the others can measure and weigh it, determine its sex and insert a tracking chip in its back so its habits and migration routes can be logged. Putting the young shark back in the water, they move its head and tail to revive it, until it swims

off on its own. "They cannot spend more than two minutes out of water because they need a constant flow to avoid dying. It's like a pit stop in Formula 1 racing," said the biologist.

Extra protection

To save the hammerheads, the government of Ecuador, to which the islands belong, added an extra layer of protection in 2016 — a 38,000-square-kilometer sanctuary zone between Darwin and Wolf islands, where all fishing is banned. The area is the mostly densely populated zone for shark populations in the world. Jose Marin, a biologist at the Charles Darwin Foundation, an international scientific research NGO, said Ecuador was making "titanic efforts" in the field of conservation of sharks, whose fins are a highly prized delicacy in Asian cuisine.



ECUADOR: A baby hammerhead shark swims after being released by the Galapagos National Park research team where a shark nursery was discovered along the coast of Santa Cruz Island in Galapagos, Ecuador. — AFP

"These studies, sometimes using satellite tracking, alert us to where these sharks are being caught when they leave the marine reserve, and allow us to notify other countries so they can help us protect them," he said. In August, a Chinese-flagged ship was intercepted in the

Galapagos marine reserve with 300 tons of fish, including some hammerheads. The Ecuadorean courts, which hand down stiff sentences for environmental crimes, sentenced the captain and his officers to three years in jail, and fined the owners of the ship \$6 million.—AFP

Paris zoo to reopen after last truant baboons found

PARIS: Paris's main zoo was set to reopen Saturday after the last of around 50 baboons who had escaped from their enclosure were found overnight, the zoo authorities said. A spokeswoman for the National Museum of Natural History said two females and a baby were tracked down at around 4:15 am. The zoo is expected to reopen around noon.

"The professionalism of the wildlife teams at the Paris zoo allowed for a happy ending ... we are analyzing the precise circumstances of the incident," the spokeswoman said. The baboons remain in the area of the "grand rocher", a landmark central mountain inaccessible to the public at the zoo in the lush Vincennes area of the French capital.

The breakout was first noticed by a zoo worker, who saw the primates gathering in a service corridor used by personnel late Friday morning. Safety procedures were immediately triggered, the zoo said in a statement, with a total of 60 firefighters, 20 police and all of the zoo's staff mobilized to capture the animals. None of the baboons reached public areas and the evacuation was ordered as a precaution, the zoo said.—AFP

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Global Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader

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What's On

Nespresso launches 2 limited edition coffees, celebrating the birthplaces of coffee

A taste of where coffee began

Nespresso is taking coffee lovers on a journey of discovery to its origins with two new Limited-Edition coffees, Arabica Ethiopia Harrar and Robusta Uganda. The new capsules take inspiration from the captivating myths on where coffee originated, featuring coffees from Ethiopia, which is the birthplace of Arabica coffee and Uganda, one of the alleged birthplaces of Robusta coffee.

A passing monk was extremely suspicious of the situation and decided to burn these mysterious cherries. Soon after he threw them in the flames, delicious aromas started to rise. Enchanted, the monk brushed the beans out of the fire, crushed them up and combined them with water to make the captivating drink we now know as Arabica coffee.

ture to the original birthplaces of coffee. These fascinating discovery stories are fundamental to the coffee we have today and allow us to share the incredible tastes of Arabica Ethiopia Harrar and Robusta Uganda, two coffees that truly demonstrate the sensorial profiles from their regions."

Discover the limited-edition coffees

There are two delicious coffees to try, For Lungo lovers, the Arabica Ethiopia Harrar can be enjoyed both as an Espresso and as a Lungo:

Arabica Ethiopia Harrar - A delicious espresso with notes of ripe fruits, fresh flowers that boasts a remarkably velvety body. 100 percent Arabica from Harrar, the region where coffee was first commercialized on a large scale and exported globally.

Intensity: 5

Serving size: Espresso (40ml) or Lungo (110ml)

Robusta Uganda - Surprisingly sweet and undeniably intense, rich in cacao notes. 100 percent Robusta.

Intensity: 10

Serving size: Espresso (40ml) or Ristretto (25ml)

To bring these inspiring and mythical coffee stories to life, Nespresso partnered with London based illustrator, Mariana Rodrigues who designed the coffee capsule sleeves. Mariana Rodrigues explained: "I was so inspired by the new coffees from Nespresso, especially with their mythical origins. When creating the



sleeves, I wanted to clearly depict the vibrancy of both these cultures and link back to their beautiful coffee stories and ingrained heritage."

Limited edition accessories

To complement the coffees, Nespresso has collaborated with Swiss design studio, atelier o? which exclusively designed two stunning Limited-Edition trays. These stainless-steel trays were inspired by traditional African coffee ceremonies and the patterns are reminiscent of century-old artisanal steelwork techniques and the intricate art of guilloché. The trays are available in small (13cm) and medium (28cm) sizes. For a limited period, you can indulge in a 'Discover Coffee Birth Places' gift box which comes with a steel tray plus a set of either two View Lungo or two View Espresso cups.



The myth of Arabica The curious goats

Transport yourself to the ancient highlands of Ethiopia, where the story of Kaldi, a young goat herder begins. He sat in the shade one afternoon and watched over his goats. In the heat of the day, Kaldi drifted off to sleep and left his goats to wander off into the wilderness.

The goats discovered and started to eat some red cherries from bushes. When Kaldi awoke to find his goats gone, he hastily went in search of them. He found them leaping and dancing around the mysterious bushes. He picked a cherry and tried it for himself. He too felt elevated and began to dance alongside his goats.



The myth of Robusta The unity bond

To discover the alleged birthplace of Robusta, we are in the bygone land of Buganda, now known as Uganda. Here, the precious Robusta coffee beans were part of a sacred ritual that united families. A single coffee cherry would be split and two people would each eat one of the two beans from inside. From that moment onwards, the spirit of the bean would connect both families and descendants for eternity in a pact of friendship and loyalty.

Karsten Ranitzsch, Nespresso Head of Coffee said, "At Nespresso, we know the journey of coffee is just as important as the taste. With the new Limited-Edition coffees, we wanted to take people on a mythical adven-



Grand Hyper launches 12th branch in Kuwait with amazing celebratory offers

Grand Hyper will be launching its 12th branch in Kuwait and the 49th in the region tomorrow at 4 pm in Al-Rai. The launch is accompanied with special inaugural offers aimed at rewarding the customers as part of the celebrations in Kuwait.

The new showroom is located in the heart of Kuwait's busiest commercial district of Al-Rai, at the intersection of the Fourth Ring Road and the Airport Road 55. The showroom boasts an expansive parking area and spans an enormous 45,000 sq feet on a single floor, providing all the needs of consumers under one roof, including a special food section that serves Indian, continental, Chinese and Arabic cuisines. The food section is set to satisfy the cravings of the large number of workers and the floating population in the area.

True to the Grand Hyper tradition, the new showroom provides value to the customers both in terms of quality and quantity in a wide range of products sourced from the region and beyond. Product categories include foodstuffs, electronic equipment and appliances, garments from the collections of European designers, footwear, health and beauty items etc. Vegetable and fruit produces are sold fresh and are purchased from select farms from

around the world to ensure the highest quality. Meat and fish products are imported from India and other countries on flights on a daily basis to ensure customers a steady supply of fresh products.

By sourcing the products directly from international suppliers, the Grand Hyper Group cuts extra cost, transferring the benefit onto the end consumer who gets to purchase the products at competitive prices. All these factors combine to give shoppers a unique shopping experience that is exciting and truly satisfying, suitable not just for the tastes of shoppers but also their budgets.

The Regency Group, a multi-national company, has a history of more than half a century, entering the Middle East by setting up its headquarters in the UAE in 1994. It has since gone on to become a leading business group in the region with a solid reputation in the markets where it operates. The group has deep connections in India, China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Turkey and Europe from where it sources world-class products.

The group's branches enjoy over 147,000 visitors every day in the five GCC states. The company has a strong presence in the Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Chia, Azerbaijan and India, and has over 5200 employees across these countries.



BEC celebrates 25 years of business

One of Bahrain's oldest leading worldwide money transfer and foreign currency specialist, Bahrain Exchange Company (BEC), have announced its 25th year in operation. Established in 1992 BEC, which is a part of BFC Group Holdings, began its legacy as the Kingdom's most trusted Money Transfer and Currency Exchange Company. In the 1990's, with the influx of expatriate workers into the country, it recognized a requirement in the market for reliable remittance services for expatriates to send money back to loved ones in their home countries and became the first company to offer draft and door to door money transfer products to both local and expatriate residents.

Since the days of paper drafts and through the evolution of technology, and its focus on innovation, BEC have developed its product offering to accommodate the ever-evolving needs of its customers and today offers a vast array of fast and secure money transfer services, including its own product - EzRemit Money Transfer which allows customers to send money in minutes to over 46,000 agent locations in 50+ countries and its global reach is extended to over 200 countries through its partnership with MoneyGram, Xpress Money and Transfast an international remittance companies. In addition, BEC is the leading provider of foreign currency exchange in the country, offering over 40 currencies at great rates and at zero percent commission.

From its humble beginnings with its first branch in Murgab, the company has grown its network in Kuwait to over 45 branches across the country and through its parent company 'BFC Group Holdings', it has brand presence globally through the establishment of its affil-



ate money transfer and currency exchange company's in Bahrain, the United Kingdom, India and Malaysia with a combined retail network of over 125 outlets.

Commenting on this, Mathews Varughese, BEC General Manager said, "BEC has completed yet another milestone in its successful journey. I would like to take this opportunity and thank all the people who have worked hard for the growth of BEC in the past. Also, I would like to emphasize that in the last 25 years we have delivered the services and products that's best in the market with outstanding results. Opportunities don't happen. You create them. There are no secrets to success, it is the result of strategic thinking, hard work and learning from failure. Going by our values we have won the hearts of the mass expatriate community with care, trust and efficiency".

At the heart of BEC is its customers and in 2016 it launched a new brand ambassador 'Bob, the BEC Buddy' whose role is to guarantee that all BEC customers will receive great rates and customer service with every transaction. The launch of Bob also represents the company's vision 'To be the prominent money service company that fully engages with our customers' and with its strong heritage and values of Care, Trust and Efficiency, BEC remains strong as a bull and the customers number one choice.

Ahmed Serafi new General Manager of Millennium Hotel

Millennium and Copthorne Hotels and resorts announced the appointment of Ahmed Serafi as General Manager of Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre - Kuwait. Ahmed commenced his career with Millennium and Copthorne in February 2016, as General Manager for the Copthorne Riyadh KSA. He led the team to open the hotel successfully. Prior to his appointment with Millennium and Copthorne Hotels and Resorts, Ahmed served many international hotel chains in Gulf region and Egypt, such as IHG, Movenpick and Starwood with over 25 years of

experience in hospitality industry. Serafi conveyed his excitement by saying: "It is with great pleasure that I have the opportunity to be back in Kuwait and to lead the professional for the success of the hotel.

Likewise, with his experience combined with his personal integrity and leadership style, Serafi will now be managing Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre - Kuwait, located in Salmiya, which is considered as one of the most luxurious 5-star hotels that not only serves tourists and businessmen but also hosts conferences and exhibitions. The award-winning Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre Kuwait provides 295 rooms and suites equipped with the latest technology, in addition to various restaurant.



LAPA hosts musical evening

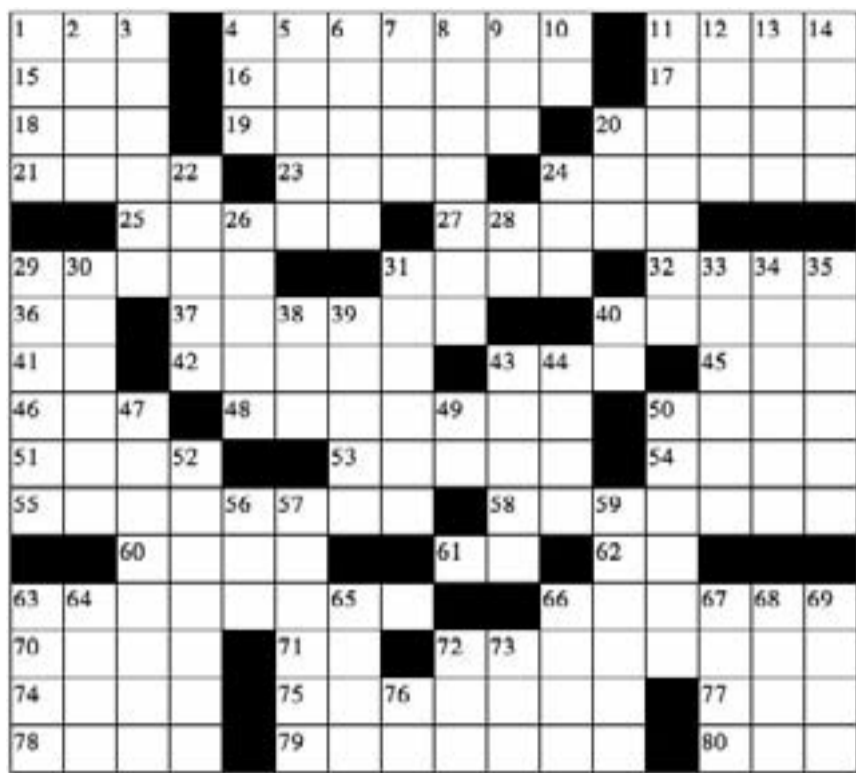


Loyac Academy for Performing Arts (LAPA) recently held a cultural and musical evening in cooperation with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters and French band Atakafia. This event was held as part of the activities of Al-Qurain Cultural Festival.



Stars

CROSSWORD 1822



ACROSS

1. The rate at which heat is produced by an individual in a resting state.
4. Used of persons.
11. A member of an Algonquian people living in central Canada.
15. Fish eggs or egg-filled ovary.
16. A religious adviser (not necessarily a priest) in the Eastern Orthodox Church.
17. The basic unit of money in South Africa.
18. A Kwa language spoken by the Yoruba people in southwestern Nigeria.
19. A city of central Russia south of Moscow.
21. United States labor organizer who ran for President as a socialist (1855-1926).
23. Sustentacular tissue that surrounds and supports neurons in the central nervous system.
25. A person who acts as host at formal occasions (makes an introductory speech and introduces other speakers).
27. God of wealth and love.
29. Obvious and dull.
32. The top edge of a vessel.
36. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
37. East Indian tart yellow berrylike fruit.
41. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
42. Ions are accelerated along a linear path by voltage differences on electrodes along the path.
45. Providing enjoyment.
46. The part of the nervous system of vertebrates that controls involuntary actions of the smooth muscles and heart and glands.
48. A long-acting crystalline barbiturate (trade name Mebaral) used as a sedative and as an anticonvulsant in the treatment of epilepsy.
51. The main organ of photosynthesis and transpiration in higher plants.
53. A heavy block of iron or steel on which hot metals are shaped by hammering.
54. Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
55. A window above a door and hinged to a transom.
58. A crisp smooth lustrous fabric.
60. Formerly the chief magistrate in the republics of Venice and Genoa.
61. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
62. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
63. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
70. City in southwestern Colombia in a rich agricultural area.
71. (legal terminology) The Latin word for wife.
74. In bed.
75. (Hinduism and Buddhism) The beatitude that transcends the cycle of reincarnation.
77. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring in the air.
78. An informal term for a father.
79. A country on western coast of Africa.
80. Step on it.

DOWN

1. A small nail.
2. British informal.
3. (Old Testament) A son of Jacob and forefather of one of the tribes of Israel.
4. Inquire about.
5. Any distinct time period in a sequence of events.
6. A city in the Saxony region of Germany on the Saale River.
7. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
8. Large Old World bat of warm and tropical regions that feeds on fruit.
9. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
10. An honorary degree in science.
11. A person who lacks confidence, is irresolute and wishy-washy.
12. Type genus of the Ranidae.
13. An organic compound that contains a hydroxyl group bonded to a carbon atom which in turn is doubly bonded to another carbon atom.
14. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
20. A shape that sags.
22. Limited or below average in number or quantity or magnitude or extent.
24. Airtight sealed metal container for food or drink or paint etc.
26. An assertion of a right (as to money or property).
28. An expression of greeting.
30. A genus of orb-weaving spiders including common garden spiders and barn spiders.
31. Void of thought or knowledge.
33. Put a new facing on, as of a garment.
34. Administer an oil or ointment to.
35. The capital of Bahrain.
38. The compass point that is midway between north and northeast.
39. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
40. A hemoprotein composed of globin and heme that gives red blood cells their characteristic color.
43. An Indian side dish of yogurt and chopped cucumbers and spices.
44. Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
47. Shod with sandals.
49. A motorized wheeled vehicle used for camping or other recreational activities.
50. Mar or spoil the appearance of.
52. A state in southeastern United States between the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico.
56. One of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
57. A noun formed from a verb (such as the '-ing' form of an English verb when used as a noun).
59. The sixth day of the week.
64. A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
65. A monocotyledonous genus of the family Iridaceae.
66. A stick that people can lean on to help them walk.
67. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
68. Being three more than fifty.
69. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
72. 100 avos equal 1 pataca.
73. A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
76. A blood group antigen possessed by Rh-positive people.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, you won't fit in with the crowd today as you will see things differently. You could feel you have been left out in the cold and verbal disagreements will seem to support this notion. Major conflict with those younger than yourself causes disruption. You may receive valuable news pertaining to a personal situation; pay close attention to a surprising source. Be aware of what you promise today, especially to a young person; keep your promises. Understand that blockages are short-lived and not as important as you think. You are able to speak your mind with very little effort; you will see what is causing trouble and get straight to the heart of the matter. This evening will bring enjoyment with those you love, Aries.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, you will be called on to create new approaches and techniques. Putting these revelations on paper will be a very easy task and many will gain by your efforts to explain. You could move upward in your career or perform so exceptionally well your superiors will take note. The choices you make now will be good ones. You may need to teach someone what you do so you can advance or take another position. Be careful to keep a lid on that heady feeling that comes with being self-assured. An occasion for you to act on behalf of your group could materialize. You empathize with the people you're close to and they look to you for guidance. You are thinking of going out this evening but can't seem to make up your mind who to invite, Taurus.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, this should be a day for very good, positive energy. You could work with those much younger than yourself; this could be at home or other places you frequent. Certain events could create well wishes and fantastic productivity. People may call on you for input regarding an important situation; your opinions are considered golden. A trip to the library or book store, or perhaps a movie theater, could provide a great escape. A nice person will lend a sympathetic ear. Your quiet mood could be most helpful today. Strategies will be highlighted as meaning a great deal to you in this particular cycle. Break away from your routine and start planning a very special vacation and short getaway to a place you love and enjoy, Gemini.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, this is the time to put a twist on the old methods everyone wants you to use. You have the talent of making your thoughts clear through words to capture the attention of others. You could receive praise and acknowledgment for a job very well done. You could feel that you can depend on your team to do their part to make a smooth accomplishment of the goal. People will see that you are compassionate and able to help in any situation. A young person asks for your help in a tricky situation they cannot handle on their own. Now is a good time to take a risk and do something better for yourself. Your family and close relatives and friends take priority at this time. Tune in to a good classic movie or immerse yourself in a good book, Cancer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, you will use your special methods to overcome sure failure and make gains in finances. Someone will come to be even more precious than you ever imagined. You could become frustrated with circumstances surrounding you now; try to keep your emotions in check and your facial expressions pleasant. You may have to make hasty decisions regarding the home front; resist making decisions you are not comfortable with. You will be called upon to mediate between two people you know very well; you will help them work through this delicate situation. Your research and efforts have brought you answers regarding the mystical realm. Concentrate on relaxing and enjoying the end of the day with a fun, exciting person this evening, Leo.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, your suggestions or strategies could fall flat to those who you speak to in a meeting today. You could have a tendency to produce without taking risks that would push the boundaries of a certain project. When you feel your confidence fade, push back and regain forward momentum. Be sure to take periodic breaks to recharge your energy. You could have a disagreement with someone on a personal level; let tempers cool before bringing this up again. Make preparations around the house and at the office for power outages or other natural disasters during this season. You may gather loved ones around you tonight for a family meeting to discuss vacation plans. After this roller coaster day you should unwind with a warm shower and delicious meal, Virgo.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, your work will be done on a global level now and you will make new contacts from around the world; one of these could evolve into an affair of the heart. Many of the mystic questions you have researched could be answered by letting yourself experience life in diverse circumstances. This is a rich time for meeting new people. You could experience a wonderful trip to a museum or university that brings an opportunity to learn and expand your thinking. You are on the threshold of enjoying abundance on material, mental and spiritual levels if you choose; we don't always accept our gifts, because it is a choice. Refuse to daydream until the end of the day. Tonight, let your thoughts go to your future and all the positive energy contained within it, Libra.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Scorpio, you are transitioning and for you this is difficult for you don't usually like change if it's not your idea. You really should not spend money today. To avoid some real or imagined problem you pay less attention to work and perhaps domestic duties or loved one. You are trying to make a decision regarding vocational choices; relax the answer will come without stress. Someone may come to you for help in a very hard situation but sometimes you can't help everyone you want to. Your focus will switch to learning more about the arts and spiritual matters; understanding the meaning of life takes on new importance. This evening may be the time you and your mate have set aside to talk about those financial matters patience, Scorpio.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarius, the new week could present changes for new starts on certain projects. Teamwork is at its finest today and you and others tackle a sticky issue that was actually necessary. You will feel very pumped up at the end of the day when you look back at what was accomplished. This could be the day to purchase that new pair of shoes or boots you were thinking of. Daydreams may be your enemies today as they take your attention from something that others want you to be present for. Someone could make the statement, you're not my boss! Perhaps a long lunch with friends would breakup the monotony of the day and smooth your ruffled feathers at the same time. No matter what, you will end the day on a good, positive note, Sagittarius.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, honest study of your place in life and how you got there is called for now. New approaches and goals regarding your immediate surroundings look likely and will be for the best; could be either work or home. People ask for your opinion on a work project that isn't yours. Your introspective, laid back attitude is perfect for reading a meaningful book, checking out a movie suggested by a friend or perhaps a massage. Wealth and abundance are likely for you as you enter this new cycle. There could be some blockage on a minimal level from an unexpected source. Mind over matter works for you; success stays near you for now. Relax and enjoy the results of your hard work for yourself and others; your karma is good, Capricorn.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Aquarius, the chances are that your energy will draw openings your way. You are definitely approachable at this time; you also feel no hesitation when called upon to make the first move. You may feel it is important to be held in high esteem by your superiors; your inspiring words and deeds have not gone unnoticed by many people. You will research how to help someone younger with a significant issue. You could figure out how to reach a financial goal in a most unusual way. Others will look to you for advice when an emergency arises; timing will be very important concerning this. Someone may pay a surprise visit tonight, Aquarius.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, you may not feel like returning to work in favor of meeting friends for a fun time. However, the projects of the day demand your presence and you must strive to meet your obligation. Your new way of thinking and doing may set someone off who prefers the usual methods; an unpleasant exchange could occur. Let your ideas continue to form before you present them again. A sense of needing to help will be prominent in this cycle and you will know just how to do it. Intuition is just a part of who you are; embrace this and let it help you help others. Home is where your heart truly is and you may find an opportunity to earn a living without leaving the house this year. You could find that large purchase on sale today, Pisces.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Moods & Emotions 2

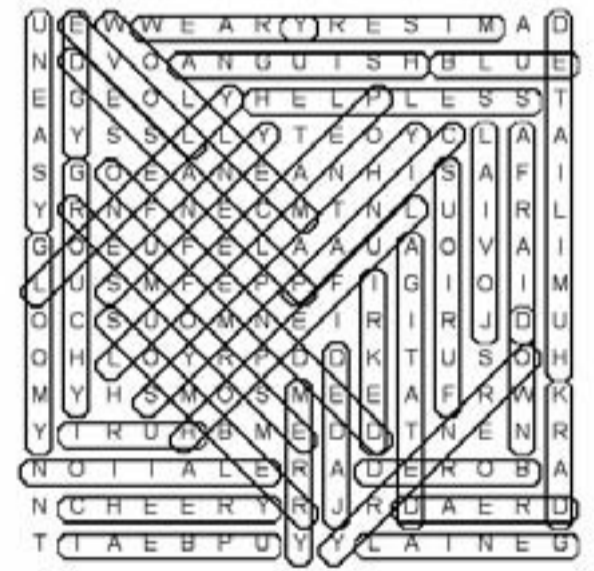
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 11 letters spell an additional word.



- | | | | |
|----------|----------|------------|-----------|
| AMUSED | DISLIKE | HORROR | SHOCK |
| ANNOYED | DOUBT | INFATUATED | SULKY |
| ANTSY | EMPATHY | JOYOUS | SULLEN |
| ANXIOUS | ENVY | LEERY | TERRIFIED |
| CARING | EUPHORIA | PRIDE | TRANQUIL |
| CONTEMPT | GLUM | RAGE | UNCERTAIN |
| CONTENT | GREED | SAD | UNHAPPY |
| CONTRITE | GROUCHY | SATISFIED | WARY |
| DELIGHT | GUILT | SERENITY | |
| DESPAIR | HATRED | SHAME | |

Yesterday's Solution

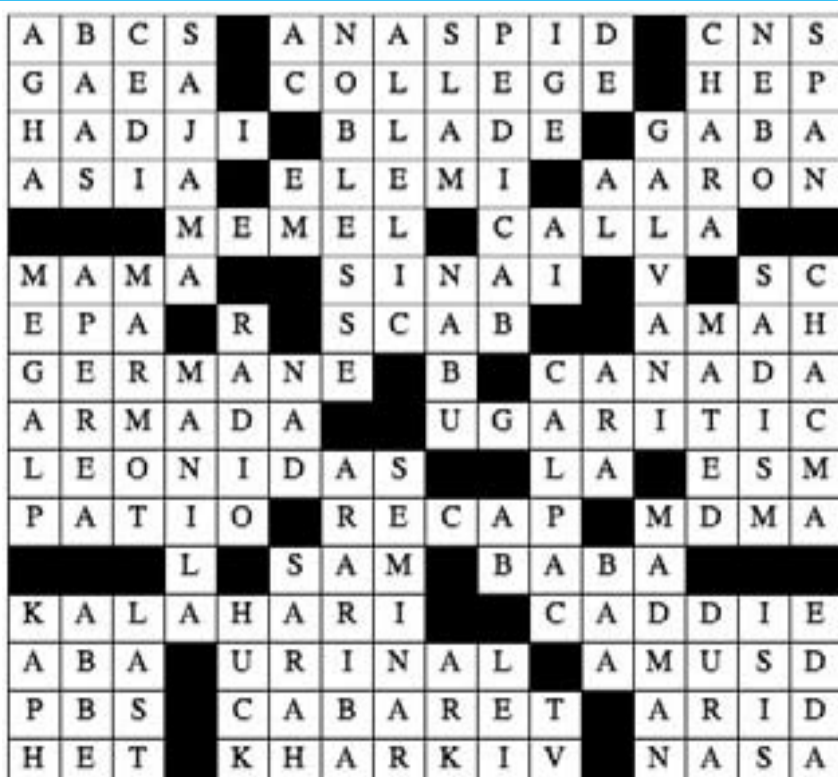
Moods & Emotions 1



- | | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|----------|
| AFRAID | ELATION | JADED | PEACEFUL |
| AGITATED | FURIOUS | JOVIAL | PLEASED |
| ANGUISH | GENIAL | LONELY | REMORSE |
| BLUE | GLOOMY | LOVE | SOMBER |
| BORED | GROUCHY | MELLOW | SUNNY |
| CHEERY | HELPLESS | MERRY | SYMPATHY |
| DARK | HOPEFUL | MISERY | UNEASY |
| DOWN | HUMILIATED | OFFENDED | UPBEAT |
| DREAD | HURT | ORNERY | WEARY |
| EDGY | IRKED | PANIC | |

The hidden word is: ASTONISHMENT

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Classifieds

Tuesday, January 30, 2018

Kuwait Times
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 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY NIGHT: Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h.

BY DAY: Cool with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 38 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 29/01/2018 1200 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	19 °C	11 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	18 °C	05 °C		
ABDALY	18 °C	05 °C		
BUBYAN	--- °C	--- °C		
JAHRA	19 °C	07 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	18 °C	10 °C		
SALMIYAH	17 °C	12 °C		
AHMADI	17 °C	10 °C		
NUWASIB	19 °C	08 °C		
WAFRA	19 °C	06 °C		
SALMY	16 °C	04 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	01/30	Cool	19 °C	05 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	01/31	Cool	19 °C	05 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 32 km/h
Thursday	02/01	Cool and some scattered clouds will appear	20 °C	05 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 28 km/h
Friday	02/02	Partly cloudy	22 °C	08 °C	VRB-NW	06 - 28 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:17
Sunrise	06:39
Zuhr	12:01
Asr	15:03
Sunset	17:24
Isha	18:44

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	19 °C
MIN. Temp.	06 °C
MAX. RH	76 %
MIN. RH	28 %
MAX. Wind	NW 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
Khalidiya	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

ACCOMMODATION

Sharing accommodation available for executive bachelor in old Reggail. Neat and clean 3 BHK apartment. Interested may contact: 99990278. (C 5377) 29-1-2018

EMERGENCY

112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Airline

American Airlines	22087425
Kuwait Airways	22087426
Jazeera Airways	171
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073

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



DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 30/1/2018						Departure Flights on Tuesday 30/1/2018					
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Time	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Time	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	KAC	516	Tehran	14:20	JZR	176	Dubai	13:40
JZR	607	Kochi	00:10	KAC	078	Doha	14:20	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
JZR	539	Cairo	00:50	FDB	059	Dubai	14:20	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	KAC	206	Islamabad	14:20	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:15
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	KAC	672	Dubai	14:25	JZR	124	Bahrain	14:30
KAC	102	London	01:20	GFA	286	Dhaka	14:35	KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	15:00
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	221	Bahrain	14:40	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	KAC	364	Colombo	14:40	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45	QTR	8512	Doha	15:25
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	304	Mumbai	14:50	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
JZR	267	Beirut	02:10	KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55	KAC	785	Jeddah	15:25
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	788	Jeddah	15:10	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	502	Beirut	15:30	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:45
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	OMA	562	Amman	15:30	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:50
WAN	548	KTM	02:40	UAE	857	Muscat	15:35	KAC	283	Dhaka	15:50
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	QTR	1072	Dubai	15:45	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	KAC	118	New York	16:00	PAL	669	Manila	16:10
KAC	414	Bangkok	03:05	JZR	535	Cairo	16:00	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
RJA	644	Amman	03:05	FDK	801	Damascus	16:00	KAC	619	Doha	16:10
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	ABY	127	Sharjah	16:00	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	JZR	779	Jeddah	16:25	OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	FDB	051	Dubai	16:40	KAC	128	Sharjah	16:40
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	RJA	640	Amman	16:55	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	SYR	341	Damascus	17:00	FDK	802	Damascus	16:55
QTR	1090	Doha	04:05	KAC	542	Cairo	17:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:15
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	JZR	240	Amman	17:15
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	JZR	266	Beirut	17:15
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	JZR	125	Bahrain	17:35	FDB	052	Dubai	17:40
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:40	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50	WAN	984	Tbilisi	17:50	KAC	361	Colombo	17:45
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	UAE	875	Dubai	18:00	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
JZR	609	Hyderabad	05:10	FDB	063	Dubai	18:10	SYR	342	Damascus	18:00
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:10	JZR	177	Dubai	18:15	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	QTR	1080	Doha	18:50	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	KAC	744	Dammam	19:10	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:20	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	19:25	JZR	538	Cairo	18:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:10	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	678	Dubai	06:30	RBG	555	Alexandria	19:25	JZR	184	Dubai	18:30
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:40	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:40
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:30	WAN	115	Bahrain	18:50
BAW	157	London	07:15	WAN	356	Luxor	19:35	KAC	381	Delhi	18:50
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	NIA	161	Cairo	19:40	FDB	064	Dubai	19:10
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45	JZR	554	Alexandria	19:20
KAC	358	Kochi	07:40	KAC	616	Bahrain	19:55	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
JZR	505	Luxor	07:45	KAC	166	Rome	20:10	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
ETD	995	Abu Dhabi/Bahrain	07:50	KAC	620	Doha	20:15	QTR	1081	Doha	20:00
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	OMA	647	Muscat	20:20	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:05
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	QTR	1088	Doha	20:45	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:45	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	ICV	675	Luxembourg	21:10	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	KAC	168	Paris	21:20	NIA	162	Cairo	20:40
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20	KAC	301	Mumbai	20:50
JZR	787	Riyadh	09:50	ALK	229	Colombo	21:20	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
WAN	342	Sohag	10:15	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20	KAC	648	Muscat	21:20
IRA	675	Lar	10:40	KAC	786	Jeddah	21:25	DLH	624	Bahrain	21:30
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	172	Frankfurt	21:30	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	UAE	859	Dubai	21:35	QTR	1089	Doha	22:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45	KAC	411	Bangkok	22:05
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:50	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
WAN	134	Doha	11:55	WAN	116	Bahrain	21:50	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	564	Amman	22:00	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	GFA	220	Jeddah	22:30
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:35
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	PIA	239	Sialkot	22:35	KAC	383	Delhi	22:40
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	JZR	241	Amman	22:40	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:50
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15	JZR	185	Dubai	23:10	UAE	860	Dubai	23:00
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:40	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:15	KAC	795	Madinah	23:05

GRAMMYS RED CARPET: WHITE ROSES FOR EQUALITY



Andra Day



Lady Gaga arrives for the 60th Grammy Awards in New York. — AFP photos

After the “blackout” on the Golden Globes red carpet to draw attention to sexual harassment in showbiz, the music industry’s hottest stars wore white roses to the Grammys on Sunday in support of gender equality. From Lady Gaga and Kelly Clarkson to Sting and Khalid, the A-listers sported or carried the flowers. “A white rose symbolizes respect, pays homage to new beginnings and expresses hope for the future,” tweeted the Time’s Up movement, launched by hundreds of prominent women in Tinseltown to shine a light on sexual misconduct.



Shanina Shaik

“A white rose symbolizes respect, pays homage to new beginnings and expresses hope for the future”

about the symbolism of the flower, saying that to her, it reflects “hope and peace and sympathy and resistance.” “It’s amazing to be a mother and to have a mother run my label,” she told E! television.

For Lauper, the white rose movement was about equal pay. “Women make up 51 percent of the workforce, and it’s about time we’re paid equal,” she said. Songwriter Diane Warren showed up with white gloves, one word on each hand: “Girl” and “Power.”

‘Equality for absolutely everyone’

The music men were not left out. Multiple nominee Khalid, Sam Smith, Sting, host James Corden and Ne-Yo were among the many men who sported roses on their lapels. And the men turned up in bright colors: mustard yellow, pink, maroon and deep red stood out from the basic black. Elton John took it to the next level in a glittering jacket in red, gold and blue—and a sparkling multi-colored full-hand ring that spelled out ELTON. Smith, the British soul singer who rocketed to stardom in 2014 with his searing ballad “Stay With Me,” wore a striking double-breasted grass green suit with a burgundy shirt underneath. “I hope we keep striving forward for equality for absolutely everyone,” said Smith, a performer at Sunday’s gala. — AFP

“We like the sound of that. #TIMESUP at the #GRAMMYS.” Gaga wore white rosebuds and a Time’s Up pin on the shoulder of her dramatic black Armani ensemble with a lace bodice and tights, visible through a massive slit in her sweeping skirt with a huge train. Her blonde hair was pulled back in a fishtail braid decorated with corset-like black laces. And during her performance of ballads “Joanne” and “Million Reasons,” she whispered, “Time’s up.”

Clarkson—who was carrying her white rose-turned fangirl on the red carpet, swooning over multiple nominee Khalid and saying how much she loved his music. But the pop diva—who wore a custom black Christian Siriano gown with gold accents—turned serious when talking



Recording artist-actor Hailee Steinfeld



Singer Miley Cyrus



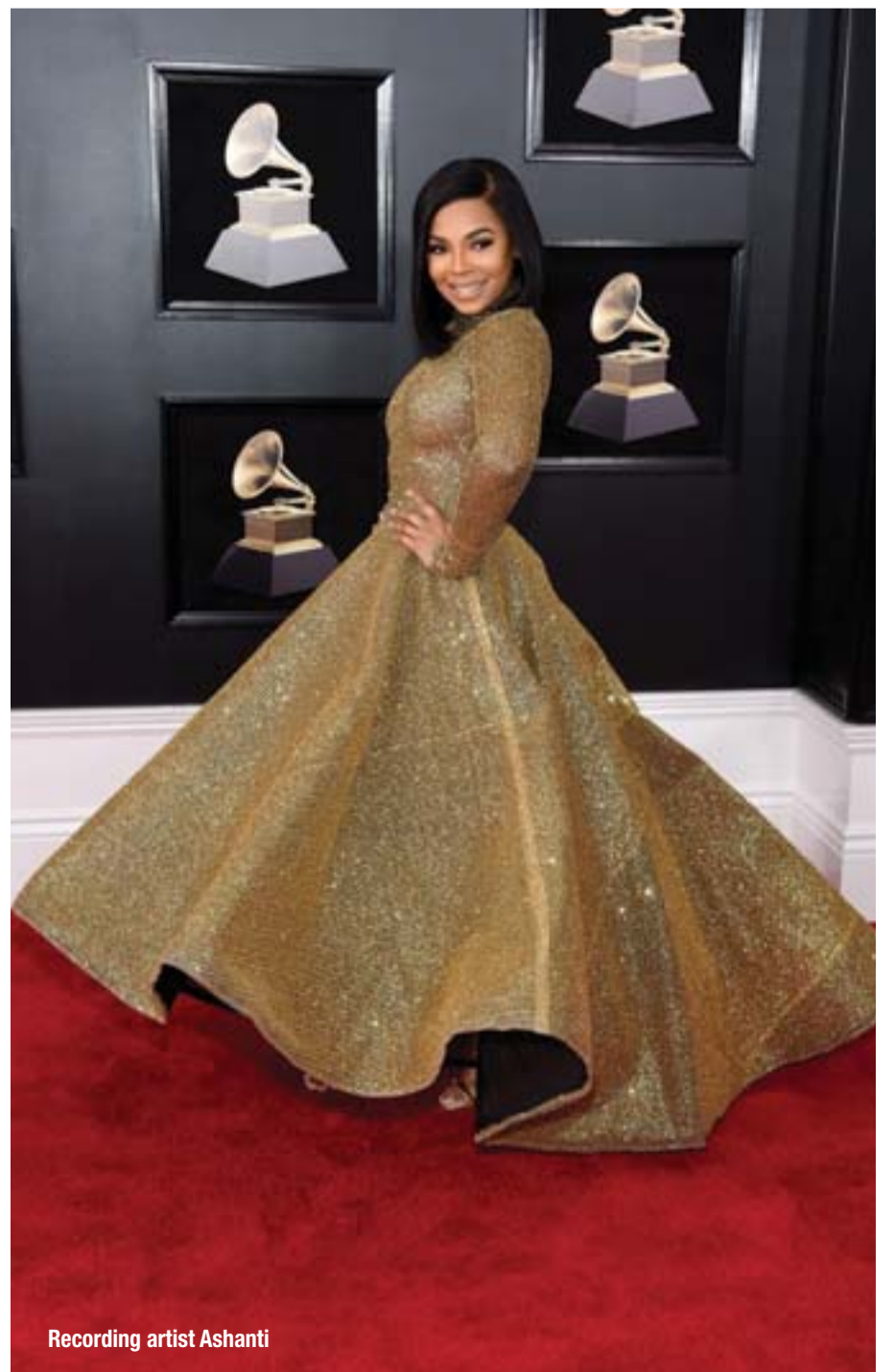
Actor Katie Holmes



Singer Alicia Keys



Recording artist Rita Ora



Recording artist Ashanti



Recording artist SZA

Singer Miley Cyrus

Recording artist Camila Cabello

Recording artist Cardi B (left) and Hennessy Carolina



Producer Desiree Gruber (left) and actor Kyle MacLachlan



Lina Esco and Shemar Moore



Model Jessica Andrea (left) and recording artist Logic.



Luis Fonsi and Agueda Lopez



Chrissy Teigen



Jenny McCarthy



Erin Lim



Aishah



Recording artists Swizz Beatz



Janelle Monae



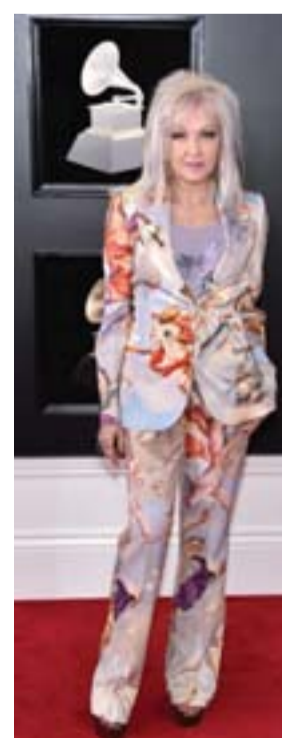
Zuleyka Rivera



(From left) Carey Hart, Willow Sage Hart, recording artist Pink, and Judith Moore arrive for the 60th Grammy Awards.



(From left) Jimi Westbrook, Karen Fairchild, Kimberly Schlapman and Phillip Sweet of Little Big Town.



Recording artist Cyndi Lauper



Kelly Clarkson (right) and Brandon Blackstock

Lifestyle | Awards

Bruno Mars surprises with Grammy sweep



Bruno Mars receives a second Grammy for Record of the Year. — AFP photos



Bruno Mars (center) performs on stage.



Singer Bruno Mars poses in the press room with his Grammy trophies during the 60th Annual Grammy Awards in New York.



Canadian singer and songwriter Alessia Cara, winner of the Best New Artist award, poses in the press room.



Recording artists Kendrick Lamar (right) and Rihanna (left) accept Best Rap/Sung Performance for 'Loyalty'.



Comedian Dave Chappelle poses in the press room with his trophy for Best Comedy Album.

Bruno Mars, who has revived retro funk and R&B for a new generation, on Sunday swept the Grammy Awards in a surprise snub for the hip-hop world, which had hoped for a major breakthrough on the music industry's biggest night. The industry seized on its annual

album "That's What I Like," an old-school ode to making love in high style. The 32-year-old singer, sporting a bright smile and sunglasses, recalled how he first performed as a child for tourists in his native Hawaii. "I remember seeing it first-hand-people dancing that had never met each other from two sides of the globe, dancing with each other, toasting with each other, celebrating together," he said. "All I wanted to do with this album was that," he told thousands of industry players at Madison Square Garden in New York, where the Grammys temporarily shifted after 15 years in Los Angeles.

vote for rappers split. Hip-hop mogul Jay-Z, who had led with eight nominations, ended the night empty-handed. Kendrick Lamar for the second time swept all rap categories but failed to win the general prizes. His five awards included Best Rap Album for "DAMN.," a turn to a classic hip-hop sound. Lamar opened the televised gala with a frenetic performance, spitting out his verses as he was joined by U2 frontman Bono amid a sea of kung fu dancers who later fell to the ground as if struck by bullets.

Monae, introducing Kesha, said that the music industry needed to address its own abuse problems. "To those who would dare try and silence us, we offer you two words: Time's Up!" Monae said, using a slogan for the movement launched on New Year's Day by hundreds of prominent women in the entertainment industry. Rapper Logic added his own voice later on stage, telling women: "Stand tall and crush all predators under the weight of your heart that is full of the love they will never take away from you." The Grammys also featured a tribute to music fans killed in attacks in Las Vegas and Manchester last year.

famous names reciting from "Fire and Fury: Inside The Trump White House," the sensational account of the tycoon-turned-president's first year in office. Musicians known for their criticism of Trump started reading from the book including John Legend, Cher and-smoking from his trademark joint-Snoop Dogg.

The video ends with Hillary Clinton, who lost to Trump in the bitter 2016 election. "The Grammy's in the bag," quips Clinton, whose confidence during her race against Trump proved ill-advised. Trump's eldest son Donald Trump Jr. and the president's ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, said the Grammy skit hit a sour note. "I have always loved the Grammys but to have artists read the Fire and Fury book killed it," Haley said on Twitter. Trump Jr tweeted that Clinton's appearance in the video "seems like a great consolation prize for losing the presidency."—AFP



Recording artist Reba McEntire, winner of the Best Roots Gospel Album award for 'Sing It Now: Songs of Faith & Hope.'

Anti-climax for rap

Mars won all of the awards for which he was in the running on what was expected to be a major night for hip-hop, which for the first time dominated nominations for the major categories. But the industry either preferred Mars, or the

No longer 'pretend-winning'

Alessia Cara, who rose from making YouTube videos in her bedroom to becoming a socially conscious pop singer, won the closely watched award of Best New Artist. "I've been pretend-winning Grammys since I was a kid in my shower," the 21-year-old from suburban Toronto told the gala. Cara has quickly found her voice as a singer with singles such as "Here," which describes the dread of forced emotions at a party, and "Scars to Your Beautiful," a call for a healthy body image.

Trump skewered

Neither did the gala hold back from more light-hearted political commentary. Noting President Donald Trump's reported disdain for reading—and the Grammy award for spoken word-host James Corden introduced a video of

Rallying for women

Amid rising attention to gender discrimination in the entertainment industry following revelations of sexual misconduct by Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein, top stars—notably Lady Gaga—walked the red carpet wearing white roses in solidarity with abuse victims and in an appeal for equality. Kesha—whose pleas to break a deal with her producer, whom she accused of rape, initially fell on deaf ears in the industry—brought some audience members to tears with her deeply personal song "Praying." Her face intense and her voice ferocious, Kesha sang the autobiographical lyrics: "After everything you've done / I can thank you for how strong I have become." Singer Janelle



Aida Cuevas holds the trophy for Best Regional Mexican Music Album.



Residente holds the trophy for Best Latin Rock album.

gala to rally on behalf of the growing women's movement against sexual harassment, with pop singer Kesha delivering a fierce performance about her own abuse story. But for the awards, the feel-good Mars carried the night.

He won the top prize, Album of the Year, for "24K Magic" as well as Record of the Year, which recognizes top tune, for the title track—a tale of good times with beautiful women set to 1980s-style synths and rhythms. The Recording Academy, the body of 13,000 music professionals, also gave him Song of the Year, which awards songwriting, for another track on the



(From left) Producers Jonathan Yip, Ray Romulus, Jeremy Reeves, and Ray Charles McCullough II of The Stereotypes, winners of the Best R&B Song and Song of the Year awards for Bruno Mars' 'That's What I Like,' pose in the press room during the 60th Annual Grammy Awards.



Actors Kristolyn Lloyd (left) and Rachel Bay Jones pose with the Best Musical Theater Album trophy for "Dear Evan Hansen".



(From left) Actors Michael Park, Jennifer Laura Thompson, Rachel Bay Jones, and Kristolyn Lloyd, winners of the Best Musical Theater Album award for 'Dear Evan Hansen.'



Khalid (left), Logic (center) and Alessia Cara (right) perform on stage.



Kendrick Lamar performs on stage.



Keb' Mo' and Taj Mahal, winners of Best Contemporary Blues Album.

Lifestyle | Awards



Singer Lisa Loeb poses with the trophy for Best Children's Album.



Robert Russ, Martin Kistner, and Andreas K. Meyer hold the trophy for Best Historical Album.



Tony Bennett and Dae Bennett, winners of Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album for 'Tony Bennett Celebrates 90'.



Actress Laura Dreyfuss poses with the Best Musical Theater Album trophy for 'Dear Evan Hansen'.

GRAMMY WINNERS
IN KEY CATEGORIES

Retro R&B star Bruno Mars was the surprise big winner Sunday at the Grammy Awards, with a clean sweep of the top awards including Album, Record and Song of the Year, and six overall. Rapper Kendrick Lamar took home five Grammys on a night that featured powerful #MeToo moments, especially from Kesha, who delivered a searing performance of her song "Praying," about her struggles with former producer Dr. Luke. Mars won all of the awards for which he was nominated. More than 13,000 music professionals in the Recording Academy voted to determine the winners of the Grammys, which were handed out in New York at Madison Square Garden. Here is a list of winners in key categories:

- Album of the Year:** Bruno Mars, "24K Magic"
- Record of the Year (for overall performance of a song):** Bruno Mars, "24K Magic"
- Song of the Year (for songwriting):** Bruno Mars along with songwriters Brody Brown, James Fauntleroy and Philip Lawrence and production team The Stereotypes, "That's What I Like"
- Best New Artist:** Alessia Cara
- Best Pop Vocal Album:** Ed Sheeran, "Divide"
- Best Pop Solo Performance:** Ed Sheeran, "Shape of You"
- Best Rap Album:** Kendrick Lamar, "DAMN."
- Best Rap Song:** Kendrick Lamar, "HUMBLE."
- Best Rap Performance:** Kendrick Lamar, "HUMBLE."
- Best Rap/Sung Performance:** Kendrick Lamar featuring Rihanna, "LOYALTY."
- Best R&B Album:** Bruno Mars, "24K Magic"
- Best R&B Song:** Bruno Mars, "That's What I Like"
- Best R&B Performance:** Bruno Mars, "That's What I Like"
- Best Rock Album:** The War on Drugs, "A Deeper Understanding"
- Best Rock Performance:** Leonard Cohen, "You Want It Darker"
- Best Alternative Music Album:** The National, "Sleep Well Beast"
- Best World Music Album:** Ladysmith Black Mambazo, "Shaka Zulu Revisited: 30th Anniversary Celebration"
- Best Dance/Electronic Album:** Kraftwerk, "3-D The Catalogue"
- Best Music Video:** Kendrick Lamar, "HUMBLE."
- Best Country Album:** Chris Stapleton, "From a Room, Volume 1" — AFP



Kesha (center) performs with (from left) Bebe Rexha, Cindy Lauper, Camila Cabello and Andra Day.



Lady Gaga performs on stage.



Scott Devendorf of The National, winner of Best Alternative Music Album for 'Sleep Well Beast.'



Pink! performs on stage.



Sir Elton John (left) and Miley Cyrus perform during the 60th Annual Grammy Awards show.



Singer Alicia Keys presents the Grammy for Best Album.



Singer Bruno Mars (center) poses in the press room with his Grammy trophies.



Singer Patti LaBelle performs on stage.



Anna Kendrick announces a Grammy category.



Sam Smith performs on stage.



Shaggy perform on stage.



Rihanna and DJ Khaled (third right) perform on stage.

Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2018



An ice sculpture, made by a group of artists led by Ts Batmunkh, of the Beatles is seen in Sukhbaatar square, in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia. Ice sculptures of the Houses of Parliament and the Beatles were set up in Ulaanbaatar's main square to mark the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. — AFP

Bullseye! Malaysia hosts colorful archery tournament

'We invite archers from around the world to strengthen friendships'



This photograph shows Bayartsetseg Yambiionchiir (center), a traditional woman archer from Mongolia taking part in an International traditional archery festival at Seri Menanti in Negeri Sembilan, about 90kms of Kuala Lumpur. — AFP photos

Hundreds of archers from around the world took part in a traditional tournament in Malaysia at the weekend, putting on a display of sporting prowess while wearing a dizzying array of national dress. About 500 archers participated in the two-day event on a farm in Seri Menanti in central Malaysia. A fifth were from overseas, from countries including China, Turkey and Austria, and numerous bright headdresses and flowing robes were on display. They took part in different events, including firing arrows at static targets and one supposed to simulate a hunt, with archers stalking through the jungle and taking aim at animal-shaped targets.

It took place in the grounds of a farm that is run along traditional lines and takes inspiration from the culture of Muslim Malays, the country's main ethnic group. Organizers decided to put on the event after Malaysian archers travelled overseas to take part in tournaments, said Shahrul Nazim bin Kasim, from Malaysia's Traditional Archery Association. "We thought it was good to invite archers from around the world to experience how we do archery in Malaysia, and strengthen friendships," he told AFP. Winners were awarded with medals, as well as bows and arrows. — AFP



A Mongolian traditional woman archer Lkhasuren Dashdondog prepares to take aim.



An Indonesian traditional archer takes part in an International traditional archery festival.



An Indonesian woman traditional archer Dhanisa Restya Agung poses for a photograph during an International traditional archery festival.



Bayartsetseg Yambiionchiir (left), a traditional woman archer from Mongolia taking part in an International traditional archery festival.